

6237

MID-WEST BIBLE SCHOOL - 1995

ABRAHAM, THE FRIEND OF GOD

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study #4

A Father of Many Nations

Reading: Genesis 17

My dearly beloved brethren and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, Genesis 17 will engage our attention this morning, b&s, and we want to talk about Abraham's spiritual fatherhood, and it's a lovely chapter, it really is a beautiful chapter in the bible. And here is a covenant between God and Abraham, b&s, that is moving, believe me! And Abraham we're told at this time was 99 years of age, and by this time Ishmael, of course, is 13 years of age, and Abraham has had amply illustrated to him, that the children of the flesh are not to be counted for the seed of promise. He would have learnt that by now and Abraham is coming to spiritual maturity, b&s, and God appears unto him, and it's a wonderful thing that happens here, because you know, the very title in which God appears to him is full of significance, because we read, b&s, in verse 1 that 'Abraham was ninety years old and nine, and Yahweh appeared unto him and said unto him, I am Almighty God', and now that, of course, is the Hebrew title El Shaddai, as we would probably recognize those words as expounded by bro. Thomas in several of his writings.

Now, b&s, if you like to keep Genesis 17 handy, and come with me to Exodus chapter 6, we read about that title, we read about it's revelation to Abraham, and I want to show you why that title was used. And so in Exodus chapter 6 and in verse 3 we read, 'And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name El Shaddai, but by my name Yahweh was I not known to them'. Now, b&s, I do not believe that what God is saying there is that they didn't know His divine name, that they did! There is clear evidence in Abraham's life, I believe, to that effect; what He's saying is, He wasn't dealing with Abraham in the terms of the covenant name, but with the title of El Shaddai. Why did He do that? Well, I believe there's a wonderful answer to it, and this is what this chapter is all about, and that's what Exodus said, I was dealing with Abraham with this title. Now b&s, you know, we've often been told that we know what El means, it means 'strength or power' it is the title of the Uncreate God, but what about Shaddai? Now most Hebraists in the expositions of the truth, we find that they say, well what the word can mean is one of two things. It can mean a 'nourisher' or a 'destroyer', and that's

confusing because we think, 'how on earth would you relate those two ideas? Well, it came about like this you see, because the word 'Shaddai' comes from the root word 'shad' which means 'to bulge' hence it came to mean 'the woman with her breasts' or 'the man with his muscles'. So you either became a nourisher or a destroyer, but b&s, when we come to the patriarchal use of it, forget about destroyer; that's not the point that's being made at all! And the point that's being made here, b&s, and you listen carefully, the point that's being made here is that God is about to turn Abraham into a father of a special character, and he's about to begin an infant family. The family of God is about to be born, the father is about to be created, from whom the spiritual children will flow. Now you listen to the way in which Shaddai is used in the patriarchal promises!

So in Genesis chapter 28 and verse 35 where it is used of the promises made to Isaac and Jacob, the word is used in the sense of multiple, 'I am El Shaddai, multiply therefore you see'. See the point? Begin a family, a young family; when Jacob had to concede to the point that Benjamin must go down to Egypt though he didn't want him to go because he was his baby boy, and when he finally conceded that he had to go or perish, and he sent that little boy off with his sons, he prayed and said, 'El Shaddai be with you', why? that's his baby! When, b&s, in Genesis 49, Jacob was talking about the blessings upon his sons and he came to Joseph, who was another one of his younger sons, he said, 'the blessings of the Almighty be with thee; the blessings of the God of my fathers, El'. So the blessings of El, the blessings of the Shaddai be with thee, the blessings of the breasts and of the womb, you see! nourishing. So the use of that term, and that's just three examples of it, b&s, you check it out, it's consistent, it's marvellously used in the patriarchal system for the development of a young family. And it doesn't stop in the Old Testament.

When Paul wrote to the 'babes in Christ' in Corinth, and they were babes, he called them that in 1 Corinthians 3, he exhorted them in 2 Corinthians 6 and verse 17, he said, 'come out from among them, and be ye separate; and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters saith the Lord Almighty'. The Lord Almighty, an unusual title to be used by the apostles, isn't it? but he's talking about Corinthian babies. So here when God reveals Himself to Abraham, He's about to start off a nursery, and we're going to see, b&s, the development of that!

And here comes the birth of God's family in the creation of the father. So there are certain prerequisites necessary, 'walk before me and be thou perfect'. Why? because you see, the fatherhood is going to have a special character about it, it's going to be like God, it's going to be a shared fatherhood; and you'll see this beautifully set out in this chapter a shared fatherhood. And so here's the prerequisite, 'walk before Me or walk with Me' (we're going to walk together Abraham, and you're going to have to be mature) perfect, and Jesus picked that up, beautifully picked that up and said, 'be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect'. And there in the Sermon on the Mount He was talking about the future seed of Abraham that He was addressing, wasn't He? Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect; here's the point, isn't it? straight out of here. This is where it's coming from! So God in verse 2 is now going to make a covenant with Abraham; but He's already made a covenant with Abram in chapter 15 remember, but

you see, b&s, there the covenant was made in the sense that it was made, but here you see, it means to 'give'. Rotherham has 'to set it', different word entirely, so there's a progression here. The covenant is going to make one major step forward; Genesis 15 was about 'so shall thy seed be like the stars of heaven', but now we're going to take a giant step forward, we're going to set that covenant now, Abraham, we're going to do it here! And says the record, it's going to be between Me and thee.

Now you keep Genesis 17 and come to Romans 4 and just have a look at this; this is one of those master touches of inspiration, I believe it is, you may not get a thrill out of this, I certainly do, I really do when I see this done, when the apostle picks the essence up of this chapter of Genesis 17, you see how he does it! He talks about the fatherhood of Abraham and he quotes from this chapter, but he just adds two words in the verse in chapter 4 and verse 17 of Romans, the end of verse 16 he says, 'Abraham, who is the father of us all' (then he quotes this chapter). '(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations) and look, before Him (look at the margin 'like unto Him') that's what the Greek means, like unto Him. And when you come back to Genesis 17, just listen to this, this covenant is a very personal one, b&s. God is about to share fatherhood with Abraham, like Him, said the apostle, father of many nations. So Jesus was right and Paul was right; when the Lord said, 'call no man on earth your father, and Abraham was not our father on the earth; Paul didn't call him 'our father' in the earthly sense, he called him 'who is father of us all because he is like Him, that is like God'; there's a shared fatherhood. So when we come back here, b&s, what do we find? Five times we find this, you listen; verse 2 'between Me and you', verse 4 'as for Me behold, my covenant is with thee'. Verse 7, 'and I will establish my covenant between Me and thee', verse 10, 'this is My covenant which you shall keep between Me and you', and verse 11 'and you shall circumcise the flesh of foreskin and it shall be a token of the covenant between Me and you', 5 times that's said and then, the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet is put into Abraham's name to change it to 'a father of many nations', and it's the main consonant of God's own name! And we become heirs of the grace of life because there's our father like God, and we have brothers and sisters therefore, in the life of Abraham a pattern of fatherhood, which Abraham shared with God. 5 times between you and Me, Abraham, like Him, whom he believed. What a wonderful touch that was that the apostle should just say that, b&s!

And so the chapter goes on that Abraham after receiving that wonderful, gracious promise, he fell on his face. Now wouldn't you fall on your face? verse 3 says that, 'he fell on his face in sheer joy and gratitude', which comes out later, that Abraham burst forth in absolute gratitude for this wonderful thing. I mean, it's one thing to be promised the kingdom of God, we can be promised many things, but to share, to share the fatherhood of God, Me and you, Abraham, two of us together, what a wonderful thing! B&S, wouldn't that burst your heart to be told that? and that's what he did; he fell on his face in sheer joy, and God said to him in verse 4, 'Abraham, I'm going to make you a father of many nations', which of course, b&s, was another human impossibility, wasn't it? because you see, Abraham doesn't mean 'a father of a multitude', I mean, any man perhaps if he started young enough could be the father of a multitude, if he had like Solomon did, a 1000 wives, he might be able to produce in a lifetime, a multitude. But

he could never, never naturally be 'the father of many nations'; because if I have a child it's in Australia, I can't produce Chinese children, and Japanese children, Ethiopians, Israelites, not even Englishmen. God alone can do that, we can be a father of many children, but we could never be the father of many nations. This is a different type of fatherhood, we're not talking about natural fatherhood at all, so Isaiah the prophet, b&s, in speaking about (let's turn it up) Isaiah 29, this is worth looking at, I think we can spare a little time to do that. When Isaiah the prophet spoke about 'these children' look what he said; the type of children that were going to be born to Abraham, in verse 22, 'Therefore thus saith Yahweh, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel', so you see, b&s, Abraham and Jacob, if they came from the tomb this day, and were taken on a tour of Israel they would be ashamed of their children, they would be absolutely ashamed of their children. Their pride and their arrogance and especially if they had to travel as most people do, through Moslem countries, and to see how their women dress and walk in Israel, they would be ashamed of their children. But the prophet says, the day's going to come when Abraham and Isaac will face their children unashamed and be proud of their kids, because they're not those natural children but these children are made with God's hands; these are different children. And in that day, b&s, the children and the father's hearts will be knit because there will be a characteristic likeness and that's what Genesis 17 is all about, isn't it?

And so when we come back to that chapter, Genesis 17, verse 5 says, 'Neither shall thy name be called Abram anymore, He says, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee' (past tense). I've done it already, Abraham, and yet he hasn't got a child in this sense; he's got Ishmael but that's got nothing to do with the shared fatherhood. Ishmael is not a child of God, and so Abraham is childless as far as this principle is concerned; but God said, I've done it, Abraham, as if the seed was in existence and that's what Paul says, didn't he? 'calling those things which be not, as they were' (that's the verse we just read from Romans 4 verse 17. Like Him, called him those things which had not already happened as if they did. So He said, I've done it Abraham, you're a father of many nations, so in verse 7 He said, 'and I will establish my covenant' (ah, now we've got another word, instead of just making a covenant, first instance, and then setting it, second instance, now we've got 'it's risen'). A covenant will rise, Abraham, that's the idea of this word, b&s; so the first word means to 'cut' a covenant, the next word means 'to give it' and now we've got a word which means 'to rise', the covenant that will rise. This covenant, b&s, is going to be to 'new life' it's going to be to resurrection. And Abraham received that, b&s, in gratitude!

Now God's got to make to Abraham a sort of a seal of this thing, so that Abraham would have some objectivity to remember, never to forget that this covenant of fatherhood is one he shared with God, and so He gave him the covenant of circumcision. What better covenant, b&s, because you see, it's just like God saying to Abraham, 'Abraham, I've made you a father you know, but just in case you sort of might think it's got to do with (and Abraham didn't think this) but assuming that he might think that it's got to do with

natural procreation, 'I want a little operation, Abraham', which when that was performed, immediately it was performed, it would be impossible for him to be the father of a natural steward wouldn't it? because you see, it's got to do with that part of his body, hasn't it? And so Stephen puts it like this, listen! How beautifully Stephen puts it in Acts 7, listen, 'And He gave him the covenant of circumcision, and so Abraham begat Isaac'. Now we know there was some time between, actually 12 months and we know that Abraham, of course, would have been healed by that time, and we know that Isaac was the product of Abraham and Sarah; we all know that, and so he was in reality Abraham's natural seed. But Stephen didn't see it like that! 'He gave him the covenant of circumcision and so Abraham begat Isaac'. And so Paul calls Isaac in Hebrews 11 and verse 17, 'his only begotten son', and b&s, had it not been for divine intervention, Isaac would never have seen the light of day. And so although it was all very natural, it was all very unnatural too! because the two people were two old people, especially the woman and yet the boy was born.

And so circumcision became a sign of many things. One of the things it became the sign of was spiritual fatherhood; now you listen to Jesus (I never cease to marvel at the exactitude!) you know, He was talking about keeping the sabbath and the Jews were arguing about sabbath keeping as if God just wanted a person for one day to bow his head down like a bulrush, and Jesus said, 'Look, circumcision was not of Moses, He said, it was of the fathers' and we gloss over that comment and say, 'what He means was that it was not to do with the Mosaic covenant, it's to do with the Abrahamic'. Well, He did mean that but He didn't use the word 'covenant', did He? He said, 'it's not of Moses but it is of the fathers', the fathers; ah, isn't that so wonderful? wasn't that the right word to say? because it is of the fathers, because it's a very sign of spiritual fatherhood which he shared with God, isn't it? There was more to that than just a comparison between sabbath and circumcision, b&s, and so this token is going to be in verse 10, 'between Me and you and thy seed after you, and every man child among you shall be circumcised'. Now, b&s, in the Law of Moses, as I said earlier, much of the Law was an extrapolation of the Genesis narrative. I want to show you something about circumcision and this is absolutely remarkable! Now this has got a very great relationship to Abraham. When a boy or girl was born, the woman went through periods of uncleanness, and if you notice there, we'll take the male child first on your right and you see, the woman had two distinct periods of uncleanness. In the first period of uncleanness she couldn't mix with the domestic circle and she couldn't go to the tabernacle. In the second period of uncleanness she could go back to her own home in the domestic circle, but for a further period she couldn't go to the tabernacle, and then finally, of course, she could enter the tabernacle as well. And that's why there were two periods of uncleanness, but I want you to notice the difference.

For a maid child

1. The first period of uncleanness, b&s, and note, please note this, was not 14 days; but,

2 weeks (note that!) and then the woman had a further period when she was barred

from the tabernacle for 66 days, for a total of 80.

For a boy child

1. She was unclean for the boy, not for one week but for 7 days (note that!) and then after that she had a further period of uncleanness for 33 days, a total of 40, and then she could enter again into the tabernacle.

Now bro. Roberts expounding this, and I with the greatest respect have to differ, b&s, and I'm not here to do that because I'm saying I know more than bro. Roberts, I wouldn't make his bootlace, but I do differ from him on this point, and I do so, I believe, for a powerful reason. Bro. Roberts said that 'it showed the superiority of male in sacrifice because the girl was double that of the boy; I don't believe that's so! I believe the boy was half that of the girl, because when you trace the laws of uncleanness you'd find (I haven't got time to show you the details) but you'd find the girl's period of uncleanness was the normal period of uncleanness, the normal period. What made the difference was circumcision; because a little girl being unable to be circumcised, was two weeks and you can see what was happening. She'd go round and round all the time, wouldn't she? unable to come to that point where she could be circumcised; but the boy was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (half the period) because he was able to be circumcised. And the little girl was always unclean and the Jew considered a week to be a 'cycle of time' and so she continued her uncleanness. Naturally, you find the second stage had to be, almost had to be, 66, which is of course, peculiarly the number of man and all his inability to perfect righteousness. But, b&s, the little boy was a representative, or should we say, (no we shouldn't say representative, that's the wrong word), he was a figure he was a shadow of Him that was to come, of the one that would be spiritually circumcised, and He, when He was spiritually circumcised in the absolute sense upon the cross, He was 33 years of age, which totalled 40, which is the number of probation; you've got Elijah, Moses, Jesus in the wilderness, Israel in the wilderness, enabled a person to live out a life of probation before God and there could be an end to it. And so you see, the little boy was so essential that the man child should come, that a boy should be born who could take away b&s, the uncleanness that we all bear! Do you see the point? So He halved the period and He'd made it possible for it to come to a finale; whereas the little girl would have gone on and on and on and on, wouldn't she?

And we are all brethren and sisters, brethren AND sisters, all of us, men and women are the bride of Christ. Where would we be without our man child? And the Law of Moses had said, 'no uncircumcised person, shall eat the Passover', where did that leave the sisters? were they not represented by their husbands, fathers, uncles and so forth? I want to read to you from Colossians, and you just listen! because I'll emphasize the words, listen to the words of representation when it comes to this matter of circumcision! 'For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality of power; in whom also ye are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body (not a little bit of skin) but the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God who raised

Him from the dead. And you, all of us, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh (around and around, 2 weeks, 66 days) hath He quickened together with Him having forgiven you all your trespasses. And in doing that blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, fulfilling that type, b&s.' And so that's what God intended when He told Abraham, 'every male child should be circumcised, and there was a wonderful prophecy of One that was to come, who would represent all mankind, and who would be able because He lived a perfect life, the body of the sins of the flesh was cut off, not just a little bit, a man who lived an entire perfect life was able on our behalf, to be represented in Him, b&s, was able to bring to an end, an endless cycle for us, of around and around of uncleanness (taped turned) even be circumcised let alone the body being circumcised.

And so you see, b&s, when that wonderful covenant was made, and when that was set before Abraham we see the principle of representation. And it's a remarkable thing, it's absolutely remarkable that circumcision became a token of two things. That Paul says in Romans 4 again, 'when Abraham received circumcision it was a sign of the faith he already had', and in Galatians chapter 5 he said to the Galatians, 'if you want to accept the Law of Moses and be circumcised, you're obligated to keep the Law', so it either became a sign of a faith already possessed or a obligation from the point that you were circumcised to keep the Law that was futile, take your pick! And that was the idea of circumcision, b&s! a token of faith or obligation, what do you want? Well, I want faith because if I'm under an obligation to keep the Law, I'm never going to see God's kingdom!

And as for the token of representation as it was, b&s, it was Peter who called Noah, the 8th person, why? Was he the last one in the ark, was that why he called him #8? No, it isn't! because he was a representative man, read Genesis 7. Read it with a coloured pencil and read how many times that God talks about Noah and every living creature, Noah and every living creature; and in the end when they shut the ark, Yahweh shut him in, him! because everybody else was represented by him; he was in Peter's terminology, 'the eighth person'. And that's exactly how it reads in Genesis as he became the representative of all those who went into the ark with him.

Now we're going to proceed along with Genesis 17. We come now to consider in verse 15, the inclusion of Sarah, and her name gets changed too, doesn't it? And so God said to Abraham in verse 15, 'As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be'. Now Strongs said that 'Sarai' means 'dominant' as a head person; a lot of Sarai's around today, b&s, they seem to be multiplying somehow. Dominant or head person, Sarai means; but Sarah means 'a princess', and in a chapter which is monumental in Isaiah, it's a key chapter, Isaiah 49 is that chapter which (ah, time would forbid me to show how wonderful that chapter is in relation to the calling of the nation; it's everywhere is that chapter) and in that chapter, b&s, in speaking about the Gentiles coming into the truth, it says this, and I quote the Hebrew 'kings shall be your nursing fathers, and princesses your nursing mothers', and that's said of the calling of the Gentiles. And Abraham's children are going to be a 'father of many nations' and 'kings are going to be nursing fathers', and princesses nursing mothers, and the figure

of Isaiah's prophecy is of a breast-feeding mother which shows a great intimacy and love for her child, who is dependent upon the milk of her own body. A union between two people, a mother and child, which mankind can only watch and never really know what's really going on there. But here, b&s, we have kings and princesses nursing children from infancy to maturity, and here they are 'the rock from whence we are hewn, and the quarry from whence we are hewn', Sarah and Abraham here, b&s. And again it's the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet that's inserted to make the change in Sarah's name, and they were to be heirs together of the grace of life, as Peter puts it.

Now in verse 17 when all this was done, and in verse 16 she's promised to be the 'mother of nations' as Isaiah 49 said she would be, and that kingdoms of people would come from her as Isaiah 49 also included, that it says, 'Abraham fell upon his face and laughed', and you know, b&s, I know a lot of people say, 'ah you know, he was just the same as Sarah'. I don't believe that he was! I do not believe this is a laugh of incredulity, all I know is that later on he says, 'what about Ishmael?' but I think, b&s, that is what Abraham is saying he absolutely believed what God said. He knew that Ishmael was not going to be included and his request for Ishmael was not that Ishmael might develop the seed, but he knew Ishmael was on the outs, so what's going to happen to him?' I believe that's the context, and I don't believe it's a laugh of incredulity, there's no rebuke here! And here are my reasons for believing that this is a laugh of sheer joy; He fell on his face to laugh; it was an act of worship, not like Sarah hiding behind the flap of a tent. This was an act of worship; Paul quoting this chapter said, 'he staggered not in unbelief, quoting that chapter. That's pretty powerful! and Jesus said, 'Abraham rejoiced to see my day and was glad', that's the only recorded incident in Abraham's life of him rejoicing. I believe for those four reasons, an act of worship, a chapter which is quoted to show the absolute genuineness of his conviction and the only place where he's found to be rejoicing and the fourth factor, that he was not rebuked for laughing, indicates to my mind, b&s, that this is indeed, an act of faith and an act of worship, and his heart is bursting with gratitude and thankfulness unto his God. And then, of course, 'that Ishmael might live before me', is an expression of anxiety, that now he knows that it's not Ishmael, what's going to happen to him? And God answers, 'don't worry about Ishmael, I'll look after him!' And so there's a guarantee given to Abraham, b&s, that He'd look after him.

And verse 19, 'God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed', see that? Not rebuking and saying, 'Abraham, don't laugh because it's going to be true', He's endorsing what Abraham asked, 'yes she will have a child'. And truly, b&s, here is a covenant between Me and you, and the two of them are rejoicing together; 'Abraham, indeed it's true', says God; and both Abraham and God here rejoice in the wonder of what's coming, b&s; truly thy wife is about to bear, says Rotherham, and God is sharing that, b&s, and then He says, 'you shall call his name Isaac' which means 'laughter'. Do you believe that God would give that name to that boy on the basis of Abraham's laugh of incredulity? I don't, I don't believe that; I don't believe that God would do that, that's not the character of our God. Isaac wasn't named after a laugh of unbelief; Isaac, b&s, was named after a burst of acclamation and joy and belief; and Sarah said 'the day will come when all the world will laugh', there'll be laughter all around the world, not ripe old

mirth like the crackling of thorns under a pot but the full-blooded laughs of people. You listen to a child laugh, what grandparent doesn't lean back in their chair and drink in the sound of a child's laughter? it's one of the most wonderful sounds in the world, it's so genuine, isn't it? to hear a little child laugh in all its simplicity. The world will laugh like that over a birth of the Son of God, b&s, as the world would laugh in their day over Isaac; and as Abraham laughed in that sense with simplistic joy and faith in what was coming to pass. That's what I believe and I think the context is clear in that regard.

Well, b&s, the chapter moved on didn't it? and as we move on with the chapter, of course, what do we find? Verse 21 where God says, 'My covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee, at the set time in the next year'. Well, it was true, because Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. And then we read this and I want you to note this expression, because this is not the last time that we're going to read it, just note it, just note the magnificent way this is recorded. I never cease to marvel at this b&s, just the way the bible's written; look at verse 22, 'And He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham'. Now there are two things, b&s, that we've got to note about that, and that is that what is being done here between God and Abraham concerning the birth of the child with Sarah, was a matter of theory; it was a theory, they were talking about it. And the manifestation at the end of the chapter, is not the greater manifestation, it's the lesser. It's the Elohim doing it, that's deliberately written like that, as you'll see later on. Deliberately written like that, we'll come to the comparison later on, it's plain later on when you see it, written differently and that's requested; so here we're being told, b&s, that 12 months is going to go by, and the man is being told about a theory, and he's being told it by a lesser manifestation; but the greater manifestation is going to go to work 12 months later.

You know, b&s, events overtook Abraham and Sarah in that 12 months which would have wrung their hearts. Would almost split them as a married couple, though they'd be rescued by the skin of their teeth, and when they fell into each other's arms, they wrung out of each other, a desperate and earnest prayer, and Isaac's born! It was marvellous how that worked out, and life's like that, isn't it, b&s? Life's full of promise, Christ is coming the signs are abroad; we've all got in our breasts the hope of eternal life. God does forgive sins; we can make the kingdom; all of that is so wonderful and yet b&s, events overtake us from day to day which seem to be a denial of all that we believe in, in ourselves, all that's possible; everything seems to go against that! And God wrings out of us, everyday of our lives, sometimes, He wrings and squeezes out of us earnest pleas to heaven above for help, help, help; and it happens every time, doesn't it? we are rescued in the brink of time. I'm talking about myself, I don't know how you feel, I'm talking about me! I'm an emotional person, very much so, and I have my ups and downs like a lift, and I'm very much a people's person; you leave me alone and I drift, b&s, that's me and I know what I'm like and I've got great hope. I believe in God and I want to be in God's kingdom, I dearly want to be there! but I know what I'm like and I know that when I'm down, I'm really down, and God squeezes me and I've got to pray, which I wouldn't normally do in that way, and in the end I do. And that's when results come, and that's what God did to this couple!

And Isaac was a boy born out of prayer, b&s, born out of prayer! he really was. And so verse 21, 'at this time next year. And He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham'. Now look at Psalm 47 in conclusion, b&s, in Psalm 47 God never comes down and goes back again without accomplishing His purpose, never does He do that! Whenever you have a divine manifestation on the earth, the work is successful, and so Psalm 47, when God went up from Abraham, we read b&s, in verse 1 of Psalm 47, 'A clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph'. For says verse 5, 'God is gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a trumpet'. And the Elohim left him, b&s, and went up and a magnificent thing had been accomplished; there had been made a covenant between God and Abraham, Me and you, Me and you, a father of many nations, just like Me, Abraham! You see, b&s, what nationality is God? and if Jesus was the Son of God, and we're baptised into Him and become the sons and daughters of God, what nationality is God? It's a ridiculous question isn't it? well, that's the fatherhood that Abraham was to share.

Circumcision was going to be a sign and a seal of it, and when Elohim went up, b&s, it was with a triumph, because now the foundation had been laid, the nursery was built. 'By my name, El Shaddai was I known to them', and ever since that time, the family of God has been born in its infancy and is drinking of the milk of the Word, from the breasts of kings and princesses; the father and mother of the faithful, Abraham and Sarah, and when our Lord Jesus Christ comes, b&s, pray God that we will all have reached maturity!