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Genesis Chapter 17 The Circumcision Covenant

In this week's study into the book of Genesis, we're going to see some massively important things in this very small... and yet very powerful 17th chapter of the book of Genesis. The 17th chapter of the book of Genesis affects every single solitary person on the earth from the days of Abraham, to this present day. We're going to see some very important things in the 17th chapter of the book of Genesis, and so I really want you to have your highlighters handy for this one. This chapter is a pivotal chapter within the book of Genesis, and we're going to find that what we see here in Genesis chapter 17 has a lot to do with what soon may come to fruition in our time.

And so, with that being said, let's go ahead as we always do, and let's read the 17th chapter of the book of Genesis so that we can know the truth about what it says... and just as equally important... what it does not say. Let's turn to Genesis chapter 17:

Gen 17:1 *When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless,*

Gen 17:2 *that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."*

Gen 17:3 *Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him,*

Gen 17:4 *"Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.*

Gen 17:5 *No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.*

Gen 17:6 *I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.*

Gen 17:7 *And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.*

Gen 17:8 *And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."*

Gen 17:9 *And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.*

Gen 17:10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

Gen 17:11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.

Gen 17:12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring,

Gen 17:13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant.

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

Gen 17:15 And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.

Gen 17:16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

Gen 17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

Gen 17:18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!”

Gen 17:19 God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.

Gen 17:20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation.

Gen 17:21 But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year.”

Gen 17:22 When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

Gen 17:23 Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him.

Gen 17:24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:26 That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised.

Gen 17:27 And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

The first thing that we need to understand about Genesis chapter 17 is that we were given a benchmark right off the bat. Abraham is 99 years old when God appears to Abraham. Abram has been walking with God, he has been talking with God, he has been obedient to God, and our Father in Heaven is well pleased with Abram and all that he's done so far. And so, here's Abram at almost 100 years old. And God appears to him and gives him some astonishingly new information concerning the covenant that he had already made with Abram... and yet, an extension of that covenant was also going to be made, and we'll talk a little bit more about that as we move forward.

It's important that we understand that 13 years has passed between the final words of Genesis chapter 16 and the first words of Genesis chapter 17. So here we are, 13 years later, entering into Genesis chapter 17, and we find that a few new things have happened over the past 13 years.

The first thing we know that happened within that 13 years is that Hagar had a son, "Ishmael" and Ishmael is now about 13 years old. We also know that Sarai is still without a child. The womb of Sarai has not produced any children at all whatsoever up to this point. Another thing that we know is that Abraham and his family are still living in Canaan (which is what we know today as modern-day Israel). Something else that we might deduct from the Scripture is that their very likely had been no contact between God and Abram within this 13 year period.

And I want us to think about that for just a moment. Here's Abram who is living in modern-day Israel. And 13 years ago, God promised him that his offspring was going to be more numerous than the stars of heaven. God promised him that all of the land from the great River of Egypt to their great Euphrates River was going to belong to Abram. And so, here Abram is 13 years later, and his wife Sarai still doesn't have a son, and nothing seems to be moving. And so, I just want us to keep that in mind as we move forward.

What's also important for us to notice is that when our Father in Heaven does appear to Abram 13 years later, he adds to the covenant that he already made with Abram. God tells Abram that he will be the father of many nations. In other words, the descendants of Abram are not going to all belong to one nation. And this is important for us to see. It is written that Abram would be the father of several different nations.

What should be clear to us here, is that not all of Abram's descendants are going to be Hebrew. Something else that's important to understand is that not every one of these nations will be of the line of the covenant promise made to Abram. And we're going to see that as we move forward.

Something else important to notice here, is that the Hebrew word for nations here is the Hebrew word "goyim". The Hebrew word "goyim" has changed little bit over time but in general, it means nations or people that are not of Hebrew descent. Today the most common usage of the

Hebrew word “goyim” applies to a person that is a Gentile, which also means someone who is not a Hebrew by blood, or someone who is not a Jew by blood.

So, Abram was well aware of the fact that he would become the father of many nations, not just one nation, and it’s important for us to grasp this as we move forward, because this covenant promise explains more than most of us think that it does, and certainly more than today’s modern-day version of Christianity is aware of.

In verse five our Father in Heaven changes the name of Abram to “Abraham”. So, Abram goes from being called “exalted father”, to, “father of many” or “father of multitudes”. In this new covenant that our Father in Heaven makes with Abraham making him “a father of many nations” is another permanent and unconditional covenant. Abraham could do nothing but be blessed by this new covenant. There was nothing that Abraham had to do to maintain this covenant. It was unconditional, and everlasting, and still continues on to this very day, and will continue on until the end of time. And so, once again, I want us to completely understand the differences between conditional covenant’s, and unconditional covenants. In this very chapter of Genesis chapter 17, we’re going to see both examples. We’re going to see an unconditional covenant... which we have just seen right here in verse four... but we’re also going to be introduced to a “conditional covenant”, which does indeed require Abraham to do something in order to maintain this new conditional covenant.

This next conditional covenant that were going to be talking about is the covenant of circumcision. Although this covenant would indeed be permanent, and perpetual, it was most definitely conditional. It was also bilateral, as opposed to unilateral, which means that Abraham and his descendents had obligations that they had to meet in order to keep this covenant intact.

What we also need to understand about the conditional covenant of circumcision, is that this covenant also depended on each and every individual in Abraham’s line. Each and every individual had a responsibility to be circumcised in order to remain in the covenant promise that was given to their father Abraham. This was a bilateral agreement. Which means that both parties of the agreement had responsibilities. The Jews call this covenant “B’rit milah”... We call it “circumcision.” The Jews to this day have a circumcision ceremony for each male child on the eighth day of his birth called “bris”. And again, I would submit to you my friends that this circumcision ceremony has been kept for literally thousands of years by the Jewish people who fully know, and understand the meaning of this most important conditional covenant.

In verse 12, we see something else that is tectonically important for today’s modern-day Christian to see and to understand. The covenant of circumcision was not only for the flesh and blood descendents of Abraham. Notice what were told in Genesis chapter 17 verse 12:

Gen 17:12 *He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring,*

Here in Genesis chapter 17 verse 12, we're told that any human being that was born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, even a foreigner who was not his offspring, was to be circumcised. This once again is a shadow picture of things to come. I want us to understand that the Gentiles were always being grafted into the house of Israel, even before the house of Israel became the house of Israel. Abraham is the house of Israel. The house of Israel came from the loins of Abraham. And clear back in the beginning, that started with Abraham... we find the Gentiles are already being grafted into the house of Israel.

Many modern-day Christians today have no idea that our Father in Heaven was always grafting Gentiles into the house of Israel from the very beginning of the days of Abraham. Most modern-day professing Christians today believe that no one was saved until our Messiah arrived on the scene. But according to our God breathed Scriptures... our Messiah was simply carrying on what his Father in Heaven had started thousands of years ago.

I want us to fully understand what it took to be grafted into the house of Israel back in the days of Moses. What did it take for a Gentile to be grafted into the house of Israel back in the days of Moses? It took three things. The first thing that you would have to do, was to have faith and believe in the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Let's face it my friends... nobody's going to be circumcised for the fun of it. No one is going to go through the pain of circumcision for no reason. The very first thing that you had to do in order to be grafted into the house of Israel was to have faith. If you did not have faith in the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, then even if you were circumcised... your circumcision would be of no effect. You first had to have faith... in the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. The second thing that you had to do, was to be circumcised, to show God that you have faith in him.

If you were a stranger that was traveling with the Israelites you were known as a Sojourner. You were known as a foreigner. They did not call them Gentiles back in the days of Moses. They called them "sojourners" or "foreigners". And if you were a Sojourner, or a foreigner, and you believed in the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, you could not just follow along and say "I am an Israelite". God required the Sojourner (people that we would call Gentiles today)... to meet certain requirements in order to be grafted into the house of Israel.

The first thing that a Sojourner (or a Gentile) needed to do was to believe in the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. The next thing that a Sojourner (or Gentile) had to do was to become circumcised. And the third thing that a Sojourner (or Gentile) had to do, was to understand that if he loved God truly with all of his heart and with all of the soul... he would then agree to obey the law of God in order to show his love for the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

The Scripture is very clear, that there is only one law. Today's modern-day version of Christianity wants us to believe that there are two laws. One for the Jew, and one for the Gentile. They want us to believe that there are two churches. The house of Israel that God has thrown away, and their newfound, man-made, man concocted new Gentile church, which has

replaced the house of Israel because God was too weak, and senile, and inapt to fulfill his promise to his servant Abraham.

Today's modern-day version of Christianity will often times proclaim that God was unable to keep his unconditional, perpetual covenants with the house of Israel. They will wrongly proclaim that our Father in Heaven just simply copped out of the covenant that he made with the house of Israel because of the disobedience of the house of Israel. My friends I want you to hear this very clearly here today; that is a demonically inspired doctrine that is not found anywhere within the pages of the 66 books of your Bible. It's not found anywhere in the history books, it's not found anywhere within the Scripture, it was never preached by any prophet, or apostle, or priest, or heaven-sent Angel, and was certainly never preached by our Father in Heaven or his only begotten son.

Our Scriptures are very clear. There is to be one law... for both the Jew... and the Gentile. And it has been this way for thousands of years, and continues to be this way even to this very day. I want us to turn to the book of Exodus, chapter 12 verses 48 and 49:

Exo 12:48 If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Exo 12:49 There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you."

The next time someone tries to tell you that there are two laws, or that there are two churches, or that there are two bodies, I want you to look them and I know that you are talking to someone who is highly uneducated and completely ignorant of what our God breathed Scriptures truly tell us. And again, my friends I just want to reiterate the fact that this Scripture is not in a parable. It's not coded. You don't need a James Bond decoder ring, you don't need to be a mathematician, or a physicist, or a rocket scientist to understand this very simplistic Scripture. There shall be one law for the native, and for the Gentile who travels with you. Is that hard to understand? Because I think not. And those who preach against it, need to be held accountable. And just so that we can have a second witness, I'd like us to turn to numbers chapter 15 versus 15 and 16:

Num 15:15 For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before the LORD.

Num 15:16 One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you."

There has always been one law and one rule that has always applied to both Jew and Gentile. There have never been two different laws. There have never been two different rules. There

have never been two different houses. There have never been two different churches. And according to our God breathed Scriptures... there never will be. Galatians chapter 3 versus 27 through 29:

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Many Christians today will tell you that they don't have to be circumcised anymore because the law has been changed. Some say that the law has been nailed to the cross and that we are once saved always saved. Others say that not all of the law has been nailed to the cross... but only some parts of it. Others will tell you that the moral part of the law still stands, but the ritual and physical part of the law has all died and passed away. And yet none of these groups of poor lost souls can point directly to their God breathed Scriptures and parse out the laws that God changed his mind about, versus the laws that he still wants us to keep.

The only laws that our Messiah came to complete, is the ritual law of animal sacrifice for the atonement of sin. That's the only law that our Messiah came to complete so that we don't have to perform any longer today. Our Messiah was indeed our Passover Lamb. He was our atonement for sin. He died once... for all. To continue slaughtering animals for the atonement of sin is blasphemous. It is something that men do in direct opposition to the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob and his only begotten Son.

But the Bible says nothing about the rest of God's law being nailed to the cross. Our God breathed the Scriptures tell us that the debt for breaking the law that we owe to God, was nailed to the cross. It says nothing about the law of God ever being nailed to the cross, and those who say that it does, are simply willfully ignorant of what is written between the pages of their own God breathed Scriptures.

Many times, people will ask me, whether or not circumcision is still for the Christian. And my answer to that question is an unequivocal and resounding "yes". Circumcision is indeed still required for anyone who has picked up their cross and followed our Messiah. We are to do as he did. We are to walk as he walked. He was a Jew. All Jews were circumcised when they were eight years old, even in our Messiah's time. Not to mention the fact that our own Messiah tells us in his own red-letter words, that he did not come to abolish the law or the prophets. But that he came to do them, and to show us that we could also do them. He tells us in Matthew chapter 5 verse 18 that heaven and earth would pass away before the dotting of an i or the crossing of a t would pass away from his Father's law. And we know that heaven and earth does not pass away until clear at the back of the book in Revelation chapter 21 verse one.

Our ignorant, and unstudied pew warming brothers and sisters will often times tell us that Paul

preached against circumcision... never understanding that in acts chapter 16 verse three, Paul himself circumcised Timothy, while delivering a letter to the assemblies from the apostle James who was the head of the Jerusalem Council... notifying the assemblies to start the new converts out by keeping four easy to keep laws to start out with... and then, allowing them to hear the word of Moses read in the synagogues every Sabbath. James was fully aware that no one was going to come into the faith and immediately be circumcised. The circumcision group who were largely a group of Pharisees... were trying to force the new converts to be circumcised immediately because they were teaching the new converts that circumcision is what saved them.

Circumcision does not save anybody any more than baptism saves anybody. If you get circumcised without faith in the only begotten son of God, then your circumcision is of no effect. Just like if you get baptized because someone tells you to be baptized without faith in the only begotten son of God... your baptism is of no effect. Because you did not do it out of the love of God. First John 5:3 tells us very clearly what the definition of the love of God is. First John 5:3 tells us very clearly that the love of God is that we keep his commandments, and that his commandments are not a burden to us.

Furthermore... we know full well that the apostle Paul always lived in observance of the law because James who was the brother of our Messiah and the head of the Jerusalem Council tells us that Paul always lived in observance of the law in acts chapter 21 verse 24. And we know that Paul was never preaching against the law of God because he tells us that he was never preaching against the law of God in Romans chapter 3 verse 31, and in Romans chapter 7 verse 12, and in Romans chapter 2 verse 13, and in Romans chapter 6 versus one and two, and in Romans chapter 8 verses seven and eight, and all throughout his writings.

And I just want to add that if you would like more information on whether or not circumcision is required for a modern-day Christian... you can visit us at our website at HolyImpactMinistries.com. At that point in time all you have to do is navigate to our H.I.M. teachings tab, and then select circumcision in the navigation menu, and you'll find several different teachings concerning what the Scriptures tell us about circumcision and a modern-day Christian. And we'll take you by the hand through those studies and walk you through both the Old and the New Testaments, to that you can know and understand what the Scripture does and does not say concerning circumcision.

What we need to understand is the true meaning of circumcision. Circumcision is like a wedding ring that signifies our love for our Father in Heaven. Every male child that would pass through a believing male into a believing female has to pass through that ring of circumcision. And I want you to think about that for just a moment. How is a child conceived? This seed comes from the man. That seed is passed through the man, through the ring of circumcision, into the woman who has the eggs. Circumcision is the sign of the covenant between God and man. The seed of a circumcised man passes through that covenant ring into the believing woman, and therefore the children are holy.

Circumcision meant something to our Father in the beginning... and circumcision means something to our Father today. He does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. I want us to turn back and take a look at Genesis chapter 17 versus 13 and 14:

*Gen 17:13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your **flesh an everlasting covenant.***

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

I want us to notice that in Genesis chapter 17 verse 13, we are told that the covenant of circumcision shall be in our flesh, an everlasting covenant. The English word “everlasting” is the Hebrew word “Olam” which means “forever”, or “always”, and everlasting, indefinite or never ending future, “eternity”.

Now my friends, let me just say this; I don’t know about you, but when my Father says that something is forever... and then some man comes along and tells me that it’s not forever... somebody’s lying. Either God is a liar... or man is the liar. And my Scriptures tell me very clearly and I quote “let God be true, and every man a liar.”

The Scripture is very clear. If a man refuses circumcision, then he is no longer part of the house of Israel and can no longer claim any right to any of God’s promises. Now I do want to mention something that is very, very important. Circumcision by itself does not save us. And I want to be very clear about that biblical fact. Circumcision does not save you any more than baptism saves you.

There was a big argument about circumcision in the early church, and we can see this in Acts chapter 15. The whole chapter of Acts chapter 15 is all about this argument over circumcision. The circumcision group was trying to force the new converts to be circumcised because they were telling them that circumcision is what saved them. Circumcision does not save, anyone. Just like baptism does not save anyone. But both are required by those who truly love, and follow our Messiah.

I want us to understand what the judgment was, of James who was the head of the Jerusalem Council in Jerusalem concerning circumcision. In the beginning of Acts chapter 15 the apostle Paul goes to James and the Elders at Jerusalem to settle this argument about circumcision. And James makes a decree concerning circumcision that is sent to all of the assemblies, so that they will know how to properly handle this argument about whether or not the circumcision group can force a new convert to be circumcised or not. And I want us to listen to James decree, and his judgment that was sent to all of the assemblies. We can find that in the book of Acts chapter 15 versus 19 through 21:

Act 15:19 Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles

who turn to God,

Act 15:20 but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

Act 15:21 For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

Now the problem with today's modern-day version of Christianity, is that they will only present versus 19 and 20. I have heard these misguided pastors, time and time again, trying to convince people that they don't have to be circumcised by only presenting versus 19 and 20. The first thing that I want us to understand about versus 19 and 20 is that James gives these new converts four things to do that come directly from the law. He tells them to abstain from things polluted by idols. He tells them to abstain from sexual immorality. He tells them to abstain from meat that has been strangled. And to abstain from blood. In other words, they were not to eat any meat of any animal that has been strangled, and they are not to drink any blood, which was a common pagan ritual for those who served other gods in those days.

So, James gives them these four very easy things to do that come directly from the law. Now if the law had been done away with... these new converts wouldn't have to worry about any of these four things. But the truth is, that the law was never done away with, and James was fully aware of that fact. Today's modern-day version of Christianity and their so-called "early church fathers will never read verse 21 when presenting their argument against circumcision.

What does James say in verse 21? He says and I quote, "*For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.*" In other words... James gives the new converts four easy things to do directly from the law, that has not been done away with... and then he says, that these new converts would hear the law of Moses being read in every city and in every synagogue on every Sabbath. Which meant... that they would hear the law concerning circumcision and would be allotted the time to understand what circumcision was all about.

James was smart enough to know that no one is going to get circumcised without even knowing why they're getting circumcised. Now how do we know that we are correct in our understanding? Well, first of all, we've already read in Genesis chapter 17 verse 13... that God says that circumcision is an everlasting covenant forever. And if that were not enough... (And unfortunately for some people it's not)... all we have to do, is to look at the beginning of the very next chapter of acts 16 verses one through four, and we see Paul and Timothy who are delivering a letter concerning James decree about circumcision to the assemblies... and Paul circumcises Timothy personally.

Now my friends I ask you plainly. Why in the world would Paul circumcised Timothy, while delivering a letter to the churches stating that the new converts were no longer required to be circumcised? That makes absolutely no sense at all whatsoever. Once again, my friends someone's lying here. Is God a liar, or his man the liar? Because it's up to us to answer that

question.

Now some of our lost brothers and sisters will say that Paul circumcised Timothy because we're told in Acts chapter 16 verse one, that Timothy was the son of a Jewish woman. But his father was a Gentile. And so, some of our lost brothers and sisters will claim that that's why Paul circumcised Timothy. Because his mother was a Jew. But in the book of Galatians Paul tells us very clearly that for those of us to be baptized in the Messiah, there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, there is not even a male and a female, for all of us are one in the Messiah. And that we are all Abraham's offspring. And that we are all heirs according to the promise. And yet, they will try to proclaim that only the Jews have to be circumcised. They will try to tell us that there are two different laws one for the Gentile, and one for the Jew. But, what did we just get done reading in Exodus chapter 12 verses 48 and 49?

Exo 12:48 If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.

Exo 12:49 There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you."

Once again my friends... someone here is a liar. And it's up to us to make a decision between whether or not God is the liar, or whether man is the liar. Because our Messiah said that not the crossing of a T or the dotting of an I of his Father's law would pass until heaven and earth pass away and we know that that doesn't happen until the end of the age in Revelation chapter 21.

Something else very important for us to understand in Genesis chapter 17 verse eight, is that God tells Abraham that he is once again going to give him all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. What we need to understand is there is a difference between possession and occupation. When we purchase a house from the bank, the house still belongs to the bank. It possesses the house, but it does not occupy the house. We don't really own the house until we pay off the mortgage.

From the very moment that God gave Abraham that land... that land has belonged to Abraham and his descendents. But the time has not yet come for us to possess it. The land belongs to us right now as we speak. But we cannot occupy that land until our Heavenly Father calls us all back to it. And for those of you who are wondering when that's going to be... I would invite you to listen to the radio program that we produced just this past Monday evening on May 7th of this year 2018. And you can listen to that study by going to our website at HolyImpactMinistries.com and then navigating to our "House of David Radio Program" page. All you have to do at that point is to scroll down to the show entitled "The Greater Exodus". And this will give you much more information concerning when it is, that we will actually occupy the land that has been given to us clear back in Genesis chapter 16.

Some people will try to proclaim that Israel lost ownership of the land when God divorced the

northern kingdom and sent the southern kingdom of Judah into bondage under Babylon. Or they'll try to proclaim that Israel lost ownership of the land when the Romans gained control and destroyed the temple in 70 A.D. But none of this is found anywhere within the pages of our God breathed Scriptures. Ownership of that land still remains with the house of Israel, and we can see that all throughout our Scriptures from the book of Genesis all the way to the book of Revelation. We see it in the Old Testament, and we see it again in the New Testament and we see it again in the writings of the apostle Paul and all throughout our God breathed Scripture.

Some people will say that Israel lost possession of the land 1900 years ago, so they don't have a right to it anymore. Simply put... wrong! The house of Israel are the only ones that have a right to that land, because despite not occupying it at times, the house of Israel has never stopped owning it. We must remember that our Father in Heaven told us that it would be an everlasting covenant. So once again we have a decision to make. Someone is lying. His God lying, or is man lying? It is written once again, "let God be true, and every man a liar."

Now I want to change gears here for just a moment and I want to talk about Isaac. God not only changes the name of Abram to Abraham... But he also changes the name of Sarai to Sarah. And Sarah the wife of Abraham, was unable to bear children. She had tried to have children her whole life. And here's Sarah 90 years old... and she has never had any children. At this point in time Abraham is absolutely sure that Sarah cannot have children.

At this point in time, we see in verse 17, that Abraham fell on his face and began to laugh when God once again told him that his wife Sarai was going to bear him a son. And he says to himself "shall a child be born to a man who is 100 years old? Shall Sarah who is 90 years old, bear a child?". And after Abraham gets done laughing, he says to God, "oh that Ishmael might live before you."

Now we have to remember that Ishmael is now 13 years old. Abraham loves Ishmael. Ishmael has been Abraham's son for the last 13 years. Can you imagine the bond that this father and son have? And so, because Abraham doubts the power of God to give his wife Sarai child... he tries to make it easy for God, by telling God to use Ishmael who's already here. But God says... "No." And God goes right back to his promise and tells Abraham that Sarah his wife is going to bear him a son and that Abraham is to call this son "Isaac", which means laughter... because both Abraham and Sarah both laughed at the power of God.

Now it's important to understand that God empathetically rejected Ishmael as the one who would carry on the line of the covenant promise that God made to Abraham. God said... that it would be Isaac who would be the one to carry out the covenant promise.

Today, Muslims claim that the Scriptures have been modified to favor Isaac as the favored son, when it should have been Ishmael. You see Isaac would be in the direct lineage of our Messiah, while Ishmael would be in the direct lineage of what we know today as the Arabs. What we must understand is that Islam is not a race of people; it is a religion. Islam is a religion that the

Arabs adopted some six centuries after the death burial and resurrection of our Messiah. But you see the Muslims call Ishmael and Abraham the father of Islam.

Now we know in verse 20 that God promises to bless Ishmael. And I want us to understand that Ishmael would also father 12 princes (or 12 tribes), just like Isaac would father 12 princes (or 12 tribes). And I just want us to remember that Abraham is the true father of the Arabs, just as he is the true father of Israel but that Shem, is the forefather of both Arabs and Jews. Both of these people groups are Semites. And so that's important to remember.

Here's a question for you; has Ishmael been blessed? Not only have the Arabs exploded in population, but look in our time how they have been blessed. About half of the earth's oil reserves have made the Arabs among the wealthiest people in the world. The only problem that the Arabs have, is that only the elite benefit from most of the wealth. And so, it's important to keep these things in mind.

In the end we see that Abraham himself was 99 years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. His son Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house, and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

And before we go, I just want to re-emphasize the importance of a slave back in Abraham's time. Back in Abraham's time, slaves were people that were poor and destitute and could not support themselves. When a person was purchased as a slave... they literally became part of the family. And this is why Abraham was so worried about not having a son. If we will remember correctly back in Genesis chapter 15 verse two, Abraham was worried that a slave of his by the name of Eliezer of Damascus would be his only heir. If a man had no son when he died, then his belongings and all that he owned went to the first male slave that lived under his roof. And so, slavery back then was nothing like we think of it in our Western mindset.

In fact, back in those days, if you were poor and destitute and had no money, you could offer yourself up as a slave until you can get on your feet. You could agree to be a slave for someone for a number of years until you gained enough to be out on your own. Today we call that employment. But back then, they called it slavery. And you were bound to work for that person until such a time as that person died, or you died, or your agreement with that person was up. And we see instances of that all throughout the Scripture, and we we'll see even more of this kind of servitude as we move on to our Fathers Torah.

But I just want us to understand some of the differences between cultures and times and some things that have changed between our time and Abraham's time.

With all that being said... we are now out of Genesis chapter 17 and will be moving into Genesis chapter 18 next Wednesday evening at 7 PM Eastern standard time.