



THE BOOK OF  
**GENESIS**

# *HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?*

## *GENESIS 17*

First, a big God makes an *everlasting covenant*.

- It would have been easy to forget God's covenant promise made 13 years earlier.
- On four earlier occasions, God had spoken His covenant to Abram. **Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:5-21**
- God uses a new name for Himself: God Almighty/*EL SHADDAI*—and I will perform my covenant.

*WHAT'S IN A NAME ANYWAY?*

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Names might record something significant about one's birth or about some life-changing experience, or even be prophetic as we will see in **Gen. 29:31-30:24**.

*Rueben—A Son, Simeon—He Heard,  
Levi—Attached, Judah—Praise*

A son he heard and attached praise . . . pointing to The Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

Jacob-Israel (**Gen. 32**), Simon-Peter (**John 1**), Son (**Matt. 1**).

# ***FOUR POWERFUL NAME CHANGES***

- 1. First, God Almighty/EL SHADDAI **Gen. 17:1-2****
- 2. The second name, ABRAHAM **Gen. 17:3-14, 23-27****
  - Which came with the promise of:
    - The covenant land—the promised land, the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
    - The covenant sign—circumcision
- 3. The third new name, SARAH **Gen. 17:15-17****

#### 4. The fourth name, ISAAC **Gen. 17:18-22**

- The first baby in the Bible who was named before birth was Ishmael (**16:11**) and the second was Isaac.
- As we shall see when we study **Genesis 21**, these two boys represent the two different births that all believers experience:
  - 1) Ishmael, our first birth after the flesh.
  - 2) Isaac, our second birth through the Spirit.

See **John 3:1-8** and **Gal. 4:21-31**, especially **v. 28-29**.

Ishmael did not get a new name because he represents the flesh and the flesh cannot be changed . . . it is always the flesh. **John 3:6; Rom. 7:18; John 6:63**

- The old nature, our flesh, can be disciplined, subdued, and even to a major extent, controlled; but it cannot be completely changed.
- **How big is your God?** He is El Shaddai/Almighty King of heaven and earth.
- So powerful He can overcome and overrule any detour, any Ishmael you will ever have!



THE PASTOR