

Circumcision

God promised Abraham that he would make him exceedingly fruitful, and that Abraham and his descendants would own the land of Canaan forever.

As a sign of faith, that he believed God, Abraham and every male in his family and household (aged 8 days and older) would be required to be circumcised.

Genesis 17:6-11, 14

And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. **And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.** And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. **This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be**

circumcised. ¹⁴And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

Any male who was not circumcised would be cut off from his people because he had broken the covenant with God.

Genesis 17:14

And **the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.**

Abraham immediately made sure every male in his family and household was circumcised, including himself.

Genesis 17:23-27

And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, **every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the**

flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. **And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.**

Paul explains it best. The outward circumcision, the letter of the law, was not what was important. It was what the outward circumcision represented, the inward circumcision of the heart. It was a show of faith in God's covenant with Abraham and all of his descendants. That is the spirit of the law.

Romans 2:28-29

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But **he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart,** in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Before they entered Canaan, God told the people of Israel about the blessings that would be theirs

if they obeyed Him, and the curses He would bring upon them if they disobeyed Him. God told them that if they obeyed, He would circumcise their hearts so they would live.

Deuteronomy 30:5-6

And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. **And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart,** and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

Israel did not obey God. They plugged their ears and turned their hearts into stone.

Zechariah 7:11-12

But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, **they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets:** therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

Moses told the people.

Deuteronomy 10:16

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart,
and be no more stiffnecked.

Jeremiah gave Israel a warning from God.

Jeremiah 4:4

**Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take
away the foreskins of your heart,** ye men of
Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury
come forth like fire, and burn that none can
quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Just before he was stoned, Stephen told the scribes and Pharisees that they always resisted the Holy Ghost because their hearts were uncircumcised. This is how we know that they blasphemed the Holy Ghost when they stoned Stephen—the Holy Ghost was speaking through him.

Acts 7:51

Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

There are other parts of the body that need to be circumcised in some people. Jeremiah told Israel that no one was listening to him. Their ears were uncircumcised.

Jeremiah 6:10

To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, **their ear is uncircumcised**, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Moses was afraid he couldn't speak to Pharaoh for God because his lips were uncircumcised.

Exodus 6:11-12

Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

12And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened

unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear **me, who am of uncircumcised lips?**

Isaiah, also, when he was chosen by God to speak for Him, realized that his lips were unclean or uncircumcised.

Isaiah 6:4-8

And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, **Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.** Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

And what about women? Women showed their faith by marrying circumcised men. Young girls and unmarried women would only be part of the

nation of Israel if their fathers or other male relatives (with whom they lived) were circumcised. Remember, an uncircumcised man was not allowed to be part of Israel because he did not follow God's law.

Genesis 34:14

And they said unto them, **We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us:**

In Romans, Paul explains that Abraham could be the father of all believers, circumcised and uncircumcised, because he received the covenant from God while he was yet an uncircumcised Gentile. His faith caused him to follow God's covenant, and he was then circumcised.

Romans 4:11

And **he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised:** that he might be the **father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised;** that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

Paul explains in Galatians that circumcision is part of God's law and we have been freed from the law by Christ. If you are relying on circumcision for your salvation, you don't need Christ!

And, you can't rely just on circumcision, you are obliged to follow the entire law.

Galatians 5:2-3

Behold, I Paul say unto you, **that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.** For I testify again to **every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.**

James 2:10

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Believers, men and women today, have been circumcised by Christ. Christ took our "body of the sins of the flesh" from us and put them on himself and destroyed them at His death, burial, and resurrection. Our circumcision was made without hands.

Colossians 2:10-11

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: **In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:**

We were dead because of sins and our uncircumcised flesh until Christ made us alive by freeing us from the law (handwriting of ordinances that was against us) and our sins by taking them all to the cross with him.

Colossians 2:13-14

And **you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him**, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

With the Holy Ghost living in our hearts, we are living testaments. The information is not written in ink or on stone tablets (like the 10 Commandments) but in our hearts by the Spirit

of the living God. (Remember the Holy Ghost worked through holy men to write the Bible.)

2 Corinthians 3:1-3

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? **Ye are our epistle written in our hearts**, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be **the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.**

This is our circumcision—that of the heart.

2 Corinthians 6:16

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for **ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; **Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**

God was not able to circumcise the hearts of the people when they first went into the land of Canaan because of their disbelief. When Christ comes to set up His kingdom of heaven on the earth, He will, at last, circumcise the hearts of the people.

Ezekiel 11:17-20

Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. **And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:** That they may walk in my statutes, and keep

mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 36:24-28

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. **A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.** And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.