

CHAPTER ANALYSIS FORM

Chapter: 17-18:15

Chapter Title: Covenant Redux, Three Visitors

1. Chapter Summary:

1. Chapter 17

- a. Covenant reiterated, Abram renamed 1-8
- b. Covenant circumcision instituted 9-14
- c. Sarai renamed, Promised son 15-17
- d. Ishmael blessed, Isaac promised 18-22
- e. All males circumcised 23-27

2. Chapter 18

- a. Visitors welcomed 1-8
- b. Sarah doubts 9-15

2. Observation		3. Interpretation	
What Does It Say?		What Does It Mean?	
Verse		Verse	
	Chapter 17		
1-8	God appears to Abram to reiterate the covenant. Abram's name change to Abraham. God promises to extend covenant to Abraham's offspring forever.	1-4	God's promise has been repeated to Abraham many times. It is a sure thing if God says it once, how sure will it be when it has been repeated many times? Abram (Exalted father) becomes Abraham (Father of multitudes) Abraham's descendants are four kinds: 1. Natural – Ishmael, Isaac, sons of Keturah 2. Natural, yet special – Isaac and nation of Israel 3. Promised – Starting with Seth, through Isaac, to Jesus 4. Spiritual – Those united with Christ
9-14	God gives the sign of the covenant – circumcision for all males.	9-14	The covenant sign is one that is not externally apparent to others. Nor does it concern social status or ethnicity. It is available for all who believe.
15-17	Sarai's name changed to Sarah. God promises multitudes and royal lines to come through Sarah through her own son yet to be born. Abraham has his doubts.	15-17	Sarai (mockery) becomes Sarah (princess). Given Abraham's and Sarah's age this is a close to a virgin birth as you can get. It will be miraculous.
18-22	Abraham wants the covenant to come through Ishmael. God says Ishmael is blessed but the covenant will continue through the promised child. The child's name will be Isaac.	18-22	Abraham, still thinking in the flesh, wants to know why the living son cannot be the son of promise. Once again, God makes it clear the son of promise will come through his work, not through the work of human hands. Isaac means "laughter."
23-27	All males, including Abraham, are circumcised according to the covenant.	23-27	Despite his doubts Abraham fulfills the requirements of the covenant given by God.

	Chapter 18		
1-8	Three visitors appear before Abraham at home. He shows them hospitality and has food and drink prepared.	1-8	Abraham ran to them, indicating he thought they were persons of importance – worthy of great respect. It is possible that Abraham recognizes one of the visitors as divine. He also acts as their servant and not their equal as he stands by while they eat and does not eat with them. (Hebrews 13:2 “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.) Are we hospitable? Do we extend God’s grace in our interactions with others?
9-15	The visitors ask about Sarah. Abraham is told that one of the visitors will return in a year and Sarah will give birth. Sarah hears and has her own doubts. Like Abraham, she laughs although she denies it when confronted.	9-15	Sarah is not only advanced in years but she is far past child bearing ability physically. Her doubts are understandable. It will take a miracle for her to have a son. This partially explains Abraham’s doubts and his focus on Ishmael. How often do we doubt God’s promises even as we say we believe?

4. Correlation		5. Application
Where Else Is It Explained?		What Will I Do About It?
Verse		
	Chapter 17	
1-8	Romans 4:17 Luke 1:55, 71-73	
9-14	Romans 4:11 John 7:22 Acts 7:8	
15-17	Romans 4:19	
18-22	Hebrews 11:11	
23-27		
	Chapter 18	
1-8	Hebrews 13:2 Luke 7:44	
9-15	Matthew 19:26 Mark 10:27 Luke 1:18, 37 Romans 9:9 Hebrews 11:11 1 Peter 3:6	

6. Conclusions

7. One Personal Application