Genesis

## **To Hear With Your Own Ears (17:15-18:15)**

*From a study of Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Paul Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary of the Bible, and the Lutheran Study Bible.*

## **A Quick Review (17:1-14)**

* A name change
  + Abram
    - Means “lofty father”
  + Abraham
    - Hence it is made up of the three words אָב, “father,” רָם “lofty,” and הָמוֹן, “multitude,” from which comes the word “mammon,” which denotes an abundance or multitude of riches[[1]](#footnote-1)
* “To be God to you”
  + “I will be their God”
* A new covenant
  + Every male among you shall be circumcised
    - What is circumcision?
      * The correct definition of circumcision is this: It is a public mark by which all, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, are urged to follow in the footsteps of Abraham or to emulate the faith of Abraham.[[2]](#footnote-2)
    - There is a stopping point
      * With the arrival of the Seed
    - A sign of what needs to be cut off
    - So why would the Lord Almighty command this?
      * Why, then, they say, was it given? Paul answers (Rom. 4:11) that it might be a seal of righteousness; that is, this work had to be there in order to place the seal upon righteousness. Circumcision had to be a document, as it were, for the purpose of acknowledging that the promise is true. In short, circumcision was a sacrament by which they were to be reminded that they were the people of God. But they did not become the people of God through circumcision[[3]](#footnote-3)
      * In almost the same way circumcision is a sacrament for the descendants of Abraham because, since they have the promise, they are made righteous by believing this promise and making use of the sacrament in faith. But those who do not believe are not made righteous.[[4]](#footnote-4)
        + Baptism, confirmation, the Lord’s Supper?

## **Sarai’s Role in All of This (17:15-22)**

* Sarai receives a covenant
  + A new name
    - hr"f'
    - The verb form means “to rule,” “to wrestle,” “to overcome”
  + A son by her
    - Ishmael was not the answer to Abram and Sarai’s problems
      * The Seed will come through Sarah
      * The “dead” gives life!
    - The same promise given to Abraham, now is given to Sarah
      * SHE shall become nations
    - 1 Corinthians 1:10
* Does Abraham doubt or wonder?
  + Romans 4:19
  + John 8:56
  + What about Ishmael?
    - It is not a question of “why not him?”…
    - But “what about him?”
* God responds
  + The Seed goes through Sarah
  + qx'c.yI
    - Means “he laughs”
    - The everlasting covenant goes through him, not Ishmael
  + Ishmael WILL be blessed
    - 12 princes (not to be confused with the 12 tribes of Israel or the Apostles)
    - Genesis 25:12
    - What about the cry of the Muslims?
      * Thus the exclusion—that the church must be sought neither in the house of Ishmael nor among the children of Keturah but in the line of Isaac—is temporal, just as we Gentiles do not have any utterances and promises of God given to us, and Christ was not born of our blood. Yet if we believe in Christ, we are not excluded from the church and the promise of salvation.[[5]](#footnote-5)
  + A definite time.
* God departs
  + Luther marvels at the relationship between Abraham and the Lord God.
    - For the Lord to have such a bond with Abraham, that He appears to him, much like in the Garden of Eden.
    - Yet, Luther argues that Abraham would be jealous as to how the Lord God communicates with us today!
      * Scripture
      * Baptism
      * Office of the Keys
      * The Lord’s Supper
      * Prayer
      * Plus, inward dwelling within us!
        + 1 Corinthians 3:16

## **A Time to Follow Through (17:23-27)**

* These guys go through with it!
  + Trust in the Lord God… trust in Abraham
    - Over their own works
    - For it is not works that justify a person, but a righteous person does righteous works. Yet the works show that faith is being put into practice and that through them it increases and becomes fat, as it were. For while Abraham carries out this act of obedience and is circumcised together with his household, faith thinks of God, who gives us His promises and accepts us.[[6]](#footnote-6)
  + Moses does not record if they asked, “Why?”
    - Therefore let no one add this detestable and fatal little word “why” to God’s commands. But when the command is certain, let us obey at once without any argument, and let us conclude that God is wiser than we are. He who argues about why God gives a particular command actually doubts that God is wise, just, and good. What sin can be more hideous and more intolerable to God? Therefore we must believe—this is part of our duty—and not argue, for these matters are too lofty for us to be able to argue about them.[[7]](#footnote-7)
    - Because of this fatal and baneful *why* those who do not conform to this example by receiving the Word in simple and childlike obedience and obeying it will, in accordance with the example of Adam, be plunged into disobedience and death.[[8]](#footnote-8)

## **A Son WILL Be Born (18:1-15)**

* The oaks of Mamre
  + Abraham’s base of operations
    - 13:18
    - 14:13
* Visitors!
  + Don’t overlook v.1!
    - The LORD appeared…
    - Yet Three Men!
      * The Trinity?
        + Saw three worshiped one
    - Goes running
      * Luke 15:20
  + The hospitality of Abraham
    - The importance of servanthood
      * Hebrews 13:2
      * Matthew 5:42
      * Matthew 25:40
      * John 13:20
    - The washing of feet
      * Luke 7:44
      * John 13:14
  + This is agreed to
  + The act is carried out
    - No light snack
      * Three seahs of fine flour
        + 1 Seah = 7 quarts
      * A calf
        + Luke 15:23?
        + Takes time to do this
      * Cheese curds!
        + KJV regards this as butter or a yogurt
* Attention turns to Sarah
  + Luther praises the acknowledgement of Sarah in the tent.
    - Service over curiosity
      * Yet…
      * She is listening at the door of the tent.
        + Awaiting further instruction?
  + A two-fold promise
    - A promise to return
    - The repeated promise of a son born from Sarah
      * 17:21
  + Sarah laughed
    - Should not have been the first time hearing this
      * Yet this is her first time hearing God’s promise through His lips
    - Recognition of their age and her inability
      * Abraham laughed too
        + 17:17
      * A sign of doubt or disbelief?
        + Luke 1:18-20
        + Luke 1:24-25
        + Hebrews 11:11
    - Busted
      * “Is anything impossible for the LORD?”
        + Jeremiah 32:27
        + Matthew 19:26
        + Trust His Word

Therefore call upon God, take hold of His Word, and cling to the sacrificial victim Christ, who has rendered satisfaction for your sins and has transferred your death to Himself and overcome it; and do not let it bother you that you are a sinner. Consider God’s command. He wants you to cling to His Son and tells you to believe. Direct your eyes to this, and do not inquire into what has been done or will be done about others; but think about yourself, so that you may comply with this command.[[9]](#footnote-9)

* + - * Sarah denies this
        + 1 John 1:8
        + Proverbs 28:13
      * God has mercy on Sarah
        + Romans 3:19

1. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.3-6&off=1418&ctx=eans+%E2%80%9Ca+multitude.%E2%80%9D+~Hence+it+is+made+up+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.3-6&off=14278), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 105–106. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.1&off=23791&ctx=s+must+be+rejected.%0a~Why%2c+then%2c+they+say%2c), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.1&off=27918&ctx=d+also+be+baptized.%0a~In+almost+the+same+w), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.19-22&off=10194), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 161–162. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.23-27&off=792&ctx=as+justified+by+it.+~For+it+is+not+works+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 169. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.23-27&off=8061), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 172–173. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge17.23-27&off=14756&ctx=n+the+Blessed+Seed.+~Because+of+this+fata), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 3: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw03?ref=Bible.Ge18.13-14&off=7064), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 3 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 214–215. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)