

“Established” - Genesis 17:1-10, 15-19

Ask - “Have you ever known someone who had their name changed? Share your story.”

Background - God promised Abram that he’d have a biological son of his own who would become the heir of the covenant between them. Unfortunately, Abram grew tired of waiting for God’s promise to be fulfilled and conceived a child through his wife’s maidservant Hagar. Though the baby that was born (Ishmael) was unique and precious, he was not the son that God had promised.

“A New Name” - Genesis 17:1-5

(v1-2) How old was Abram when the LORD appeared to him? What all did the LORD say that He was going to do? What did He command Abram to do?

(v3-4) How did Abram respond to the LORD’s speaking? What else did the LORD promise would happen?

(v5) What did the LORD do to Abram in this verse? What do the names Abram and Abraham mean? Discuss. (*Research in advance*)

WHEN ABRAM WAS NINETY-NINE YEARS OLD, THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM, REITERATED HIS COVENANT PROMISES, AND THEN CHANGED HIS NAME TO ABRAHAM.

“A New Sign” - Genesis 17:6-10

(v6) What did God promise regarding the proliferation and growth of Abraham’s descendants? Can you name any nations and/or kings that trace back to him?

(v7-8) How long did God covenant to be God of Abraham’s descendants? How long did He promise them possession of the land of Canaan? Discuss the implications of this as it relates to current events.

(v9-10) What sign did God establish for this covenant? How long was this practice to continue?

GOD ESTABLISHED CIRCUMCISION AS THE SIGN OF HIS COVENANT. ABRAHAM AND ALL HIS MALE DESCENDANTS IN EACH GENERATION WERE TO BE CIRCUMCISED.

“Another New Name” - Genesis 17:15-19

(v15-16) What did God say regarding Sarai? What do the names Sarai and Sarah mean? Discuss. (*Research in advance*) How was His promise to Sarah

like that He'd made to Abraham?

(v17) How did Abraham respond to the LORD this time? Why did he have doubts?

(v18-19) What did Abraham request? Did God accept his request? What did the Lord promise? What do the names Ishmael and Isaac mean? Discuss.
(*Research in advance.*)

GOD ALSO CHANGED SARAI'S NAME TO SARAH AND PROMISED THAT SHE WOULD GIVE BIRTH TO THE PROMISED SON, ISAAC.

Application - Abram and Sarai became Abraham and Sarah. God changed their names as a way of declaring them to be the father and mother of many nations. He promised to establish His covenant with Abraham through their promised son Isaac. He even set forth a sign of this covenant - the circumcision of all males born of Abraham's lineage. Devout Jews still follow this practice today in obedience to this religious command from God. What additional insights does the New Testament reveal about circumcision (Romans 2:25-29)?