

## Chapter 17

*God renewing his promifes to Abram, 5. changeth his name, 10. and commandeth Circumcifion, 15. changeth alfo his wiues name, promifeth a fonne of her. 20. Likewise that Ifmael shal profper, 23. and the fame day Abraham circumcifed him felfe, and Ifmael, and al the men of his houfe.*

**A**nd after that he beganne to be nyntie and nyne yeares old, our Lord appeared vnto him: and faid vnto him: I am the God almightie: walke before me, and be <sup>a)</sup>perfect. <sup>2</sup> And I wil make my couenant betwen me and thee: and I wil multiplie thee excedingly. <sup>3</sup> Abram fel flat on his face. <sup>4</sup> And God faid to him: I am, and my couenant is with thee, & thou shalt be a father of manie nations. <sup>5</sup> Neyther fhall thy name be called any more Abram: but thou shalt be called Abraham: becaufe a father of <sup>♠</sup>many nations I haue made thee. <sup>6</sup> And I wil make thee encrease excedingly, and I wil make thee into nations, and kinges shal come forth of thee. <sup>7</sup> And I wil eftablish my couenant betwen me and thee, and betwen thy feede after thee in their generations by a perpetual couenant: to be thy God, and thy fedes after thee. <sup>8</sup> And I wil geue to thee, and to thy feed the land of thy peregrination, al the land of Chanaan for a perpetual poffeffion, and I wil be their God. <sup>9</sup> Againe God faid to Abraham: And thou therefore shalt keepe my couenant, and thy feed after thee in their generations. <sup>10</sup> This is my couenant which you shal obferue betwen me and you, and thy feede after thee: Al the malekind of you <sup>♠</sup>shal be circumcifed: <sup>11</sup> and you shal circumcife the flesh of your prepuce, that it may be for a figne of the couenant betwen me and you. <sup>12</sup> And

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<sup>a</sup> He is perfect in this life, that fincerly & diligently tendeth towards perfection of the next life. And this God here commanded to Abraham, & Chrift to al Chriftians. *Math. 5. S. Aug. li. de perfect. cont. Cæleft.* See *Gen. 6. v. 9.*

infant of <sup>a</sup>)eight daies shal be circumcised among you, al malekind in your generations: afwel the homebred shal be circumcised, as the bought feruant of whofoeuer he is, not of your ftocke: <sup>13</sup> and my couenant shal be in your flesh for a perpetual couenant. <sup>14</sup> The male, whose flesh of his prepuce shal not be circumcised, that foule <sup>d</sup>)shal be deftroied out of his people: becaufe he hath broken my couenant. <sup>15</sup> God faid also to Abraham: Sarai thy wife thou shalt not cal Sarai, but Sara. <sup>16</sup> And I wil bleffe her, and of her I wil giue thee a sonne, whom I wil bleffe, and he shal be into nations, and kings of peoples shal spring of him. <sup>17</sup> Abraham fel vpon his face, & <sup>b</sup>)laughed, faying in his hart: Shal trowest thou to him that is an hundred yeare old a sonne be borne? and Sara that is nyntie yeares old shal she beare? <sup>18</sup> And he faid to God: I would that Ifmael may liue before thee. <sup>19</sup> And God faid to Abraham: Sara thy wife shal beare thee a sonne, and thou shalt cal his name Ifaac, and I wil establish my couenant to him for a perpetual couenant, and to his seed after him. <sup>20</sup> Concerning Ifmael also I haue heard thee. Behold, I wil bleffe him, and encrease, and multiplie him exceedingly: twelue dukes shal he beget, and I wil make him into a great nation. <sup>21</sup> But my couenant I wil establish with <sup>c</sup>)Ifaac, whom Sara shal bring forth to thee at this time an other yeare. <sup>22</sup> And when he had leaft of speaking with him, God ascended from Abraham. <sup>23</sup> And Abraham tooke Ifmael his sonne, and al the homebred of his house: and al whom he had bought, al the males of al the men of his house: and he circumcised the flesh of their prepuce forthwith the very same day, as God had commanded him. <sup>24</sup> Abraham was nyntie and nyne yeares old, when he circumcised the flesh of his prepuce. <sup>25</sup> And Ifmael his sonne was

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<sup>a</sup> Circumcision and name receiued the eight day signified the affociation of Saints in heauen after the feuen dayes trauel of this world. *Ser. de circum. apud S. Cyprian.*

<sup>b</sup> Abraham laughed not doubting but reioycing. *S. Ambro. li. de Abraham c. 4. S. Aug. li. 16. c. 26. de ciuit.*

<sup>c</sup> Temporal bleffings were common to Ifmael, but fpiritual pertained properly to Ifaac and Ifrael, & their fucceffors.

ful thirtene yeares old at the time of his circumcifion. <sup>26</sup> The felfsame day was Abraham circumcified and Ifmael his fonne. <sup>27</sup> And <sup>a</sup>)al the men of his houfe, as wel the homebred, as the bought feruantes and ftrangers were circumcified togeather.

## ANNOTATIONS

Gal. 4. 5 Manie nations.) Abram fignifying *Hiegh* or *Noble father*, changed into Abraham, which fignifieth *Father of manie* (nations) and Sarai fignifying *My Princes*, changed into Sara, which abfolutely fignifieth *Princede*, import great Myfteries intended by God. For by this changing of names was declared and confirmed, that Abraham by the iffue that he fhould haue of Sara, fhould be the father of manie nations, which S. Paul exprefly applieth to his fpiritual children, thofe efpecially that fhould beleue in Chrift, of the Gentiles prefigured by *Iaac borne of the freevvoman, by the promife*, as the Iewes were prefigured by *Ifmael borne of the bond vvoman according to the flesh*, concluding with the prophet Efai, Ifa. 54. that *Manie are the children of the defolate, that before vvas barren*. For albeit Abraham was natural father of foure nations, The Ifmaelites, Madianites, Idumeans, and the Ifraelites, yet he was fpiritual father of manie more, to wit, of al nations that beleue in Chrift from his owne time to the end of the world, of which fome are Iewes, but the greateft part Gentiles, as the fame Apofle fheweth. *Rom. 4. Gal. 4. Ephef. 3. Collof. 1.* and in other places. Wherby is clere, that the Church of Chrift doth alwayes confift of manie nations, not as Donatiftes and Proteftants abfurdly fay, fometimes of few inuifible or vnknown perfons, for fo Abraham fhould fometimes be father of few or no nations, which derogateth either from Gods omnipotencie if he could not, or from his fidelitie if he fhould not maintaine his promife, made to Abraham for euer.

10 Shal be circumcified.) The Sacrament of Circumcifion here firft intituted, about 400. yeares before the Law of Moyfes, is a perfect figure of Baptifme, refembling it in foure things. Firft by both thefe Sacraments the faithful are diftinguifhed from infidels. Secondly profeffion of faith is made in them both, either by thofe that receiue the fame, if they be of difcretion, or by others for them, if they be infants. Thirdly by both thefe Sacraments entrance is made into the Church, and to the participation of other Sacraments and fpiritual rites. Fourthly both thefe Sacraments induce fubiectiō to the iurifdiction, and lawes of the Church. But

Changing of names is myftical. *S. Aug. li. 16. c. 28. & 39. ciuit. S. Hierom. Tradit. Hebraicis.*

Abraham natural father of foure nations: fpiritual father of al that do beleue in Chrift. *Rom. 4, 11.*

The Church of Chrift euer confifteth of many nations.

Circumcifion a figure of Baptifme.

Baptifme excelleth Circumcifion.

<sup>a</sup> Conformitie in Religion conferueth peace in euery familie. *Tho. Anglus in hunc locum.*

Baptifme doth farre excel Circumcifion in that it is more eafie, or leffe painful, more vniuerfal, for it pertaineth to al nations, and both fexes; and efpecially in vertue and efficacie, for Baptifme as an infrumental caufe remitteth finne and iuftifieth, Circumcifion was only a figne that grace was geuen, & finne remitted. Againe Baptifme imprinteth a character in the foule, the other leaueth a marck only in the flefh. Finally Baptifme openeth the gate of heauen, in vertue of Chrifts paffion now pafte, which circumcifion could not before Chrift fuffered death. Of which both refemblance and difference S. Auguftin treateth in manie places, efpecially *li. 3. de doct. chrift. c. 9. Epift. 118. and Ianuarium. li. 19. c. 13. cont. Fauft. & in Pfal. 73.* where he alfo maketh like comparifon between other Sacraments of the old and new Teftament.

14 Shal be deftroyed.) Here occurre two difficulties about the true fenfe of this hard place. Firft whether this punifhment belonged to them only, by whofe fault circumcifion was omitted: or to infants alfo that fhould be circumcifed and were not. Secondly whether temporal punifhment, or eternal was here threatned for tranfgreffion of this precept. Touching the firft doubt, it femeth probable, that this punifhment pertained only to thofe, by whofe negligence themfelues, or others of their charge, were not circumcifed: for that the reafon why fuch a one is punifhed is aleaged, *Becaufe he hath broken Gods couenant.* VVhich is only in their powre to kepe or breake, that are of difcretion, and not in the powre of infants. The indifferencie alfo of the Hebrew and Greeke text fauoreth this fenfe, for where according to the Latin we read, *The male vvhofe flefh of prepuce is not circumcifed,* the Hebrew and Greke may be tranflated, *The male that doth not circumcife the flefh of his prepuce,* which can not be ment of an infant of eight dayes old. This expofition is likewife confirmed by example, *Exodi. 4.* where Moyfes was in danger to be flaine by an Angel, becaufe his fonne was not circumcifed. Neuertheles S. Auguftin (*li. 3. c. 18. cont. Iulian. li. 16. c. 27. ciuit.* and in other places) proueth that this commination pertained alfo to infants. Whofe iudgement is confirmed by the 70. Interpreters adding for explication thefe wordes, *the eight day:* which neceffarily include infants, as fubiect to this punifhment; not for that they could tranfgrefle this precept, or commit a new finne, but for lack of circumcifion. The reafon wherof is, for that God now determined this only remedie for original finne, in the male fex of Abrahams feede, in place of facrifice, or other profeflion of faith vfed before, and that in cafe it could be conueniently be applied for otherwife the former remedies were ftill aualable.

Concerning the other difficultie manie ancient fathers expound thefe wordes, *shal be deftroyed out of his people,* of only temporal punifhment; either death, as the like phrafe fignifieth, *Exodi. 12. VVhofoeuer shal eate leauened bread, his foul shal perish out of Ifrael;* or temporal feparation from the people of God, as *Num. 19.*

Two difficulties.

To whom the punifhment pertained whē circumcifion was omitted.

What punifhment was threatned.

*Euerie one that toucheth the dead corse, shal perish out of Ifrael.* But S. Auguftin (*li. 3. c. 18. cont. Iulian li. 5. hypog. & alibi.*) S. Gregorie (*li. 4. Moral. c. 2. & 3.*) S. Profper (*li. de promiff. Dei p. 1. c. 14.*) S. Beda (*li. 2. in Lucam. c. 8.*) and S. Bernard (*Ser. 3. de circum.*) vnderftand this threatning not only of temporal punifhment, but alfo of eternal feparation from God, and the focietie of Saints. And that alfo infants are fo fecluded only for lack of this remedie, as now children which dye without Baptifme, cōmitting no new fault are depriued of the vifion of God, for their original finne not remitted. VVherupon is geathered that albeit Circumcifion was principally intituted to diftinguifh the people of God, which fhould come of Abrahams feede, from other nations, yet it was alfo for remiffion of original finne: not in al, but in thofe to whom God appointed this particular remedie.

Circumcifion  
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