

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah
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Circumcision of the Heart

(Part 2)

Matithyah (Matthew) 10:37-38

37 "He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

38 And he that does not take his cross and follow after Me, is not worthy of Me."

This study deals a lot with physical circumcision. Please, let me make this very clear from the very beginning. Physical circumcision cannot save a person any more than obeying the commandment of wearing tzitiot, or keeping the seventh day Shabbat, or keeping any or all of the other mo'edim. This goes for any and all of the commandments of YHWH. Obeying the commandments cannot and will not bring salvation to a person. Obeying the commandments of YHWH from a heart filled with His love brings us into a deeper and closer walk with Him through Mashiach Yeshua. For it is only through the Blood of Mashiach Yeshua that one can even begin to keep and to do His commandments from a heart filled with love. This is true of both those before and after Mashiach Yeshua. Those who came after Mashiach look back in faith. Those who came before Mashiach looked forward in faith. Either way it is by faith that we keep and obey His commandments.

Now then, having said that, when a person is in a right relationship with YHWH through Mashiach Yeshua, then such a person will obey all the commandments of YHWH; or at the very least be moving in that direction. This certainly includes being physically circumcised and even more importantly, physically circumcising all their sons.

Last week we dealt with how the Scripture defines what it means to be circumcised in one's heart. In that study we have this paragraph.

"Perhaps one way by which we can understand how these two types of circumcision actually complement one another is to look at immersion in water. While there are a few who teach that baptism actually saves a person, this is actually a fringe group and not the mainstream of the believing community. It has been rightly said that to be immersed in water is an outward sign of an inward act. This is a very good analogy of

reality in this case. This is also true (or at least it should be) of the two types of circumcision. The outward cutting of the flesh does not save a person any more than being dipped in water can save a person. But the cutting of the flesh should be a sign of the work that has been done in the heart, just like being immersed in water should be a sign of the work of YHWH in a person's heart. Now we all know that just because a person goes through the outward motions and signs, does not make it a reality inwardly."

When looking at immersion in water the outward act logically follows the work that YHWH has already done in one's heart. However, on the surface this does not seem to be the case with physical circumcision and circumcision of the heart. At least, not until we take a much closer look at it.

Here is the first commandment that YHWH gave concerning physical circumcision. Please read and consider it carefully and prayerfully.

B'reshit (Genesis) 17:10-12

10 "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you; every male among you shall be circumcised.

11 And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant between Me and you.

12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner that is not of your seed."

The commandment from YHWH to all the male descendents who desire to be a part of Shema Yisrael is to be circumcised on the eighth day of their lives. But the question that this raises to us is this: Does this not indicate that the outward work of circumcision of the flesh happens before the inward work? Furthermore, the commandment to be physically circumcised is only to males, while the circumcision of the heart is to all, both male and female. So what would be the outward sign of circumcision of the heart in a female's life? Is there even one?

As we are about to see, it is the same outward sign in both a male and female of the inward work of circumcision of the heart. Furthermore, as we are about to discover, the inward work of circumcision of the heart comes before the outward sign of the cutting of the flesh.

Here is a question for us to ponder. If the inward circumcision of the heart comes before the outward sign and the outward sign is indicative of the inward work, does this not imply that a person has to make choices? If this is so, then how can a male child of only eight days old make any choice in this matter? Simply put, he cannot.

This brings us face to face with His truth in this matter. You see, it is when a married couple has a child, specifically a male child, that they must make the choice to circumcise or not to circumcise their newborn son. It is the hearts of the father and the mother who must

experience the circumcision of the heart before they are ready to circumcise the flesh of their offspring. You see, it is not the cutting of one's own flesh that is the outward sign of the inward work of circumcision of the heart. But rather, it is the cutting of the flesh of one's male child that is indicative of one's heart circumcision.

It is one thing to cut one's own flesh, but it is another thing altogether to do this to one's child. Avraham was challenged with this same principle from YHWH Himself.

B'reshit (Genesis) 22:2

And He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, even Yitzchaq, and you go into the land of Moryah. And offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of."

As we see in our opening Scripture, YHWH calls us to follow Him so completely that not even a beloved family member will stand between us and Him. This includes one's own son. Are we willing to cut the flesh of his foreskin when he is eight days old? Do we love YHWH our Elohim enough to obey His commandments?

When a couple who has a male child makes the choice to circumcise that child on the eighth day, they are in effect entering into a blood covenant with YHWH. These new parents, both the father and the mother, must have their own hearts circumcised in order to circumcise the flesh of their son. In effect, these parents are doing as Avraham did in offering up his son.

Yochanan (John) 14:15

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."

One of the dilemmas of today is that as many men are returning back to YHWH and His Torah through Mashiach Yeshua each man is faced with the very difficult question of physical circumcision for himself. This is so because his parents may not have been circumcised in heart to the point that they were willing to follow this command. Therefore, not only does this man have to struggle through this himself, but then he has to do it for his son, who may already be older than eight days old. This is not an easy struggle to be sure, considering that this is taught against in Christianity.

Please understand that what we are dealing with here in this teaching is not salvation. One cannot be saved by being circumcised, either in the flesh of his foreskin or in his heart. However, if one is saved, then some of the fruit that this will bear according to Scripture is that one will be circumcised in his heart as well as being physically circumcised.

In part, what it means to be saved by the Blood of Mashiach Yeshua is that one will grow and mature in His understanding which will include keeping and obeying His commandments, just as Mashiach Yeshua taught us to do. This certainly includes being circumcised.

Philippians 2:5

Have this mind in you, which was also in Mashiach Yeshua.

And what was the mind of Mashiach?

Yochanan (John) 6:38

“For I am came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.”

Yeshua has shown us what to do in order to show that we love YHWH our Elohim. We are to obey His commandments. Scripture clearly admonishes us to follow in the footsteps of our Mashiach Yeshua.

We know that the testimony of Scripture is that Mashiach Yeshua obeyed all the commandments and did not sin in any matter. Let us take a hypothetical question, which is actually not all that hypothetical. If Yeshua would have had a son, would He have had him circumcised on the eighth day? To be sure, He would have! Do you no realize that you are a child of the King? As such do you not see that it is His will for you to be circumcised both in the flesh of your heart as well as your skin?

Yochanan Aleph (1st John) 2:6

he that says he abides in him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

And again;

Kepha Aleph (1st Peter) 2:21

For hereunto were you called; because Mashiach also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps.

If a person is going to be absolutely serious about following in the footsteps of Mashiach Yeshua, then he will have to be circumcised in his own heart. If he is circumcised in his own heart, then when he has children, he, along with his wife, will share in the responsibility of circumcising the flesh of their sons. The outward sign of heart circumcision will be borne out in the flesh of their sons.

In this way, both men and women can and do share in both the circumcision of the heart as an inward work as well as the outward sign of physical circumcision.

Let us look at one example in Scripture of what not to do in this regard. It is a powerful lesson, if one is willing to accept the Scriptural record as it stands!

Shemot (Exodus) 4:24-26

24 And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that YHWH met him, and sought to kill him.

25 Then Tziporah took a flint, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said, "Surely a bridegroom of blood you are to me."

26 So He let him alone. Then she said, "A bridegroom of blood you are, because of the circumcision."

For whatever reason, Moshe had not circumcised his son. YHWH had come out against Moshe as a result. Now this passage can be interpreted to mean that YHWH was going to kill Moshe or it can be interpreted to mean that YHWH was going to kill his son. It is likely by the wording that it actually means both. It certainly means that YHWH was going to kill Moshe's son. For it seems doubtful by the attitude recorded about Tziporah that she would have circumcised their son to save only Moshe's life. But she certainly would have done it to save her son's life.

That aside, it is clear that it was Tziporah who made the choice to circumcise, even though it was done under extreme duress, indicating to us that there was a lack of heart circumcision in both parents at this moment in time. This brings us to the logical question: Did this lack of heart circumcision in Moshe contribute to later events in his life which led to his not being able to enter into the land?

This seems likely, which should teach us the importance of being circumcised not only in heart, but also of having the outward signs to back up that inward work. Now, as we discussed in the previous study, just because someone has the outward work does not mean that the inward work is done. But if the inward work is done, then it will bear the appropriate fruit outwardly at some point, only one of which is circumcising one's male children. Besides, whichever way it is, YHWH will know without question.

Let us be careful to conduct ourselves with all due diligence in following the example of Yeshua our Mashiach so that we will be able to receive all the blessings that YHWH desires to give to us.

Shabbat Shalom

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