

Sermon Discussion - 25 June 2023

The Hope a Name can bring.

Read Genesis 17:1-8

I want you to make sure you catch this, what you have in Chapter 17 is God giving Abram rich deep theology. I am El Shaddai. I am God almighty. Know my name, know my character, know my nature and the result of that rich, deep theology is the practical response of Abram to walk, to live in a way that's pleasing to God, which tells us something very good for Bethany Church, that the most practical thing this church can do is know the theology of who God is. I want you to know that it is an absolute mistake for a church to say we don't want theology. We just want to be practical. The practical comes from the theology, that's the way it works when you know who God is, you know how to be a person of God. We know who God is. When you know who God is, you know how to love God. When you know who God is, you know how to love people. When you know who God is, you know how to make disciples.

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience.*

Abram and his wife believed God and yet they faltered. They were not flawless and, in a sense, were trying to rescue God and did what they should not have done, and it's now been 13 years.

We don't have any evidence that God has spoken to Abram during these 13 years, can you imagine what that would feel like?

Can you imagine what Abram must be thinking?

Is God finished speaking to me? Is the promise over?

Abram is becoming a man of faith and he's becoming a great man of faith, but becoming a great person of faith takes time. We get there imperfectly. Have you noticed this in your life? Explain.

Observation *Discovering the context.*

Problem / Power / Purity / Praise / Promise

1. When God appears to Abram there are potentially two out comes. What are they and how does God respond to the problem?
2. Vs 1 "I am God Almighty" What is God telling Abram?
3. Considering God is God Almighty "El Shaddai" what does this mean for you in your life and any challenges you face? Consider Jeremiah 32 vs 17.
4. Vs 1 What does God instruct Abram to do? This is also an instruction for us, how do we respond?
5. What does Abram do in these verses? Consider you reaction to the Lord appearing to you?
6. In vs 3 we see the first name change in the bible. There are many wonderful name changes in the Bible, such as when God changed Jacob's name to *Israel* (Genesis 32:28), and when He changed Simon's name to *Peter* (Mark 3:16). God promises a wonderful new name to every overcomer in Him (Revelation 2:17). God gives us many names in faith (saint, righteous, chosen, royal priesthood, sons of God, and so forth), and He knows He will accomplish the meaning of the name in us – even if it seems somewhat crazy. Abram = Exalted Father. Abraham = The father of a multitude. What's the Problem? How do you think Abrams family and friends would react to his name change.
7. Vs 3-8 talk of Abram's name being changed, and covenant between God and Abraham. God tells Abraham, vs 6 for I have made you a father of a multitude of nations. When God speaks it's as if it has already happened! How do you respond to this?

8. Now something brand new is added to the covenant. We've not seen this before in Chapter 12 or in Chapter 15? vs 6. How does this relate to Matt 1 vs 1?

Application *Putting knowledge into practice.*

- The primary actor in this story is not Abraham. Never forget that Bethany Church. The primary actors in the work of this church are not you, it's not me, it's not the Elders, it's not the Pastor. Just look at the verbs. He says in verse 5 I have made you, verse 6 I will make, verse 7, I will establish, verse 8, I will give, verse 8, I will be there. This is all the commitment of God, the initiative of God, the promise of God, the work of the sovereign grace of God.
- Verse eight, *"⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojourning's, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."* God says I'm going to keep my promise to you and I'm going to be with you. I will always be with you. Well, this changes everything, because now what Abraham knows is whatever I face, and whatever my people face, we will never, ever face anything alone. And This is why, and this is how the people of God live in victory, not because we are arrogant or foolish, but because we believe in the power and the name of our God. The God with all the might and the God who will never forsake you.
- What are your needs today? Your needs are real. The needs of your family. The burdens on your heart. But your God is El Shaddai. The God, with all the might, the God with all the power. The title, of the message is. **The hope a name can bring.** I do not mean the name Abram going to Abraham. The name Abram going to Abraham would have no meaning and no value if not for the name of our God, **El Shaddai** who can do all things because nothing is a challenge for God. The most important name in Genesis 17 is the name of God. The most important thing in your life, is the name and the power of God. Trust in Him, my friends. Rest in him. Surrender to him.