

## Genesis Lesson 35 Handout

### Genesis 17

**1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old,**

### Genesis 17 (NIV84)

**1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old,**

**the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty;**

Almighty.

Most  
powerful

Skip Hezig - the term El Shaddai is found more in the book of Job than any other book in the Bible. It's around this time frame; same era, patriarchal era. El Shaddai, it is thought to be an old Acadian word that means 'mountain' or 'breast'.

The idea is that some of the ancients would, when they would see hills in the distance, it was as if the earth was flexing its muscle.

It represented a buff muscle coming up out of the earth.

The divinely  
buff One. The  
One who can do  
anything that  
you can't do. He  
is strong, you  
are weak. He is  
God, you are  
not.

**Gen. 17:1....walk before me and be blameless.**

**2 I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."**

**3 Abram fell facedown, and God said to him,  
4 "As for me, this is my covenant with you: you will be the father of many nations.**

**Abram  
meant  
"exalted  
father"**

**5 No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham,**

**for I have made you a father of many nations.**

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**6 I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.**

**7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.**

**8 The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."**

**9 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come.**

**10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.**

**11 "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.**

**Skip Heitzig: Circumcision was not something invented here. Understand that circumcision had been, for generations, practiced by nations all around that part of the world in the Middle East. The ancient sixth dynasty of Egypt practiced circumcision. Even into the Roman Empire, the priests of Rome and their offspring were circumcised. So here you have God taking a social practice and turning it into something with spiritual meaning.**

**It's a  
physical  
sign of  
something  
spiritual**

**Baptism is an  
outward sign of a  
new inward  
reality. Jesus paid  
for our sin. The  
Holy Spirit now  
dwells in us.**

**12 For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring.**

**13 Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.**

**14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”**

**If Abraham's  
descendants  
would be  
Covenant  
people they  
would have to  
bear the  
Covenant mark.**

**15 God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah.**

**16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."**

**17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"**

**18 And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"**

**19 Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.**

**20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.**

**21 But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year."**

**When God  
wants to do  
something  
new - don't  
keep looking  
back.**

*IT'S HARD TO  
MOVE INTO  
SOMETHING  
NEW WHEN  
YOU HAVE  
ALWAYS DONE  
THINGS THE  
SAME WAY IN  
THE PAST.*

**22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.**

**23 On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him.**

**24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised,**

**25 and his son Ishmael was thirteen;**

**26 Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that same day.**

**27 And every male in Abraham's household, including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.**

**Paul is discussing the role of the Old Testament Law as it relates to Christianity. He argues that Jewish circumcision is only an outward sign of being set apart to God.**

**However, if the heart is sinful, then physical circumcision is of no avail. A circumcised body and a sinful heart are at odds with each other. Rather than focus on external rites, Paul focuses on the condition of the heart.**

**Using circumcision as a metaphor, he says that only the Holy Spirit can purify a heart and set us apart to God.**

**Ultimately, circumcision cannot make a person right with God; the Law is not enough. A person's heart must change.**

**Paul calls this change "circumcision of the heart."**

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**Deuteronomy 30:6 (NIV84)**

**6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.**

**Romans 2:28–29 (NLT)**

**28 For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision.**

**29 No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.**

**THINK OF  
"CIRCUMCISION OF  
THE HEART"  
AS THE HOLY SPIRIT  
CUTTING OUT THE  
STUFF IN OUR LIFE  
THAT SHOULDN'T BE  
THERE.**

**Galatians 5:16–26 (NLT)**

**16 So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves.**

**17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.**

**19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures,**

**20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division,**

**21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.**

**22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

**23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!**

**25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.**

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