

## **“Circumcision”**

Did Paul change Yahuahs Law, by telling converts that they didn't have to be circumcised (in order to be saved). Or was Paul correctly interpreting Torah for those who were confused about it? Did Paul correctly interpret the Law concerning new converts and circumcision? I can definitely understand why there was confusion about it. Let's take a close look at what the Scripture has to say about circumcision. **Take care to read the end of this section, as my opinion has changed on the teaching that follows. I didn't choose to remove the teaching, as I think it serves a purpose in understanding different perspectives.**

**Acts 15:1** – You know circumcision actually came way before Moses received the Torah from Yahuah; it was first given as instruction to Abraham in **Genesis 17**. So here we see that people were arguing that you couldn't have salvation without circumcision.

It started with Abraham and Abraham had salvation before he was circumcised!

**Genesis 17:10-14 & 22-27**

**So here we see that any uncircumcised male would be cut off from his people and guilty of breaking Yahuahs covenant in vs.14**

Pauls argument in the renewed covenant (New Testament) is that circumcision isn't necessary for salvation, because circumcision came after Abraham believed Yahuah and it was reckoned as righteousness to him!

**(Genesis 15:6)-** this is what Paul is saying in **Romans 4:1-13**

All Paul is arguing is that salvation can come before circumcision as is the case with Abraham- However, **Romans 3:31** we know that faith should lead us to keeping Torah

**Genesis 21:4** – Isaac circumcised on the eighth day

**Leviticus 12:1-3** The giving of the commandment from Yahuah through Moses in the Torah

Now Moses also had an incident with circumcision himself, even before this.

**Exodus 4:24-26**- Moses didn't do what he was supposed to do

It would appear as though Moses wasn't obedient to the already known commandment to circumcise your son on the 8<sup>th</sup> day- but nevertheless, his son was circumcised, although more than likely not on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

**Colossians 2:8-14** – circumcision without hands; here it would appear as though there is a circumcision made without hands- a type of spiritual circumcision or circumcision of the heart- something that baptism (immersion in water/raw-hats) is supposed to be symbolic of- dying to self or the flesh and living for Messiah, awake for the spiritual growth. Many in the Hebrew roots movement refer to immersion in water as a Mikveh. Mikveh actually refers to a body of water whereas raw-hats refers to being immersed in a mikveh.

**Jeremiah (YirmeYahu) 4:1-6**

**I Corinthians 7:17-20** – Pauls direction to all the churches

This is one area that I'm not too sure about Pauls conclusion as far as remaining in the condition you were called in- For if any man is in Messiah he is supposed to become a new creation- that means change- spiritually and physically.

Obviously circumcision was a huge issue- you had gentiles being grafted into Israel and no longer being gentiles- and I'm sure all the circumcised wanted the new converts to be circumcised as well- can't say that I blame them. Especially those with daughters who desired to marry the newly converted uncircumcised men. This could've been a serious issue for many parents; a bit of a social dilemma.

I do think it's important to make a distinction between circumcision necessary for salvation, and salvation without circumcision. I don't think circumcision is necessary for salvation. However, I do think all men who come to salvation- like Abraham- it should lead them to circumcision. And my opinion is that all men should get circumcised. I think Paul simply argues that if you aren't circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day- then if you become a convert at 30 years old and get circumcised- you are not fulfilling the commandment of circumcision- because that is something your parents have to do on your behalf.

And how about an uncircumcised fellow who becomes grafted into Israel, a believer in Messiah! Wouldn't it be his duty to circumcise his future sons, as he learns and keeps Torah! Now I will say that I know of some believers who think circumcision for a gentile is wrong because you are bringing yourself under the wrong covenant. I also know most messianics believe that we, gentiles grafted into Israel, must be circumcised to partake in Passover. I actually disagree with both opinions. I think a gentile grafted into Israel could be circumcised if he chooses too, but this will not fulfill the commandment to be circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day. I also think he should circumcise his children on the 8<sup>th</sup> day as commanded in Scripture by Yahuah. But if a gentile converts to following Yahusha and he is well past his eighth day of life I don't think it's necessary for him to be circumcised to partake in Passover. Although if I were in his shoes I think I would get circumcised. But that is only my opinion.

**Acts 16:3** – Paul circumcises Timothy; Timothy's mother was a Jew and his father a greek.

**Acts 21:17-26** Paul kept Torah, Paul taught others to keep Torah

This portion of scripture even hints to the fact that they were still doing sacrifices, and of course they were, until 70 c.e. (common era) when the temple was destroyed, But I'm not talking about Jews who didn't believe in Messiah, I'm talking about **Jews who believed in Messiah, doing sacrifices!**

**Exodus 12:42-49** I believe this lines up with Pauls New Testament (Brit Chadasha or Renewed Covenant) teaching on Yahuahs Supper which I think is Passover and not a Pre-Seder. No unbeliever is to partake of Passover.

**Vs.45- foreigner= 8453 = one who dwells amongst you but isn't native-** I see it as a goat amongst sheep

**Vs.48- stranger=1616= one who is a permanent resident, once a citizen of another land**

**Passover is not for the uncircumcised, Passover is not for the unbeliever, Passover is not for the one who does not keep the commandments of Yahuah. We are not to invite people who don't keep the commandments of Yahuah to Passover. So make sure that you don't , and if there are those who don't keep the commandments of Yahuah and want to come to our Seder Service- you need to explain to them that they can come to the other feasts starting with Shabbat, and join us and learn of the commandments of Yahuah, but they cannot partake of Passover with us.**

**Ephesians 2:11-22** we are no longer strangers, sojourners, aliens, but we are like the native of Israel and all the laws of Yahuah apply to us as they do to them. One law for all- for there is neither Jew nor gentile in Messiah- but one law for all.

**I Corinthians 11:23-34** – Now does this mean that when Passover rolls around we need to line you men up and make sure that you're circumcised? No, I don't think so.

**Vs.28-** Says let a man examine himself

**Vs.25 & 25** These verses are referring to the last Passover Seder Yahusha partook of before He was crucified

**Vs.26- "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup"**. I think Christianity takes freedom with this verse to eat the Passover seder as often as they like (represented by communion), even though they don't do it on the appointed time of the Father. This verse isn't saying you can make

the appointed time of Passover whenever you would like it to be. This verse is speaking of the appointed time. "As often" is referring to the actual appointed time of Yahuah. As often (when you eat the Passover), you proclaim Yahushas death until He comes.

**Vs.27- Unworthy= unfit**

**Vs.28- Examine= test, prove, tried, to be approved, to be qualified**

**Do you qualify- do you line up with Yahuahs ways.**

**You must measure yourself with Yahuahs standard/ with Torah.**

**Judgment= liable, in danger of**

**Sleep= Spiritual death, or cloudy judgment**

I think that this scripture supports Exodus 12 in that no unworthy, unfit, uncircumcised at least in heart, no one who doesn't keep the commandments of Yahuah, and no one who is not in right standing with Yahuah has any business partaking in Passover.

And if you do partake of this feast in an unworthy manner it will bring sickness to you and weakness and sleep. Maybe it's a lack of discernment, a dulling of the spiritual senses so you can't tell the difference between clean and unclean, or between the kodesh and the profane.

So we need to make sure that we are getting the leaven out of not only our homes, but our lives, our hearts and minds and preparing ourselves for Passover.

**I Corinthians 5:8 malice= depravity; cloudiness strong#G2549 which is a synonym of strongs #G4190**

**Wickedness= strongs #G4190 a synonym of strongs #G93 which is a synonym of strongs #G458 meaning lawlessness**

**Sincerity= clearness, purity, clarity**

## Truth= the Law

**Exodus 12:47-49** No unbeliever is to participate in Passover; so don't be inviting people who don't even attempt to keep the commandments of Yahuah, because they want a taste of Hebrew roots.

**I Corinthians 11:23-34** No unbeliever is to participate in Passover

Passover isn't for the uncircumcised, so the Kingdom of Yahuah isn't for the unbeliever. We need to circumcise our hearts and taste of the good things of Yahuah here on earth – which are just shadows, a down payment, a taste of the great things of heaven to come!

That used to be my view on circumcision. Which honestly I thought it was pretty grounded. I welcomed uncircumcised men to Passover as long as they showed an outward fruit of keeping Torah. I thought Paul was saying if you weren't circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day then being circumcised later in life was not qualifying as keeping the commandments of Yahuah. And I still think I am right in those two areas. However, where I think I am in error is in teaching gentiles that it is ok to become circumcised, or in teaching gentiles to circumcise their children on the eighth day. Bear with me and I will try to explain:

Gentile circumcision is not evident in the new testament. Neither for the gentile convert, nor for the gentile children. And teaching gentile circumcision of the adult or the child seems to go against the renewed covenant (new testament).

Renewed Covenant (New Testament) verses against gentile circumcision or hinting that gentile circumcision isn't necessary: **Acts 15:1-32**;

**Romans 2:26-29; 3:30 weak; 4:1-12, 16 verse 11 is good**;

**I Corinthians 7:17-20, 24**;

**Galatians 2:3,12** verse 3 is good for Titus a greek wasn't compelled to be circumcised;

**Galatians 5:2,11** verse 2 is the best verse on this topic or so I think

**Galatians 6:12-17**

It would seem as though **immersion in water is the new sign of the renewed covenant** in regards to circumcision being made without hands.

**Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:11-12**

It would also seem as though **Hebrews lineage (Jews) should still be circumcising their children-** **Acts 21:20,21**. And if there is a Hebrew adult who isn't circumcised and comes to faith in Yahusha- he should be circumcised- **Acts 16:1-3**.

**I don't know how to explain Exodus 12:48**, but it does seem to me as though circumcision of gentiles in the renewed covenant isn't evidenced in any way. It seems to me as though immersion in water replaces circumcision as far as gentiles go. The Ethiopian immersed by Phillip, Luke, Cornelius, Titus wasn't compelled- there is no example of these gentiles being circumcised and yet it seems evident that they kept Passover. I would also think that if a Hebrew person comes to believe that Yahusha is Messiah; it would be good for them to be immersed in water as well. **Acts 2:10,41 and Paul's immersion Acts 9:18**.

So even though we don't have an example in the renewed covenant of gentiles being circumcised- even the opposite, it seems to be condemned- how do we get away from this commandment in Exodus 12. It seems to me that one could be in danger by eating the Passover uncircumcised and that one could be in danger by telling gentiles grafted into Israel not to become circumcised or their males with them. Seems to me that one could be an extremist on the opposite side of this view point and say it's heretical to tell people not to be circumcised; just as there are extremist with this view point saying it's heretical to teach gentiles to be circumcised.

One thing I do think is that it's not good to be overdramatic about the issue. Calling people heretics and saying they have lost their salvation because of a lack of understanding isn't helping anything. We are all seemingly searching for the truth, and sometimes we miss it- but that doesn't send us to hell as heretics; otherwise what hope would there be for any of us- knowing that at some point we were all wrong- it would be arrogant to think that at this point we are completely right.

I can understand both sides, both view points, the renewed covenant seems to not support gentile circumcision, and the Tanak supports it; and we are not to add to Torah nor take away from it. So if the renewed takes away from it then is James and the elders and Peter and Paul all guilty of taking away from the commandment to circumcise? No, they shouldn't be labeled heretics, there is possibly some change to the law at this point. I don't think it's necessary to label those who think gentiles should be circumcised as heretics either because they obviously have a valid point. But the renewed covenant seems to go against it - for example: **Galatians 5:2 If you receive circumcision, Yahusha will be of no benefit to you.**

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