



Genesis 17:1-27

NAMES ACCORDING TO GOD

Why did Abram have to wait all this while before the Lord appeared to him again? Why must so many years drag their weary course before Yahweh reveals Himself once more and promises to give him Isaac?... God has reasons for delays. Not until man comes to the end of himself will God put forth His power. Not until man's extremity is reached does God's opportunity arrive. Not until our own powers are 'dead' will God act in grace... God has more than one reason for His delays. Often it is to test the faith of His children, to develop their patience, to bring them to the end of themselves. His delays are in order that when He does act His delivering power may be more plainly evident, that what He does may be more deeply appreciated and that in consequence He may be more illustriously glorified.

—A. W. Pink (1886-1952)

Though Abram and Sarai had their most significant spiritual failure in Genesis 16, God still reaffirms His covenant with them in Genesis 17.

- A Abram was 99 years old (17:1a)
- B Yahweh appears and speaks to Abram (17:1b)
 - C **Yahweh's revelation of His all-sufficient power (17:1c-2)**
 - D Abram falls on his face in humility (17:3)
 - E Yahweh changes Abram's name (17:4-8)
 - F **Yahweh gives sign of the covenant (17:9-14)**
 - F Yahweh changes Sarai's name (17:15-16)
 - D Abraham falls on his face in incredulity (17:17-18)
 - C **Yahweh's revelation of His all-sufficient power (17:19-21)**
 - B Yahweh stops speaking and goes up from Abraham (17:22)
- A Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised (17:23-27)

When God "appeared" to Abram:

1. In Mesopotamia (12:1; Acts 7:2)
2. After arriving in Canaan (12:7).
3. After 10 yrs. in Canaan (15:1).
4. After 24 yrs. in Canaan (17:1).
5. By the oaks of Mamre (18:1).

When God gives you a vision and darkness follows, wait. God will bring the vision He has given you to reality in your life if you will wait on His timing... The waiting time is always the testing time.

—Oswald Chambers

Studies show that delayed gratification is one of the most effective personal traits of successful people.

—Dr. Ilene Cohen

Our faith and perseverance can grow only under the pain of trial.

—Jerry Bridges

El Shaddai. The Hebrew meaning is debated. Possibly, "God of the mountains (*shaddu*)" or "the One Who is enough" (from *sha* and *dai*)

El Shaddai is the name of the all-powerful and all-sufficient God who can do anything and meet any need.

—Warren Wiersbe

GOD IS _____ IN THE DELAY.

- God is El Shaddai—the All-Powerful, All-Sufficient One.

THE NAMES OF GOD
REVEALED IN GENESIS

Elohim. The God of strength (Gen. 1:1). The Powerful Creator.
Yahweh. The God of salvation (Gen. 12:1). I AM. Always present.
El Elyon. The God of supremacy (Gen. 14:22). God Most High.
Adonai. The God of sovereignty (Gen. 15:2). The Sovereign Lord.
El Roi. The God of sympathy (Gen. 16:13). The God Who Sees.
El Shaddai. The God of sufficiency (Gen. 17:1). All-Sufficient One.
El Olam. The God of stability (Gen. 21:33). The Everlasting God.
Yahweh Yireh. The God of sacrifice (Gen 22:14). God the Provider.

- God calls us to walk before Him, with integrity, while we wait.

GOD IS _____ FOR OUR DESIRES.

- Abram and Sarai both longed for a family, a home, and a future.
- God pledged to bless them beyond what they could imagine.

1. You will be the father of many nations.
2. I will make you exceedingly fruitful.
3. I will make nations of you.
4. Kings shall come from you.
5. I will establish My covenant with you and your descendants.
6. I will give this land to you and your descendants.
7. I will be their God.

- God changed their names as a confirmation of His promises.
 - Abram to Abraham
 - Sarai to Sarah

GOD IS _____ IN OUR DOUBTS.

- Abraham has a difficult time believing God’s promise.
- God incorporates Abraham’s doubt into His promise by naming their future son, Isaac, meaning _____.
- God gives a definite time for the fulfillment of His promise.

GOD IS _____ IN OUR DECISIONS.

- God gives Abraham the sign of the covenant—circumcision.

A visible sign that one was set apart to God’s covenant (17:9-14).
A reminder of God’s promise to Abraham—a multitude of descendants, including the Seed who would bless the world (17:1-8; 22:16-18).
A picture of the need for cleansing, the “cutting away” of that which hinders effectiveness or fruitfulness (Lev. 19:23; Ex. 6:12; Jer. 6:10).
A call to the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4).

- Abraham immediately obeys—circumcising himself, Ishmael, and all the males in his household. Abram is 99 years old.

“For I have made you a father of many nations” (v. 5b) expresses a future promise as though already realized. —Kenneth A. Mathews

The eighth day was the safest of all days for circumcision to be performed. On that day, a person’s clotting factor is at 110%, the highest ever, and that is the day God prescribed for the surgical process of circumcision.

—Drs. L. E. Holt & R. McIntosh

Abraham would be annoyed to see the hardly suppressed smile on the ironical faces of his men as he boldly commanded them to call him by a name whose verification seemed so grievously to lag.

—Marcus Dods

Abram = “exalted father”

Abraham = “father of a multitude”

***Sarai** (סָרַי) and **Sarah** (סָרָה) are different forms of the same Hebrew word that basically means “princess” or “queen.” It is likely that Sarai is simply the possessive form of Sarah (i.e. “my princess”).*

—Eliyahu Lizorkin-Eyzenberg

Some feel that Abraham laughed for joy, but 17:18 indicates that it was an expression of doubt as he struggled to match his faith to his circumstances. —Charles Ryrie

This ritual marks something as set apart. Here the organ of procreation is consecrated to God.

—Bruce K. Waltke

Since the Canaanite worship system involved sexual excess, the distinctive sign on the body of the male Hebrew would be a significant reminder not to participate in the rituals of the Canaanites.

—Nelson Study Bible