

Keeping Covenant

Genesis 17

Introduction: Genesis 17 – First, God's name 'El Shaddai'; second, the term “everlasting covenant” and third, the words, “walk before me, and be blameless”.

“**El Shaddai**” - Genesis 17:1 - “One mighty to nourish, satisfy and supply”; One who “sheds forth” and “pours” out sustenance and blessing.

“**Walk before me, and be blameless**” - Genesis 17:1b - The patriarchs were called to walk 'before God or in his presence'. (Deuteronomy 18:13-14; Matthew 5:47-48; Colossians 1:28; 4:12)

Name Changes - Genesis 17:5, 15

Everlasting Covenant - Genesis 17:7, 8, 13, 19 - The only 'everlasting covenant' that applies to the gentiles has nothing to do with physical land, or possessions in this temporal life; it has to do with eternity and the final place of rest for God's people. (Revelation 21)

Covenant Signs - Genesis 17:9-15 - In the Abrahamic Covenant the parents declare for their son and in the New Covenant each believer declares for themselves the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Promised Son – Genesis 17:17-21 - God is not put off by doubt, by our inquiring mind, by our need to understand; but he nonetheless calls for simple, childlike faith, to believe God in the face of our doubts. (Mark 9:22-24)

Precept: Like Jesus, Isaac will be born miraculously, not to a virgin but to a woman well past childbearing. He is a type of Christ, miraculously born.

Abraham's Obedience – Genesis 17:22-27 - This external sign is illustrative of the new Covenant whose sign is the 'circumcised heart' and without it people are cut off from His New Testament people commonly referred to as the Church.

Conclusion: The name God-Almighty, El-Shaddai, speaks of the endless bounty of God's grace and self-sacrificing love for his people, the ones he has promised to bless.

Most covenants are temporary, the covenant God made with Abraham is 'everlasting'; he promised, God will keep his word. (Romans 9-11)

Jeremiah 33 - God's everlasting covenant is not forgotten; he will keep his promises!

Biblical faith is faith that exceeds mind and thought, it is always a faith that acts and James 2:17-24 concurs. Abraham imposes this on his household but it has no covenantal affect on Ishmael, and perhaps others, and the one chosen, Isaac, has not yet been born. I find here that redemptive grace/mercy is God's gift, he gives it to whomever he wishes (Exodus 33:18-19; Romans 9:1-29).