

God Almighty's Power Covenanted unto Us for Saving and Sanctifying Grace

Genesis 17:1-8

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Main Idea: **God Himself is the strength and certainty of our walking before Him**

Introduction: What do believers who have been stumbling along in their own strength need? This is the question we see presented in Abram, who has been dealing with the consequences of the Hagar choice for thirteen years, as this passage opens.

- 1. The power of God Almighty at work in believers.** Such believers need the power of God Almighty at work in them. We might think that “I am God Almighty” is the prelude to destroying a sinner, since that is what Abram is. But it is instead the prelude to sustaining a saint, since that is also what Abram is: “I am God Almighty, [so] walk before Me and be blameless”!
- 2. The presence of God Almighty pressed into believers.** Such believers need the presence of God Almighty pressed into them. The knowledge that we are before His face is a help against all fear of men, and even against service of self.
- 3. The purity of God’s standard applied to believers.** Such believers need the purity of God’s standard applied to them. Be blameless. Not the run-of-the-mill blamelessness in the eyes of men, either. Blameless in the eyes of God! Only one who has been shown God’s grace in Christ can have this as a standard, because only Christ’s sacrifice and righteousness can be the sure fulfillment of such a standard on our behalf, and only Christ’s life in us can be a sure hope that we will one day be conformed to such a standard.
- 4. The promise of God Almighty covenanted to believers.** Such believers need the promise of God Almighty covenanted to them. We who are so deserving of wrath need God’s glorious swearing of Himself to us as an encouragement to our faith (cf. Heb 6:13-20). It was not for His sake that God entered into such a commitment, but for ours.
- 5. The propriety (ownership) of God Almighty pronounced upon believers.** Such believers need the propriety (ownership) of God pronounced upon us. One way that God reaffirms that He has special ownership of Abram is by changing his name. “You are Mine, so you will be called what I call you.” And so He calls us saint, brother, believer, sons of God, etc. in the Scripture.
- 6. The prosperity (fruitfulness) of God’s commitment held out unto us.** Such believers need the prosperity (fruitfulness) of God’s commitment held out unto us. What sad consequences we endure daily from our fall in Adam. But God’s salvation in Christ is even more effective. v6, 8 present the opposite of Abraham’s current experience. And as God tells us throughout Scripture of the effects of His gospel, we expect this opposite-fruit to continue.
- 7. The persistence of God’s covenant affirmed to us.** Such believers need the persistence of God’s covenant affirmed to them. Persistence across generations: just as the fall comes upon our children simply because they are ours, all of these covenant benefits are held out to them by God, also simply because they are ours. And persistence across time. This is still the same covenant that we are in when we believe in Jesus. It is an everlasting covenant that belongs to all who have the same faith in Christ as Abraham (cf. Rom 4:11-18, Gal 3:7, 29).

Conclusion: Be patient! Attend upon God’s means, but wait upon God’s grace