

The God Who Marks His Covenant People

Genesis 17:1-27

Student Devotion

Day 1: Walk Before Me

“I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1, ESV)

Abraham had followed God for decades by the time this moment came. He had trusted God enough to leave his home, and he had seen God work in powerful ways. But the promised son still had not come. At ninety-nine years old, the waiting had gone longer than most people would have expected. That’s when God appeared and said, “I am God Almighty.” The name El Shaddai means that He has more than enough power to keep His promise. Age and barrenness do not limit Him.

Then God called Abraham to walk before Him and live with integrity. This was not a command to be perfect. It was a call to walk in honesty and faithfulness, with nothing hidden. God wanted Abraham to live with a clear awareness of His presence and to let that shape everything he did.

Obedience matters. The life of faith is not just about receiving promises. It is about walking in a way that reflects the character of the One who made the promise. Every step taken in faith becomes part of the journey where trust deepens and God’s presence becomes more real.

Think About It:

Where in your life is God inviting you to walk with more intentional trust?

Do This:

Start your day by quietly acknowledging God’s presence. Invite Him to shape your steps as you go.

Day 2: Who Gets to Name You?

“No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham.”
(Genesis 17:5, ESV)

Names in Scripture carry weight. They point to identity, purpose, and future. When God renamed Abram, He wasn't just giving him a new title. He was marking him with a new direction. Abram meant "exalted father." Abraham means "father of a multitude." The new name spoke to a promise that had not yet been fulfilled.

God was naming him based on what He planned to do, not what Abraham could see. That's how God works. He speaks to who we are in His plan, not just to who we are in our present season.

The world offers a lot of names. People can call you successful, broken, talented, lazy, valuable, overlooked. Sometimes those names settle into our minds and begin to shape how we see ourselves. God's voice cuts through all of that. He says, "You are mine. You are chosen. You are being shaped for something that matters." Abraham had to learn that his identity was secure in what God said, not in what his circumstances showed.

Think About It:

What names or labels have you believed about yourself that don't reflect what God says?

Do This:

Write down one truth from Scripture that speaks directly to your identity in Christ. Let that truth guide your mindset today.

Day 3: A Sign You Can Feel

“You shall be circumcised... it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.”
(Genesis 17:11, ESV)

God had already made His covenant with Abraham. His word was certain. But now He gave Abraham a sign to carry in his body as a reminder of the promise. Circumcision would set Abraham's family apart from the world around them. It was a physical mark of a spiritual reality. It pointed to a deeper truth: these people belonged to God.

Throughout the Bible, God gives His people signs that help them remember His promises. He gave Noah the rainbow. He gave Israel the Passover. Jesus gave the church baptism

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and the Lord's Supper. These signs do not create the relationship. They remind us of it. They help anchor our hearts when doubts creep in.

For a believer, baptism marks that we have died with Christ and been raised to new life. The Lord's Supper helps us remember the sacrifice that purchased our forgiveness. These are not just traditions. They are God-given reminders of who we are and whose we are.

Think About It:

How do you remember what God has done in your life when the road feels uncertain?

Do This:

If you've been baptized, take a few minutes to reflect on that step of faith. If not, ask someone you trust what it means and why it matters.

Day 4: Trusting God's Timing

***"I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her."* (Genesis 17:16, ESV)**

Abraham and Sarah had tried to make the promise happen through Hagar. That decision brought tension and pain. But God did not change His mind. His plan had always been to give Abraham and Sarah a son together. And now, after decades of silence, God spoke clearly. Sarah would give birth. The promised child would come through her, even though she was far past childbearing age.

This is where faith gets tested. Abraham had to lay down his assumptions and trust what God had said. God did not go with the plan that seemed most efficient. He stayed with the plan that showed His power. The child would be named Isaac, which means "he laughs." There is joy in seeing God do what seemed impossible.

Faith grows when we stop measuring God's faithfulness by how much progress we can see. Sometimes God waits until the situation seems completely closed. Then He steps in and brings life where there was only loss. His timing always serves His purpose, even when it stretches us.

Think About It:

Where are you tempted to run ahead of God rather than wait on Him?

Do This:

Ask God to help you trust His pace. Release the need to control outcomes and rest in His faithfulness.

Day 5: Obedience That Follows Faith

“That very day Abraham... circumcised the flesh of their foreskins.” (Genesis 17:26, ESV)

When God finished speaking, Abraham got up and acted. He didn't wait a week. He didn't delay the hard parts. He didn't ask for more signs or guarantees. He followed through that very day. His faith had found its expression in obedience.

This is how Scripture consistently describes people of faith. Noah built the ark. Moses went back to Egypt. Joshua marched around Jericho. Mary said yes to the angel's message. When God speaks, the ones who trust Him respond.

Obedience will often ask for something costly. Sometimes it means standing out. Sometimes it means giving something up. Sometimes it means adjusting your direction when pride wants to keep you comfortable. Abraham's obedience shaped the identity of his household. Your obedience can do the same. It sets the direction. It declares trust. It keeps your feet on the path of God's promise.

Think About It:

What has God already asked you to do that you've been putting off?

Do This:

Take one clear step today. Obedience does not have to be dramatic to be real. Just follow where He's already spoken.

Conclusion: Marked for His Purpose

God made a covenant with Abraham, and then He gave him a mark to remember it. He gave him a new name. He gave Sarah a new name too. He made it clear that the promise would come in His way, in His time, and through His power.

God still marks His people. Not with physical signs, but with spiritual ones. He places His Spirit within us. He calls us to remember His grace through baptism and communion. He speaks identity over us through His word. And He still invites us to walk before Him with faith that takes the next step.

Abraham's story reminds us that faith is not a feeling. It is a life. It is a steady walk in response to a faithful God. When the world feels unsure, and the road stretches longer

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than expected, we can return to what God has said. We can remember who we are. We can walk in obedience.

And when we do, we carry the mark of those who belong to the God who keeps His covenant. Always.