

#27: Tazria (הזדוּשׁ) "She conceives" / #28: Metzora (מִצְוֹרֵעַ) "Leper"

Torah ~ *Leviticus 12:1-15:33* | Prophets ~ *2 Kings 4:42-5:19; 7:3-20* | New Covenant ~ *Matthew 8:1-17; Acts 22:14-16*

Crucify the Flesh

In this weeks Torah Portion the Lord commands the Israelites to circumcision their children in *Leviticus 12:3* where it says "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised" NKJV. This is not the first time we see circumcision in the Bible, for the Lord commanded Abraham in *Genesis 17:12-13* to circumcise all males when they are eight days old. Therefore circumcision is a dedication service for your child to be dedicated to the Lord.

Many people say that the law of circumcision has been abolished because they misinterpret *Acts 15*.

"Circumcision" in *Acts 15:1* refers to a formal conversion into Rabbinical Judaism called the "custom of Moses".

The "yoke" in *Acts 15:10* refers to all of the rules that was added to the Torah by the Rabbi's, but not the Torah itself.

In light of *Acts 15* we can now correctly interpret *Galatians 5:2* where it says "if you let yourselves be circumcised, Messiah will be of no benefit to you" TLV. What this verse means is "if you undergo a formal conversion into Judaism as a necessary component of your salvation, then Messiah will profit you nothing." Messiah would be of no value because the convert has opted to accomplish his own salvation through his own works. So Paul forbid them to be circumcised through the rabbinic rules for conversion.

Circumcision of the Heart

Deuteronomy 10:16 "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked." KJV

Jeremiah 4:4 "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, remove the foreskin of your hearts, O people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else my wrath will go forth like fire, and burn with no one to quench it, because of the evil of your doings." NRSV

Galatians 5:16 "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." NKJV

Galatians 5:24 "Those who belong to Messiah have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." MWEB

To be saved (born-again) is more than just knowing in our minds that God is real or that Yeshua is His Son. Real salvation is making Yeshua the Lord (Master) of our lives and dying to our old fleshly nature by repenting of our sins. It is at the point of our salvation that the Holy Spirit will circumcise of heart, but it is a daily battle for us to crucify our flesh.

Baptism

The word baptism comes from the Hebrew "tevilah" and the Greek word "baptismos", meaning "to be immersed" in water. Baptism and circumcision have many things in common. Both baptism and circumcision are pictures of our dedication to the Lord. Baptism is a picture of crucifying the flesh, circumcision is the removal of the flesh. Baptism is a sign of the New Covenant through Yeshua, circumcision is a sign of the Abrahamic covenant.

Baptism (immersion) in water during the times of the Temple was carried out in a mikvah, which is a Hebrew word meaning "gathering of waters." When someone would go down into the waters of the mikvah, they "symbolically" died to their old life and come up out of the water as a new and spiritually clean person. So it should be no surprise to see the New Testament use terms such as "born anew", "new creation", and "born from above" when referring to baptism.

Paul parallels circumcision of the heart with baptism in *Colossians 2:11-12*.

Galatians 3:27 "For all of you who were immersed in Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah." TLV

In Closing

Matthew 28:19 "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." NKJV

Acts 2:38 "Peter said to them, "Repent, and be immersed, every one of you, in the name of Yeshua the Messiah for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." MWEB

Acts 22:16 "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name." ESV