

Genesis: Back to Obedience
A New Name
Genesis 17:1-27

In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet says, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." She spoke these words from her balcony, unaware that Romeo was listening below. She was pondering the fact that she belonged to the Capulet family and he to the rival Montagues, and that the label that had been imposed on them beyond their control at birth is what was keeping them from getting married. What difference should a name make?

1. A new name signifies promise.
2. A new name signifies covenant.
3. A new name signifies reward.

For Abraham and Sarah, it was the beginning of a new day. They had been given new names. The promise had been renewed. The covenant had been confirmed, the reward was on its way, the baby of promise, the one whose lineage would eventually produce a Savior. This is the moment Jesus referred to when he said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad."