

## **BLOOD COVENANT EXCHANGE**

When a blood covenant is made, both sides inform the other of their resources which will be available to one another. In our case, we get the better of the deal, because God opens his vast resources to us. They are not only meant to benefit us but also to bless others around us. That was certainly true when God made a covenant with Abram.

God gave a preview of what Abram would receive even before the covenant was made. He promised him a land, many heirs, a great nation, a great name and that he would be a great blessing to many (Genesis 12:1-3). In the ancient world the greatest honor was to be a founder of a tribe. One aspect of covenant was a change of name. It is interesting to note that God gave part of his name to both Abram and Sarai. God's name in Hebrew was YHWH but He chose to give each one of them an H. Abram became Abraham and Sarai became Sarah. At creation, God breathed into Adam. When we sigh or breath out, we can hear the sound of h, ah or ha ....which is a reminder of God as the one who gives us breath. The Jews considered God's name too holy to pronounce so they just breathed it out. Try it now.....say YHWH.

Abram meant *exalted father* but God changed his name to Abraham which meant *father of a multitude*. God gave him an illustration of its magnitude when he told him to look at the dust of the earth (Gen.13:16) and the stars in the sky (Gen.15:5) Have you noticed that sometimes God's people need more than just a word from God in order to believe? Abraham needed a visual sign and so did Peter when God provided him a vision through a trance to show him that the gospel message was for all peoples not just the Jews (Acts 10). (When appropriate I will share times when God gave me some specific signs in guidance). God's Word should be enough for us to act upon, but He understands our tendency to doubt so he will often provide confirmations to us.

When God made a covenant with Abraham, he revealed another aspect of himself in the name **El Shaddai**. We should understand that no one name could fully describe God since even the heavens themselves cannot contain God. Nonetheless, God has chosen many names and compound names to reveal his character and capabilities. Later we see the fullness of God expressed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**El** is a name for God that describes Him as being strong, powerful and mighty.

God the Father is El (Gen.14:18-22)

Jesus is El (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-9) Immanu-el God with us.

Holy Spirit is El (Job 33:4, 37:10)

The plural form of El is **Elohim** which signifies the plurality of all three in the Godhead. Elohim is mentioned 32 times in Genesis 1 and about 2500 times in the Bible. It often reveals God as a creator. In Genesis 1 we read: "In the beginning Elohim (plural word) created (a singular verb) the heavens and the earth." All three persons of the Godhead were involved with the creation of the universe. We also see them active when Jesus was baptized as he opened a new of kind creation to this world....the kingdom of God. The Father affirmed his Son and the Holy Spirit empowered Him.

When the Bible mentions **God as one**, it does not mean a numerical one but a **collective oneness**. (not  $1+1+1=3$ ; but  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ ) Two Hebrew words clarify this for us.

**Yachad:** This refers to absolute unity and just one in number. For example, Abraham offered up his only (yachad) son Isaac on the altar. Yachad is never used in reference to God. Another word is used.

**Echad:** This refers to a compound or collective unity and is used hundreds of times in the Old Testament. It is the only word used to describe God as one. It is also used regarding Adam and Eve becoming one (echad) flesh in Genesis 2:24.

Jesus often said that he and the Father were one. It is also the same oneness that he prays his church would have (John 17:20-21).

**This is what covenant is all about. Two or more becoming one. They become one in heart, mind and purpose.** God could ask Abraham to sacrifice his son, because God and he were in covenant. Now back to the name El Shaddai.

**Shaddai** is translated as meaning Almighty 48 times but it is also translated as Breast 24 times, which signifies one who nourishes, supplies and satisfies. God is the Almighty, All Sufficient One. Abram first heard the name El Shaddai at the age of 99 when God told him that he would confirm the covenant by making him a father of many nations. It seemed impossible because Abram and his wife were well beyond child producing age but nothing is impossible with El Shaddai. He is more than enough for any situation or circumstance! God's resources are unlimited and we have access to them! In another lesson we will look at the part that blood played in God's covenant with Abraham.

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