

Circumcision 1

Ex 4:24; Josh 5:2; Gen 17

Ex 4:24 explains the origin of circumcision. Gen 17 is the sole account of Israel's circumcision.

Circumcision then was integrated into the Mosaic system — under the law. But Abraham was not under the Mosaic system, 430 years before Moses. Circumcision was integrated into the Mosaic system in connection with the Passover (Ex 12:44) and continued as if the promise YHWH made to Abraham would be fulfilled “by law practices.” But the promise is fulfilled by faith alone. Rom 4 — Circumcision continued under the Mosaic system until the law was fulfilled by Messiah and circumcision was no longer a legal requirement. Acts 15:1 — “Some men from Judea” did not understand that the Law was fulfilled and that New Covenant Israel was no longer bound by its legal requirements. Rom 8:1-4 — So in the New Covenant circumcision was carried out by revelation and faith of the Abrahamic covenant which was 430 years before Moses.

The New Covenant Body now fulfills all that was promised to Abraham by faith. So circumcision is now done in faith not in the letter of the law.

Under the Law

The early church in Jerusalem had so long associated circumcision with Moses that they had forgotten the origin of it and the purpose of it. They had grown dull to the reality of why they were doing it except that it was *the law*, and they thought that obedience to law was how they would *earn* eternal life, apart from YHWH and love for Him.

Abraham in Gen 17 wore the *mark* of the *promise* made to him by YHWH in his flesh as an everlasting memorial and sign of His faithfulness to keep His covenant with him. Only those who do not circumcise their seed in Israel are cut off from the promise to Abraham. Gen 17:14 — Everyone born into the family at eight days old, plus everyone who comes in from the

nations, must wear this seal if they are included in the faith of Abraham and his seed. All else will be a part of the nations (Rev 21:26; Eph 4:17; Ex 12:40-51).

The New Testament Judaism could not associate circumcision with Abraham but only with Moses. This was the center of much controversy in the early church (Acts 15:1,5; 21:21; Gal 5:2-3)

Yahshua had to remind them that it went back to Abraham — 430 years before Moses (Jn 7:22). And also Paul was emphatic that it was the *current understanding of the Mosaic connection* that was obnoxious to the New Covenant (Gal 5:2,3,11), and he constantly brings it back to Abraham (Rom 4:11; 15:8, etc.).

Gen 17 describes 1) a spiritual operation (verse 10), and 2) a national sign designating membership in Israel (verse 11), as in Gen 34:14-15, but the sign was a by-product of the covenant. Jdg 14:3 — You were identified as an Israelite so your behavior should correspond to your name.

In Gen 17:10-14 circumcision is identified with the covenant made with Abraham. Acts 7:8 — Circumcision signifies that which Paul describes to the Thessalonians in 2 Ths 2:13 — in relation to the love of the truth.

This speaks of the chosenness of Abraham's seed from the beginning — chosen with Abraham for Salvation through sanctification (which circumcision signifies), bearing the mark of the continued work of enduring in the land as an Israelite until the promises to Abraham, our father, would be fulfilled. The Messiah was one of the promises fulfilled to Abraham's seed, and He was the Seed Himself. This, however, did not annul physical circumcision, but instead put it in the spiritual realm — out of the letter of the law — no longer just a ritual law observance. Now, since the Spirit has come to us, the true circumcision can be finally performed upon a nation that bears His Name (1 Pet 2:9). 2 Ths 2:13-14 — This is done through sanctification of the spirit and faith in the truth. And it was for this He called you through our gospel — that you may gain the full purpose for the Messiah coming as Abraham's seed (and the purpose for us receiving His Spirit), that we might gain the glory of Messiah, our Sovereign Yahshua.

We attain to this by the true circumcision, standing firm and holding to the teachings which we were taught (2 Ths 2:15).

The Seal of the Covenant

In the example of Abraham's life, we see that first YHWH appeared to him and made a covenant with him in Gen 15, and in Gen 17 Abraham made one with Him — to circumcise all his descendants in order for the promises to come to his seed. This was a promise to obey Him. Gen 18:19 says Abraham was “chosen (or ‘known’) *for this very purpose.*” We are in this very same *chosenness* in Messiah, his Seed. We are known also by our Father YHWH and His Son YAHSHUA, through the Holy Spirit given to those who love their God (Gal 3:16; 1 Cor 8:3; Josh 5:2-9; Num 14:34; Ex 6:12,30; Jer 6:10). Only the word can bring the remedy. Rom 4:11 speaks of circumcision as a “seal” upon YHWH's gift of righteousness.

Also Yahshua is a *minister of circumcision* “for the truth of YHWH that He might confirm the promises given unto the fathers” (Rom 15:8, KJV). Circumcision is that work of His grace by His Spirit whereby He chooses out and marks men for His very own. From among the nations (Rom 15:8-13) he extracts Jacob's life (Rom 11:26).

This circumcision is between YHWH and Abraham's seed (Gen 17:7; Gen 17:1). Unless those who are circumcised walk in this manner, they have become uncircumcision. The prophets take circumcision out from under the law and into its reality (Jer 4:4; Rom 2:25-29; Acts 15:5; Gal 5:3,4,6).

The mark of circumcision is altogether one's own choice, as an adult, to be all that Yahshua wants him to be. And in circumcising his children on the 8th day, it is a choice to invoke the name of Yahshua to bring about the promise of Gen 18:19. Our children are not yet circumcised unless it is done by a holy priest in the name of Yahshua the Messiah for His very own purpose to be accomplished. It is a spiritual operation. There is no use for our children to be circumcised if the father is not and won't be circumcised himself. The father gives his holy consent to the operation and promises to bring the child up in this revelation.

Circumcision expresses the cost of being a SON — in Messiah, the Seed of Abraham. You sit down and you count the cost (Lk 14:26-34) so that the nation won't come to verse 34. This is the mark one must bear who has counted that cost. There is a costly demand that our Father makes of those He calls and chooses to be His very own special possession (Tit 2:14) and marks with a sign of His Covenant. Circumcision is a prayerful operation — one full of awe and wonder and praise to our God. It is limited to Abraham's seed, plus all strangers or foreigners who come into that seed.

Rom 2:27 speaks about the Gentiles, those who were not circumcised at birth according to the law (the uncircumcision by nature). They are outside of Judaism and have lost their national identity as Israelites. They no longer circumcise according to the law as the Jews do, even to this day.

The Condition of the Heart

Rom 2:27 and Gen 17:10,13,14 are inconsistent sounding. Dt 10:16; Jer 4:4 warns that without the reality the sign is nothing (Jer 9:25-26). Outward circumcision must come forth from circumcision of the heart. Jer 9:25 could be speaking of ourselves and our children (Dt 30:6; Jer 31:31-32:40, etc.). Without obedience, circumcision becomes uncircumcision (Rom 2:25-29). The outward sign fades away compared with the realities of keeping the commandments. 1 Cor 7:18,19; Gal 5:6; 6:15 — Christians today should not scorn the *sign* of circumcision, even though they have not entered into the seed of Abraham themselves (Gal 5:2), because Christians need the *reality* of circumcision (Col 2:13; Isa 52:1). This is the circumcision of Messiah — putting off the *body*, not just *part* of it — not by the letter but by the spirit (Col 2:11-12). This is the New Covenant transaction of Spirit and Truth in baptism after hearing the word of salvation (Col 2:13; Eph 1:13). It is the *first cut* of this circumcision (Phil 3:3).

Dt 10:16 — *Stiffen*, obstinate, stubborn, stiff-necked (Gen 17; Ex 4:24; Josh 5:2; Ex 12:44), as the Evangelicals, Protestants, and Catholics. The first church in Jerusalem, at least a

segment of it, had so long associated circumcision with Moses that they had forgotten about their father Abraham, the father of the true circumcision (Acts 15:1,5; 21:21; Gal 5:2-3).

Our-Sovereign had to bring it to the Jews' attention that Abraham was the father-of it not Moses. In the New Covenant no one could receive true circumcision under the old law system of Moses, but they could under the New Covenant, which fulfills the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision.

Gal 5:2,3,11 — Circumcision under the law is excluded, which brings it back to Abraham in the New Covenant — not circumcision by the letter, lest one be cursed by not obeying all the law (ritualistic and ceremonial, etc.) in the letter of it.

Rom 4:11-12; 15:8 — Messiah is a minister of circumcision.

The Abrahamic covenant consisted of Abraham's family, nation, and land. YHWH promised Abraham the possession of the whole land from the Euphrates southwestward, and Gen 13:15,18. More than fourteen years later YHWH again appeared (Gen 17) to Abraham to reaffirm this promise for the future of his family, nation, and land. His covenant promise was made to Abraham in Gen 15:7-8 concerning the land YHWH had promised him in Gen 12:7. (It is reaffirmed as we eat and drink at table.) Spiritual twelve-tribed Israel is the only Israel who can fight the *battle* to gain the land of promise. Physical Israel today can do nothing, for the flesh profits nothing. So here we are, "dying daily" for the land (Lk 9:23).