

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Topic: A New Identity and the Covenant of Circumcision Wednesday, September 24 2025

Text: Genesis 17:1-16;23

Facilitator: Pastor Paul Akoh

In Genesis 17, God gives Abram a new identity by changing his name to Abraham ("father of a multitude") and establishing the covenant of circumcision as a permanent, physical sign of his special relationship with his people. This chapter marks a pivotal moment in the Abrahamic narrative, reaffirming God's promises and providing a clear, physical marker of covenant membership.

Question: God has already made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 but in Genesis 17 He instituted a sign. Why?

New Names, New Identity

- We met Abraham as Abram (exalted father) in Genesis 12, Sarah as Sarai (princess), but in chapter 17 their names changed to Abraham and Sarah.
- The meaning of their new names are very instructive
 - No one encounters God and remains the same
 - For everyone that God walks with there MUST be a transformation.
 - While Abram meant the exalted father, which speaks of personal ability or capability, Abraham, on the other hand, means father of many nations.
 - For the meaning of his new name to come to pass, Abraham was required to depend completely on God and God's ability to keep the covenant between them. Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinth 5:15
- Abraham's new identity will not only be in words but in a very painful, physical mark that would be felt in his body. From this point on, Abraham and all his physical and spiritual descendants are to experience God's covenant; not only spiritually but both in their physical bodies and their lifestyles.

Romans 12:1-2:

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Question: How has your encounter with God changed your identity or perspective?

Romans 2:28-29

“A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.”

New Identity in Christ

Key Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20

Notes:

Believers have a new identity in Christ: we are new creations. Our lives are now lived through Christ, not ourselves. Transformation is ongoing: identity, lifestyle, and obedience reflect our faith.

Conclusion

God appears again to Abraham, changing his and Sarah’s names and establishing circumcision as a sign of covenant. God’s renewing grace gives Abraham a new identity and deeper assurance. God’s covenant marks us for His purposes and invites us into deeper obedience and trust.