

**WORD:**

Genesis 17:1-10 - “1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. 2 Then I will make 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. 5 No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. 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 now reside as a foreigner, 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.” (NIV)

**THE GOD ALMIGHTY**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and spoke. “I am God Almighty”. In Hebrew, it means, “I am El Shaddai” - the All-Sufficient One. He is omnipotent or all-powerful, the God who is more than enough, He is the God of the Mountain who created all things, makes life out of nothing, multiplies it, is faithful to keep His promises, provides all that we need, and even more in abundance, the source of all good things, and the only one that can answer all prayers. He is the God of the impossible. Wow! This is the way God introduces Himself to Abram. But why did God remind Abram about who He is? Or to most of us, why is it necessary for us to get this kind of reminder? Let us rewind a little bit. When Abram was around 75 years old, the Lord first appeared to him and gave him a promise.

Genesis 12:2 - “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.” (NIV)

How many of us would remember the excitement that we have when we first heard about the promise of God for us? We are on fire for God. Abram had a similar response to God. When God instructed him to go to another land, he went. However, when time passed by, and he could not see the fulfillment of the promise, he began to doubt and worry.

Sometimes, we have a similar response. When the fulfillment of the promise of God does not fall within our time frame, we tend to doubt. We tend to question whether He is still able and sufficient. Is He still the omnipotent, all-powerful God that we knew before? Is He El Shaddai? And this is somehow what happened to Abram. Fast forward, to right after his first encounter with God, Abram started to question Him. And we all know what happened if you are following our Yahweh series. He took matters into his hands and got his servant Hagar pregnant with the urging of his wife Sarai.

Maybe, this was Abram’s prayer to God. “In Chapter 12, you told me that you would make me a great nation. We are now in chapter 15, and God, I am still childless. Can you make me into a great nation? Can you fulfill your promise to me? You told me, God, that my household will overflow with your blessings. Can you do it?”

We start to become impatient, and we begin to give some recommendations to God. We begin to provide him with suggestions and options. “Let me give you some strategy, God.” “Let me tell you what we should do.” It sounds funny, right? But this is what we do whenever we get impatient with God.

In our time, it will sound like this. “I know God that you said you would bless me, but I don’t have a proper job or a decent salary up to now. Here is my suggestion: Let the Visa or Mastercard, or the loan company or the Bumbay handle this.” We tend to tell God how He can fulfill His promise in our life. But God said. “This is not my solution. You have to trust me. Whatever you are worried about right now, I am telling you what I told Abram.” Genesis 15:1 - “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.” (NIV)

For some of us, I think this is the exact message that you and I need to hear today. El Shaddai said: No matter what situation you are in right now, no matter how complicated or how difficult the circumstance you are in right now, God is telling you: “Do not be afraid.”

Just like Abram, you might be losing your trust right now, but the God Almighty said – “Do not be afraid.” He is our shield, our very great reward. How many of us would say that if El Shaddai told us not to be afraid, then there is no reason for us to be scared, right?

Again, sometimes it is easy to declare it in the church setting, but it is challenging when you are in a difficult situation. Even Abram had his share of the story. Just after one chapter, he shifted from giving God advice to helping God make the promise come true. Of course, the idea came from his wife, but he agreed with it.

Have you ever tried to help God in fulfilling His promise in your life? Let’s say in the aspect of your relationship. You know that this is not God’s will to pursue that relationship, but somehow, you think God is not doing anything in that aspect of your life, so you decided to help Him. How about in the aspect of your study or your career? Do you help God so that you can achieve your dreams faster? In your business, do you help God to make it thrive?

And again, I am not saying this to condemn anyone. I am also not saying that we should not do anything. Our message is a reminder, in the same way that Abram was reminded about who God is. After giving God advice and even helping Him, all have resulted in problems. So, God came to him and reminded him about who He is. Genesis 17:1 - “The Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty”.

Our God is the God Almighty. The creator of heaven and earth. The omnipotent God. The all-sufficient one. God was the El Shaddai in the past, He is the El Shaddai today, and He will be the El Shaddai in the future. His name carries a promise. It brings a covenant. The One who gave a covenant is both able and willing. And we can trust Him even if it is not happening according to our time frame. God will fulfill His promise at His perfect timing.

**THE GOD WHO IS ALL-SUFFICIENT**

Abram’s name was changed to Abraham and God called on Abraham to obey the covenant. As Abraham obeyed God, God fulfilled His part of the covenant and blessed Abraham with a son, and now the name Abraham means “Father of many nations”. I want you to notice something: God spoke to Abraham in the past tense, “for I have made you a father of many nations.” God told Abram when He changed his name to Abraham that He spoke it as if it were already done: Abraham was told this even before Isaac was conceived. I believe for Abraham, God’s covenant was confirmed in his heart when God said, “I have made you…” It’s as if it was already fulfilled.

God’s promises will be fulfilled on time; God is never late; God’s timing may not be your timing, but it is always perfect. El Shaddai will sustain and nourish your spirit in times of a seemingly impossible situations. You are asking for healing? Do not stop praying! El Shaddai is the only one who is all-sufficient; He is the only one who is Almighty; God is the only one who is able to do all that He says He will do.

Friends, God doesn’t need anything or anyone in order to accomplish or fulfill His plan. He knew, way in advance, how and when He was going to do it. All Abraham and Sara needed to do were to believe and wait upon the LORD. To wait on the Lord and to trust and obey are the hardest things you can do.

El Shaddai is God Almighty. Psalm 91:1 - “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.” (ESV)

Are you resting in the shadow of God Almighty? Are you trusting Him with your troubles and trials? Are you trusting El Shaddai with your weaknesses and your seemingly impossible situations? Are you abiding in God?

Folks, What has God promised you? Eternal life with Him in glory? Joy unspeakable? A new body? Your name written in the Lamb’s book of life? My question is: Are you continuing to trust and abide in Christ while walking in faith and victory?

Maybe, you are believing in God regarding the promise of a certain family member’s salvation, but it has been years. Keep believing. Maybe you are believing in God for the healing of a loved one who is sick. Hold on to the promise of healing or some other promise you have had in your heart for years.

When God Almighty steps in, miracles happen. No matter what your situation is, God Almighty is able and willing. And He is always sufficient to meet your needs. Even if you are in the middle of a burning furnace or a lion’s den, He can rescue you. He can part the sea so you can go to safety. God can use a small stone so you can defeat a giant problem in your life. He can breathe life into your dead situation, and it will come to life.

**LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION:**

1) In what aspect of your life is it challenging for you to trust that God is all-sufficient to meet your needs?

2) When you are experiencing hard times, is it easy or difficult for you to believe in God’s promises of help? Or are you more apt to doubt God’s ability or his willingness to fulfill his promises? Why do you think that you sometimes don’t receive what God has promised?

3) Do you think it is important to remember and be reminded of God’s promises? Why or why not? How has God reminded you of His promises?