

# **GENTILE CIRCUMCISION?**

**BY AVRAM YEHOSHUA**

**[THE SEED OF ABRAHAM](#)**



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# GENTILE CIRCUMCISION?

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

When a male Gentile Christian is physically (covenantally)<sup>1</sup> circumcised he takes himself out of the New Covenant and places himself in the Abrahamic/Mosaic Covenant. He leaves the Body of Messiah Yeshua and is now part of unsaved, sinful Israel, and as the Apostle Paul states, he has fallen from Grace (Galatians 5:4), whether he knows it or not. By his wanting ‘to obey Torah’ (i.e. Mosaic Law), or ‘to keep Passover,’ or any other reason, in essence, he has told the Messiah that His sacrifice was ‘not enough’ to make him part of the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16), and he has voluntarily placed himself ‘under the Law’ (Gal. 4:4-5; 21f.).

This paper will bring out why Gentile circumcision is a damnable heresy, and why no Gentile should be physically, covenantally circumcised.<sup>2</sup> First we’ll begin with a proponent of Gentile circumcision. Tim Hegg is a well known teacher among ‘Gentile circumcision’ groups. He leads a movement called ‘One Law.’ I’ll present his chief New Testament argument for why he believes Christian Gentile males should be physically, covenantally circumcised, and reveal why he’s absolutely wrong.

Tim Hegg bases his theological position on the Apostle Paul’s young assistant, Timothy. Hegg sees Timothy as a *Gentile* that Paul circumcised, and builds upon this fanciful and false understanding, citing Acts 16:1-3, to present his dangerous and heretical teaching—that male Gentile Christians should be circumcised *for the right reason* (i.e. in order to keep Torah;<sup>3</sup> Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:43-49). He is quick to point out that it’s “not for salvation,” as he knows that Scripture specifically comes against against (e.g. Acts 15). Yet, a rose by any other name is still a rose. Gentile circumcision is never addressed in Scripture ‘for the right reason/s. In other words, if God had wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised, He would have had a few Scripture witnesses saying such, but none is found.

Back to Hegg’s alleged biblical support. Why would Paul circumcise a Gentile man (i.e. Hegg’s Gentile Timothy) when Paul expressly teaches against it?<sup>4</sup> Hegg has no answer for that, but instead writes:

“Is Timothy an example of a *non-Jew*” (i.e. a Gentile) “who, *for reasons unknown to us* but acceptable to Paul, underwent circumcision as the appropriate measure for a Torah submissive Gentile? Is it possible that Paul was convinced of Timothy’s genuine understanding of justification by faith alone, so much so that receiving circumcision was permissible as a Torah observant act without any sense of gaining status with God?”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The physical circumcision of the Bible (Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:43f.) is always a *covenantal* circumcision. It allows a male Gentile to come into covenant with Israel and her God (Ex. 12:43f.). This circumcision was given to Father Abraham as the *sign* of the covenant that God had made with Abraham (Gen. 15:1f.).

<sup>2</sup> There have been many Gentile babies, with Christian and non-Christian fathers and mothers, circumcised for health reasons, in a hospital, but their circumcision is not a biblical circumcision even though the two might look identical. Muslim boys are religiously circumcised at 13 years old, but their circumcision does not bring them into the Covenant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. Circumcision isn’t bad, but a Gentile Christian male must not be biblically circumcised ‘in order to follow Torah,’ or ‘to keep Passover,’ etc.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew word *Torah* is used for the first five books of Scripture (Genesis through Deuteronomy; for the Law of Moses), and today as a general term for all of Scripture (the Hebrew Bible). Torah applies to every believer. Physical covenantal circumcision, though, doesn’t apply to the male Gentile believer because he is not of the racial Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who were given the *sign* of circumcision for their sons forever.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 4:1-16; 1st Cor. 7:17-24; Gal. 1:6-9; 2:1-5; 5:2, 11; Phil. 3:2-3f.

Aside from some obvious problems (Hegg makes Gentile circumcision a matter of subjectivity—Paul *saw* that Timothy had a *genuine understanding of justification alone*, and speculation—*for reasons unknown to us*, which means that Hegg has no New Testament Scripture to support his position), he is greatly mistaken when he teaches that male Gentile Christians should be physically (covenantally) circumcised ‘in order to obey Torah.’

Timothy was *not* an example of *Gentile* circumcision. Timothy was seen by Paul as a Jew, and Paul circumcised him because he wanted Timothy to minister alongside of him among the *non-believing Jewish* people. Timothy hadn’t been circumcised as a baby and this would have been a major Gospel hindrance for Paul *among the Jews*. Acts 16:3 states,

‘Paul wanted this man to go with him and he took him and circumcised him *because of the Jews* who were in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.’

Why would Paul need to circumcise a *Gentile* man *for the non-believing Jews* in the area? They would have cared less about a *Gentile* being circumcised, and actually, they would probably have been very offended. They might have said to Paul, ‘We don’t believe in your Jesus, and therefore, your circumcision of Gentile Timothy isn’t valid!’ Paul’s circumcision of a Gentile Timothy would have raised more problems than it solved. With Luke writing, though, that the Jews ‘knew that his father was a Greek,’ the unbelieving Jews in the area would have realized that Timothy’s belief in Messiah Yeshua had caused him to keep the commandment of circumcision, as a Jew (cf. Acts 21:20-24). This is exactly what Luke writes of as the *cause* for Timothy’s circumcision: ‘because of the Jews...in that area.’

Timothy was seen as a Jew by those Jews, as well as by Paul and Luke, even though he hadn’t been circumcised when he should have been—when he was eight days old (Gen. 17:10-14), hence, the phrase, ‘his father was a Greek,’ which reveals the reason why Timothy hadn’t been circumcised as an infant. Timothy’s mother was Jewish (Acts 16:1) and *this* is the criteria that Paul went by, despite a passing reference by Hegg to Shaye Cohen’s work on Timothy allegedly being a Gentile.<sup>6</sup> (In Judaism if the mother is Jewish the child is also Jewish.) Ben Witherington dismantles Cohen’s arguments, saying:

“S. Cohen has argued at some length that Acts 16:3 implies that Timothy was a Gentile, and that even if he had a Jewish mother he would still have been viewed by Paul (and Luke) as a Gentile because the matrilineal principle that the son of a Jewish mother and a non-Jewish father did not come into Judaism before the second century AD. Neither of these arguments is compelling. The very reason for mentioning *first* in v. 2” (*sic*;<sup>7</sup> it’s verse 1) “that Timothy was the son of a Jewish women is to prepare for what is said in v. 3—Paul has him circumcised. Had this information been omitted in v. 2” (*sic*; it’s v. 1), v. 3 would have been inexplicable. There is obviously some connection between the two facts in the author’s mind. Furthermore, we are told that Timothy was circumcised *because of the Jews* in Lystra’ (his hometown) ‘and Iconium (v. 3,” *sic*; it’s v. 2). “The assumption is surely that they would assume he should have been circumcised.”<sup>8</sup> Whether

<sup>5</sup> Tim Hegg, *The Letter Writer: Paul’s Background and Torah Perspective* (Littleton, CO: First Fruits of Zion, 2002), p. 114. Hegg writes, “Paul felt free to have Timothy circumcised because it was a matter of Torah-obedience,” and on p. 285, that Timothy was a “Torah-obedient Gentile.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113, notes 232-233.

<sup>7</sup> The Latin adverb *sic* (‘thus;’ in full, *sic erat scriptum*, ‘thus was it written,’ inserted immediately after a quoted word or passage, indicates that the quoted matter has been transcribed exactly as found in the source text, complete with any erroneous or archaic spelling, surprising assertion, faulty reasoning, or other matter that might otherwise be taken as an error of transcription. (From <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sic>)

<sup>8</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), p. 475, note 19: “For some reason Cohen, *Was Timothy Jewish?* p. 254, focuses entirely on the clause that refers to his father being Greek as proof that Luke (and the Jews in Lystra and Iconium) thought of Timothy as being a Gentile. This makes Paul’s actions, which Luke clearly records, quite in-

they would have or not, in Luke's narrative outline this story prepares for the remarks in 21:21 and makes clear to Theophilus in advance that there was no basis for the complaint that Paul was insisting that *Jews* forsake Moses, in particular that they not circumcise their" sons.<sup>9</sup>

Witherington further takes the sociological foundation out from under Cohen, and therefore, Hegg, by saying that 'the key anonymous ruling found in *m. Qidd.* 3:12 is admitted by Cohen' to be earlier than the second century AD, and that,

"Cohen's reading of Acts 16:1-3 makes no sense in light of Acts 15. The decree made clear that circumcision was not expected or required of Gentiles."<sup>10</sup>

Intermarriage with non-Hebrews (pagans) was forbidden by the Law of Moses.<sup>11</sup> Obviously, Timothy's mother hadn't followed that commandment. Yet, rabbinic thought stated that where the mother was Jewish, the children were to be regarded as Jews. By Paul's day, as Witherington has shown, any child who had a Jewish mother was considered Jewish according to the Rabbis. Witherington also adds that, "Lüdemann is right to conclude... 'Timothy was a Jew by rabbinic law.'"<sup>12</sup> Theologian David Williams affirms this, stating that,

"the children were regarded as Jews (*j. Yebamoth* 2.6). Clearly, in Timothy's case the Jewish influence was predominant (2 Tim. 3:15). But for some reason—his pagan father may have prevented it—he had never been circumcised."<sup>13</sup>

Internationally recognized scholar I. Howard Marshall also sees Timothy as Jewish. He writes:

"Timothy ranked as a Jew' and 'it was absolutely essential to give him good standing in the eyes of the' non-believing 'Jews among whom he would be working.'"<sup>14</sup>

The early 20th century scholar, R. J. Knowling, said that if Timothy had remained uncircumcised,

"he would have been unacceptable to them" (i.e. the unbelieving Jews in the area) "since with a Jewish mother and with a Jewish education" (Acts 16:1; 2nd Tim. 3:10-15) "he would be regarded as"<sup>15</sup> an apostate, but since he "thus submitted even in manhood to this painful rite," it "afforded the clearest evidence that neither he, nor his spiritual father, despised the seal of the covenant for *those who were Jewish according to the flesh*, while the Christian Jews would see in the act a loyal adherence to the Jerusalem decree."<sup>16</sup>

Acts 16:1-3 presents Timothy as a Jew who hadn't been covenantally circumcised as a baby, and was circumcised by Paul so that they could preach Messiah Yeshua among the Jews who didn't yet believe in Him, especially in Timothy's hometown of Lystra. If not, the Jews there could have rightly said, "You're

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explicable. Probably the  $\gamma\alpha\upsilon$  clause ('for/because they all knew that his father was a Greek;' v. 3) should be seen as an explanation of why Timothy had not *yet* been circumcised, as his fellow Jews were well aware."

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 474-475.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 'm. Qidd.' is short for *Mishnah Qiddushin* (Sanctification), a tractate in the Mishnah, part of the Talmud.

<sup>11</sup> Ex. 34:12-16; Dt. 7:1-4, see also Ezra 9:1-2, 12; 10:1-14f; Neh. 9:-13; 10:28-30; 13:23-28.

<sup>12</sup> Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476, note 23: *Early Christianity*, p. 176.

<sup>13</sup> David J. Williams, author; W. Ward Gasque, New Testament editor, *New International Biblical Commentary: Acts* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), p. 275. "*j. Yebamoth* 2.6" is *Yrushalami [Jerusalem] Yebamoth* and deals with Levirate marriage in the Jerusalem Talmud.

<sup>14</sup> I. Howard Marshall, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., author; Professor R.V.G. Tasker, M.A., B.D., General editor, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Acts* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 260.

<sup>15</sup> R. J. Knowling, D.D.; author; W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A., LL.D., editor, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. two: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 339.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

a Jew who believes in Jesus, but you're not circumcised?" Hegg's interpretation, that Timothy is a Gentile who was circumcised 'for the right reasons,' is seriously flawed. Also, Hegg has no 'second witness' in the New Testament (Mt. 18:16; 2nd Cor. 13:1; 1st Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28) to support his position on either Timothy being a Gentile, or any Gentile being covenantally circumcised "in order to obey Torah." Hegg has fabricated a "Gentile Timothy" in order to ram through his false theology on Gentile circumcision.

An interesting phenomenon, and one with theological significance, is where Timothy's story of circumcision is presented—sandwiched right in-between Acts 15:1-32 (the very decision that the Gentiles *weren't* to be circumcised) and Acts 16:4-5, which states that Paul and Silas, etc., took the Decree of Acts 15 to many congregations! It's impossible to understand that Luke would have written of a Gentile man being circumcised, with these two theological bookends acting as staunch pillars against it. Obviously, Timothy was *not* a *Gentile* that Paul circumcised 'for the right reason' and/or 'to obey Torah' and/or 'to keep the Passover,' etc., but that Timothy was a Jew who had come to Messiah and fulfilled Torah's commandment of circumcision for the Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 17:10-14).

After those three succinct verses about Timothy, Luke writes of Paul and his companions proclaiming the Decree of Acts 15, that the Gentiles *weren't* to be covenantally circumcised:

'And as they went through the cities, *they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem.* So, the congregations were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.' (Acts 16:4-5)

The *decrees* spoke of the Gentile not being circumcised in order to be saved and the four rules they needed to implement immediately, in order for their faith in Messiah Yeshua to be seen as genuine.<sup>17</sup> The Greek word for *decrees* is *dogma*, which means, 'a formal statement concerning rules or regulations that are to be observed.'<sup>18</sup> Acts 15 *authoritatively* determined that Gentile circumcision, in order to be saved, was not the will of God, and we *never see any reasons* in the New Testament why Gentiles should or could be covenantally circumcised at a later time, 'for the right reason,' as Hegg heretically teaches.

Nowhere does the Book of Acts, or anywhere else in the entire New Testament, even hint at, let alone address, the issue that a Gentile (or his eight day old son) should receive physical covenantal circumcision in order to comply with Gen. 17:10-14 and/or Ex. 12:43-48, if he understood that he wasn't doing it in order to be saved or more properly, justified, or to justify his son. (It's hard to imagine how an eight day old infant could understand this.) The New Testament neither speaks of it nor authorizes it. In other words, if Hegg is right about Gentile circumcision, why doesn't the New Testament teach and affirm it?

Seeing that Gentile circumcision for justification is negated in Acts 15, it would seem imperative that Gentile circumcision 'for the right reason' be written in the New Testament, so as not to confuse the two issues, but Luke doesn't write anything about Gentiles being circumcised 'for the right reason,' nor does Paul, nor does anyone else. One would think that if it were part of God's will, someone in the New Testament would have endorsed it, taught it, and/or perhaps even shown us a living example of a Gentile who had been circumcised 'for the right reason.' The New Testament, though, explicitly states that the Gentile *wasn't* to be circumcised for theological or covenantal reasons.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Acts 15 is *the* theological pillar in the New Testament that establishes the Law of Moses for every believer in Yeshua. [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#). The book reveals that the four rules of Act 15:20 are not for 'table fellowship,' as the Church erroneously teaches, but are a comprehensive *unit* on sacrificial-sexual idolatry. James presents them as a biblical filter for the Gentile Christian to pass through to prove that his faith in Yeshua is genuine.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Bauer, augmented by William F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 254.

<sup>19</sup> Acts 15:1-32; Rom. 2:26-29; 3:30; 4:1-12, 16; 1st Cor. 7:17-19, 24; Gal. 2:3, 12; 5:2, 11; 6:12-17. The covenantal circumcision of Gen. 17:10f., is a physical circumcision that is done in order to enter into the covenant of Father Abraham, and is theologically different from a medical circumcision, even though the two may look



Old Testament circumcision cannot be stripped of its theological (covenantal) reality by saying that one isn't doing it for justification, but in order to be 'Torah obedient.' It remains an act of entry into the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants; of becoming *one* with Israel 'after the flesh' (1st Cor. 10:18; cf. Gal. 6:16), something that no male Gentile Christian should want to do because it eradicates the efficacy or intended result of Messiah's sacrifice, meaning that it wasn't enough for the Gentile (Gal. 5:4).

With Timothy being circumcised it reveals that boys born to a Jewish woman should be considered Jewish and physically, covenantally circumcised, but even if 'only' the father is Jewish, the boy should still be circumcised.<sup>20</sup> This transcends rabbinic tradition, where only the mother's lineage determines if the child is Jewish, but Tamar wasn't a Jewess, yet who would say that Perez wasn't a Hebrew or part of the covenant that God gave to Abraham (Gen. 38:29; 46:12)? Asenath was an Egyptian woman (Gen. 41:50-52), but both her sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, literally became two of the 12 Tribes of Israel (Gen. 48:1-5; Num. 1:10). Also, Moses married a Midianite woman named Zipporah, who bore him two sons (Ex. 18:6) and we know that God almost killed Moses because he hadn't circumcised one of them (Ex. 4:24-26). Therefore, sons born to any parent who has any Jewish lineage should be seen as Jewish and circumcised on the eighth day because Jews are born into the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants through physical lineage.<sup>21</sup> Tim Hegg has no biblical (nor rabbinic) foundation to call Timothy a Gentile, and therefore, his theological position, that Gentile circumcision 'for the right reason' is God's will, is a major heresy because it diametrically opposes the Word of God and negates Yeshua's sacrifice. It's the sin of presumption.

## But what of Passover for the Gentiles?

One reason why most leaders in the Hebrew Roots/One Law movement want male Gentile believers to be circumcised is because of what is written in Ex. 12:43-49 concerning the Passover, especially verse 48:

“And when a stranger dwells with you *and wants to keep the Passover* to Yahveh, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it and he shall be as a native of the land. *For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.*”<sup>22</sup>

Their reasoning is logical—Gentiles should keep Mosaic Law and Gentile covenantal circumcision is part of the Law. Therefore, the male Gentile should be circumcised, 'not for salvation, but for the right reason' (in order to celebrate Passover; Exodus 12:48, or 'to keep' this part of the Law, etc.). As logical as this reasoning is it's false because the New Testament *repeatedly teaches against it*. Satan, too, knows how to use logic and this is a prime example of how he has deceived many well meaning people.

There is no *appended* legislation in Acts 15 (or anywhere in the New Testament) that allows for Gentile circumcision in order to keep this part of Torah (Ex. 12:48; Gen. 17:10-14), and so, Gentile circumcision is struck down in the New Testament—it's not an option for any reason. For instance, in Acts 15:24, after all the Jewish Christians realized that physical covenantal circumcision for the Gentile wasn't what God

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identical.

<sup>20</sup> If one knows that he has any lineage from the natural seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (i.e. that there's a Jewish grandparent or great-grandparent, etc. in his background) he/she should consider himself a Jew.

<sup>21</sup> Physical covenantal circumcision effects the most intimate part of a man and symbolizes that he is totally submitted to the God of Israel (Dt. 10:16; 30:6; Josh. 5:2-7; Jer. 4:4; see also Lev. 26:41; Ezk. 44:7). See Acts 21:20f., where Paul is slanderously accused of teaching that *Jews* shouldn't circumcise their sons. James knew that it was a lie and a distortion of Paul's teaching, so he led Paul to be purified, along with four other Jewish believers under the Nazarite Vow, in order to prove that Paul still kept the Law of Moses; Acts 21:24).

<sup>22</sup> Also important to them is Gen. 17:14: 'And the uncircumcised male child who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, *that person shall be cut off from his people*—he has broken My covenant!'

wanted in order for them to be saved (Acts 15:1-21), Yakov (Jacob/James, the half-brother of Messiah Yeshua) is recorded as saying in his letter to the Jewish and Gentile believers in Antioch that the Gentiles weren't to be (physically, covenantally) circumcised (and keep the Law in order to be saved):

“Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom we gave no such commandment—” (Acts 15:24).

According to those who teach Gentile circumcision, shouldn't James have said something like this:

“Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘You must be circumcised and keep the law’—to whom we gave no such commandment—*BUT when you realize that you're not to be circumcised for salvation, you must be circumcised in order to keep the Passover...*”

We never read of any writer in the New Testament speaking like this. What if a Gentile came to believe in Messiah Yeshua a day or two before Passover? Would that be enough time for him to realize that he wasn't being circumcised in order to be saved, but in order to keep Passover? One reason why there is no Scripture to this effect is because Gentile circumcision ‘for the right reason’ is *works righteousness*. According to the Law, if a man is part of Israel and doesn't keep Passover he will be *cut off* from Israel. Anyone *not* keeping the Passover under Moses was ‘cut off’ (Num. 9:13). It's quite a dilemma for the proponents of Gentile circumcision. In other words, according to their position, whether they realize it or not, the male Gentile *must be circumcised or he will lose his place in the Kingdom of God*.

Didn't God realize, though, what He had said to Abraham and Moses about circumcision (Gen. 17:10-14; Ex. 12:43-49)? Obviously, He did, but the ‘circumcision made without hands,’ pictured in Dt. 30:6, is what God requires of the Gentile (*and the Jew*) today. Physical biblical circumcision *for the Gentile* doesn't bring him (nor the Jew) into Yeshua's Kingdom—only the circumcision of the heart:

‘*For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Messiah Yeshua, and have no confidence in the flesh*’ (i.e. physical covenantal circumcision, for by it the Jew was saved, as the Rabbis still teach today; Phil. 3:3; see also Jn. 4:23-24).

‘*In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Messiah*’ (Col. 2:11).

The Scripture, that all who keep Passover must be physically, covenantally circumcised (Ex. 12:48), is of the Old Covenant and the Egyptian Passover, but in order to keep the Second Passover, Messiah's Passover in Jerusalem, one must be circumcised in the heart, which happens when one is Born Again (Jn. 3:3, 5). It's New Testament sign is baptism in water.

Paul seems confusing to some, in 1st Cor. 7:17-20, where he commands Jews to remain circumcised and Gentiles to not be circumcised, and ends by saying to keep the commandments of God. The commandment of circumcision for the Gentile is invalid because the Gentile was never under the Law nor part of the Covenant that God made with Abraham and Israel through Moses. The New Covenant has a new sign and both Jew and Gentile must have this in order to enter the Yeshuic or New Covenant. That's why it doesn't matter if the Jew is circumcised and the Gentile not.

Circumcision was given to the Jew as a *sign* of the covenant relationship that Abraham had with God (Gen. 17:1-14, 23-27), and therefore, with every Son of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This physical sign is still in effect for the Jewish believer and his sons, as is evident from the remark of James because the Jew is of that lineage/covenant. Some wrongly thought that Paul taught against Jews being circumcised, but this was put to rest by James (Acts 21:20-21, 24-25).

Others might say that if the Christian Gentile shouldn't be circumcised, then the concept of the Law still being in effect is shattered because, as they see it, if the Gentile doesn't have to keep one law he shouldn't have to keep any of them. This ‘all or nothing’ concept fails because it doesn't recognize the Abraham's

circumcision was the sign of the covenant, but a new sign, which actually is the greater fulfillment of the old sign, has been given—water baptism, which speaks of one’s heart having been transformed in being Born Again (cf. Dt. 10:16; 30:6).

As a side note, modification of a law does not do away with the entire law code. Some Mosaic laws are modified in the New Covenant. For instance, our Messiah, from the Tribe of Judah, is our High Priest, but Mosaic Law states that the high priest can only come from the Tribe of Levi (Ex. 28:1, 3; 29:30; Heb. 7:1ff.). Mosaic Law is for the Gentile, but God doesn’t want him to be physically, covenantally circumcised. The position of not having to keep any of the laws of Moses is clearly seen as non-biblical when one realizes that the laws of love for God and Man, as well as the laws against adultery and homosexuality, all come from Mosaic Law. This should not be ‘waved away’ by saying that they are moral laws, and so, they come into the New, for homosexuality today (and in ancient Greece) is seen as ‘moral.’

We Jews are also adopted into the Family of Israel who love Messiah, just as the Gentiles are.<sup>23</sup> It’s by *the circumcision made without hands*, being Born Again, that we enter into the New Covenant, which is symbolized by water baptism. The *sign* has changed to reflect that one is a new creature in Yeshua (more on this in *Yeshua’s Water Baptism*, p. 10f.) That’s why the Apostles Peter and Paul could say that (physical covenantal) circumcision wasn’t for the Gentile, but that *all Christians* must keep the commandments and rules of God *as they apply to them*.<sup>24</sup> Yet, wouldn’t the continued circumcision of Jewish sons create a problem if Gentile sons were not circumcised? After all, if both sets of parents were to keep the Law, how could one be required to circumcise his son, while the other was forbidden to do so? The theological reason is that the Gentile was never part of the Abrahamic Covenant, but the Jew is. Also, at any one time in Israel’s history only half the population was circumcised—the men, not the women! Yet the women were just as much “Israel” and a part of the Covenant as the men. This concept also applies to the Gentile. He is just as much a part of the New Covenant as the Jew, and ‘one’ with the Israel of God.

## CORNELIUS—THE FIRST GENTILE

Another major point against Gentile physical covenantal circumcision is Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48). He was the first Gentile to come to Messiah Yeshua (39-40 AD);<sup>25</sup> Acts 10:28, 34-35; 11:18; 15:7), but about nine years later, at the time of Acts 15 (48 AD),<sup>26</sup> where it was divinely determined that Gentiles weren’t to be physically covenantally circumcised, Peter stands up and relates that it was by his mouth that the Gentiles (meaning Cornelius, his household and friends) first heard about Messiah Yeshua. Yet, in those *nine years* Cornelius hadn’t been circumcised because here was Peter saying that it hadn’t happened (Acts 15:7-11). We know that Cornelius was walking in all the Law that applied to him, and with Peter and James coming against circumcision in Acts 15, would Cornelius ever need to consider physical circumcision? What was the need? Hadn’t he already kept Passover as an *uncircumcised* Gentile in those 9 years?

Hegg, though, would have us to believe that in order for Cornelius to be a ‘Torah submissive Gentile,’ he would have had to have been physically covenantally circumcised so that he could obey Mosaic Law (Ex. 12:48). If so, where do we find even a *hint* of that possibility for Cornelius, or any other Gentile for that matter, in Acts 15 or anywhere else in the New Testament?

The New Testament is God’s will for ascertaining if a Gentile should be physically, covenantally circum-

<sup>23</sup> Acts 15:7-11; Rom. 8:15-16, 23; Gal. 4:1-5; 6:15; Eph. 1:5.

<sup>24</sup> Acts 15:1, 7-11; 1st Cor. 7:17-24; see also Rom. 3:20, 31; 4:11.

<sup>25</sup> Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 346: 39-40 AD. Marshall, *Acts*, p. 183: ‘before 41 AD.’

<sup>26</sup> Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, pp. 486-488: 48 AD.

Douglas, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 1, pp. 279-283: 48 AD.

Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one, p. 692: 49 AD.

cised (PyCC) or not. Those who say that they want to follow the Law in the area of Gentile circumcision, but disregard what the New Testament says about it, are walking in the sin of presumption (Dt. 1:19-46, esp. v. 43; see also Num 14:44) and are involved in a major heresy that strips them of their salvation.

## Titus and Dr. Luke

Turning to Titus, one of Paul's Gentile traveling companions, Gal. 2:1-3 speaks of him being in Jerusalem with Paul (about 52 AD) among the Apostles and that he was 'not being compelled to be circumcised.'<sup>27</sup> *Why shouldn't he have been compelled to be circumcised* in order to keep the Passover? *When would he be compelled* to be circumcised? There's no mention of Titus ever being PyCC, and the obvious implication of what 'compelled' means is that he would never have to be circumcised.<sup>28</sup>

Just a few verses later Paul speaks of Peter's sin in separating himself from the Gentile Christians when *those of the circumcision* arrived (Gal. 2:11-13), obviously meaning the Jewish Christians. Weren't **any** of those Gentile Christians circumcised yet, in order to keep Passover or be Torah observant? They were some of the first Gentiles to believe in Yeshua (Acts 11:19-26), so how long would it be before some of them/most of them/all of them would be circumcised to keep Torah? Also, how could Paul use that language ('of the circumcision') *if Gentiles* had already been circumcised *for the right reason*?

There are some who misinterpret the phrase (that there isn't any Jew or Greek; Col. 3:11, etc.) to mean that those distinctions don't exist anymore, but the problem with their understanding is that Paul also says that there aren't any males or females, slaves or free. Would Paul endorse a marriage between two Christian men since 'men and women' didn't exist anymore? Of course not, and in the following verses Paul speaks to the slaves and to the masters, and to wives and to husbands (Col. 3:18-22; 4:1, etc.). Also, Paul continues to use, and make the distinction between the Jew and the Greek/Gentile (Rom. 1:16; 2:9; Gal. 2:11-13). What Paul means by speaking of 'no Jew and Greek,' etc., is that 'before God,' the Jew and the Gentile, the slave and the free, the husband and his wife, *are on equal footing* ('one in Christ;' Gal. 3:28). This was a new concept in pagan society, as well as Hebrew, *but it doesn't negate their racial or gender identity*.

Paul's sense of 'Jew and Gentile' is also seen when he begins to close his letter to the Colossians in chapter four, which was written toward the end of his life.<sup>29</sup> He speaks of Onesimus (v. 9) as 'one of you' (meaning that he was a Gentile, possibly of the congregation in Colosse). Was Onesimus circumcised? In vv. 10-11, Paul writes of Aristarchus, (John) Mark and a certain Jesus who was also known as Justus. Paul says that they are 'the *only fellow* workers for the Kingdom of God *who are of the circumcision*.' Paul then goes on to mention Epaphras and 'Luke, the beloved physician,' as well as Demas (vv. 12-14). How could Paul make such a distinction if all the Gentiles had been circumcised? If not, when would they be circumcised, and why hadn't any of them been circumcised?

How long had Dr. Luke been a Christian? According to Luke he had 'perfect understanding *from the very first*' (Lk. 1:3), which seems to imply that he was one of the first Gentiles to come to Christ in Antioch (Acts 11:19-20), which is dated about 41 AD.<sup>30</sup> How many years had Dr. Luke been with Paul when he wrote Colossians? Luke first 'appears' in Acts 16, with the beginning of his 'we' passages that speak of Luke writing of the events first hand.<sup>31</sup> Acts 16 is seen to have taken place about 48-49 AD. The letter to the Colossians is said to have been written from Rome about 58-62 AD.<sup>32</sup> Luke had been with Paul for at

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. Galatians was written from Ephesus about 52-53 AD.

<sup>28</sup> See Acts 21:25 (54-59 AD) where James reiterates that Gentiles 'should observe no such thing' (i.e. circumcision). To understand that James meant circumcision and not 'the Law,' see [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#) pp. 153ff. *Acts 21:25—Observe No Such Thing!*

<sup>29</sup> Colossians was written from Rome about 58-62 AD.

<sup>30</sup> Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 486-488.

least nine years and had been a believer for at least 17 years. Why hadn't this Gentile doctor been circumcised yet?<sup>33</sup>

Also significant is that Scripture implies that Luke, *while uncircumcised*, kept the Passover *before* Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians. Acts 20 took place about 57 AD,<sup>34</sup> yet it wouldn't be for at least one to five years later that Colossians would be written, but Luke records that he and the others stayed at Philippi *during the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread* (Passover week),<sup>35</sup> which strongly suggests that he kept the Passover with Paul in Philippi in 57 AD—*uncircumcised*:

‘But we sailed away from Philippi *after* the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days’ (Acts 20:6).

Paul certainly kept the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Acts 21:20-27). Are we to think that his good friend and Christian traveling companion Dr. Luke didn't?<sup>36</sup> Luke was *never* PyCC. How could he do such a thing if Gentile circumcision for the right reason is God's will?

## Passover in Corinth

Another facet of this issue on circumcision for the Gentile is seen when Paul writes to all the Gentile Christians in the Corinthian church about *not* being circumcised (1st Cor. 7:17-24) just *after he's already told them to keep Passover!* (1st Cor. 5:6-8) Many One Law/Hebrew Roots leaders *demand* that Gentiles be PyCC in order to keep Passover, basing their demand on Gen. 17:10-14 and Ex. 12:48. This is the logical outcome of their teaching on keeping Torah *and* being PyCC ‘for the right reason,’ and/or to keep Passover, etc. Yet, Paul, *certainly aware* of those verses in Torah, admonishes the Gentile believers in Corinth to keep the Passover and *not* be PyCC! Hmm...perhaps this is why most of those false teachers don't like Paul, wishing he hadn't written this, and other letters about Gentiles not being PyCC?

Unless one is ready to charge the Apostle Paul with heresy, which some in their pride and ignorance do,<sup>37</sup> Gentile Christians in the days of the Apostles *weren't* circumcised in order to keep Passover. If Gentile circumcision wasn't done in Apostolic times, why the need for it today? The teaching that espouses Gen-

<sup>31</sup> Acts 16:10, 11, 12, 13, 16; 20:6, 13, 14, 15; 21:8, 10-12, 14, 18; 27:1f., etc.

<sup>32</sup> Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. one, p. 692: 58 AD.

Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 233. Colossians was written in 61-62 AD.

<sup>33</sup> See [Luke the Jew?](#) for why Luke was a Gentile.

<sup>34</sup> Douglas, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Part 1, p. 279-283.

<sup>35</sup> The term *Passover* is used interchangeably with *the Feast of Unleavened Bread* (Matt. 26:17-20; Mark 14:12-18; Lk. 22:1, 7-14; Acts 12:3-4). See also Acts 27:9f., where Luke writes, ‘and sailing was now dangerous because *the Fast* was already over.’ The *Fast* that Luke refers to is the fast of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26-32), which occurs in mid to late October. From mid-September to mid-November it was ‘risky’ to venture into the Mediterranean Sea, while from mid-November to the beginning of March it was ‘dangerous’ because of the strong winds; James B. Pritchard, *The Harper Atlas of the Bible*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1987), p. 172. The *Fast*, like Passover, is a holy Sabbath, and if one doesn't keep it he will be ‘cut off from his people’ (Lev. 23:29-30). Luke wasn't circumcised, yet it seems that he also kept the *Fast*.

<sup>36</sup> Gentiles were to *imitate* the Apostle Paul (1st Cor. 4:14-17; 11:1; Phil. 3:15-17; 4:9; 1st Thess. 1:6-7; 2nd Thess. 3:7, 9), as he followed Christ.

<sup>37</sup> Some charge the Apostle Paul with being a false apostle and a heretic, revealing the height of arrogance, or perhaps I should say the depths of depravity? They don't understand his writings on the Law and/or circumcision, and so, some accuse the Apostle of being false and ‘an Apostle of the Devil,’ but ‘everyone proud in heart is an abomination to Yahveh. Though they join forces, none will go unpunished’ (Prov. 16:5). Charging Paul with heresy is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt. 12:31-32). Paul's writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit and recognized as such by James and all the other Apostles (Gal. 2:6-9; 2nd Peter 3:15-16). No one in the New Testament ever warns us to beware of ‘Paul the Apostate,’ as some now mockingly call him.

tile covenantal circumcision, ‘for the right reason’ is logical, false, deceptive and dangerous because it nullifies Messiah’s atoning sacrifice and takes the Gentile out of Yeshua’s Kingdom.

## YESHUA’S WATER BAPTISM AND GENTILE CIRCUMCISION

If circumcision was so important in the days of Abraham, Moses and King David, and it was, for that was the only way a Jew or a Gentile entered into the Old Covenant, why does God, in the New Covenant, nullify circumcision for the male Gentile Christian? Circumcision is nullified for the Gentile because both the covenant and the sign have changed. Covenants are made through the shedding of blood. The blood of the physical covenantal circumcision is symbolically linked to the blood sacrifices of the animals of the covenant that God made with Abraham by making circumcision the *sign* of that covenant (Gen. 15:1f; 17:1f.; cf. Ex. 24:1-8f.). The eight day old Hebrew infant, unbeknownst to him, but chosen by God, was brought into the covenant of Abraham by the shedding of his own blood in the act of circumcision. This linked him back to the animals sacrificed when God made His covenant with Abraham. Before the Gentile Christian comes to Messiah, also unbeknownst to him, he was chosen by God. Yeshua said:

“You did not choose Me, *but I chose you* and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, and that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” (John 15:16)

“And He said, ‘Therefore, I have said to you that *no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.*’” (John 6:65)

The Covenant of Circumcision for Abraham included redemption (future salvation) from Egyptian slavery and entry into the Promised Land (Gen. 15:12-14; Ex. 6:1-8). It was the prototype of God’s New Covenant with Israel (Jer. 31:31-34) in which His Son’s sacrifice, as the Lamb of God, brings about Israel’s redemption from sin, sickness and Satan, and brings us into the eternal Kingdom of Messiah. The *sign* of the New Covenant is not physical covenantal circumcision, but *water baptism* in the name of Messiah Yeshua,<sup>38</sup> which is based upon being Born Again (John 3:3, 5) and having one’s heart circumcised with the divine circumcision made without hands (Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11). This is the New Testament’s reality behind what God promised Israel in Mosaic Law (Dt. 30:6). Yet, how can *water* baptism link the believer to the *blood* of Yeshua’s sacrifice?

Baptism in water signifies the Christian’s *death* in dying to self (Rom. 6:1f.), *which symbolically speaks of the shedding of his blood.* This is the ‘blood’ of water baptism, which is the *physical sign* that both Jew and Gentile must have. The hope of every ancient righteous Hebrew was that his circumcised infant son would grow into a man who would love Yahveh and keep His commandments. Baptism in water speaks of that same hope being made possible by the *blood* and Spirit of Messiah. One is now able to love God with all his heart, his neighbor as himself and keep His commandments *by Yeshua’s blood and Spirit within.*

Being Born Again, symbolized in water baptism, brings this new reality with it—the circumcision of the heart. In Dt. 10:16 God *commanded* Israel to circumcise their *hearts* and to no longer resist Him and His ways by their stubborn, carnal nature, but in Dt. 30:6 God said that *He* would circumcise the hearts of Israel so that they would no longer be stubborn, but instead, love Him, and consequently, delight to keep His commandments, which is one of the express reasons for the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33, where the Hebrew word is Torah or Mosaic Law, which God wants to place in our minds and hearts; see also Ezk. 36:24-27).

With the shedding of the sacrificial blood of Yeshua, both circumcised Jew and uncircumcised Gentile

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<sup>38</sup> Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 10:47; Heb. 10:22; 1st Pet. 3:20.

enter into the New Covenant, by faith in *His* Messiah's Work of Redemption. It is *this* blood that God requires of us in order to keep Passover in the Kingdom of His Son, not the fact that one is circumcised or not. It is *this* blood that will avert God's wrath on Judgment Day, not the blood of physical covenantal circumcision, nor the blood of Abram's sacrifice, although both pictured it. *This* blood is given to every Christian, pictured in the 'death to self' of water baptism and what baptism symbolizes. This is what physically links the believer, both Jew and Gentile, to the blood sacrifice of Messiah Yeshua. A Jew who is only physically, covenantally circumcised cannot enter into Messiah's Kingdom, nor participate in *Messiah's* Passover. A Gentile who gets physically, covenantally circumcised tramples over the sacrificial blood of Messiah, declaring that it wasn't enough for him to stay in His Kingdom and keep Passover—he must also be PyCC. This is why, for whatever reason the Gentile might do it, he leaves the Kingdom of Yeshua and has lost his salvation.

## The New Creature

Water baptism has an incredibly significant aspect to it, which further emphasizes its potent spiritual reality. First, though, a question—*why* was Yeshua baptized in water? Certainly not, as some think, for identification with Israel *in her sins*, as noble a concept as that is, and it certainly wasn't for *His* need for cleansing, for water is associated with cleansing of sin (cf. Lev. 17:15-16; 19:19), for He was sinless.<sup>39</sup> Even though Yeshua is the quintessential Israeli, representing all Israel, Israel must identify with Him, and that's exactly what we have here.

The water baptism of Yeshua was *a symbolic, physical reenactment* of how Yeshua, God the Son,<sup>40</sup> *came forth* from the Father<sup>41</sup> and the Holy Spirit on Day One of Creation Week, and how Christians are recreated in Yeshua's Image and Likeness. Therefore, all who follow Yeshua in this physical-spiritual covenantal sign of 'death to self' are not only saying that their 'death to self blood' links them to Yeshua's sacrifice, but that symbolically and spiritually they are *coming forth from God the Father just as* Yeshua did on Day One. Christians truly are new creatures 'in Christ,' *begotten* by the Father, just as Yeshua was. One day, the Father promises that we will be exactly like Yeshua is now—the glorified God-Man.<sup>42</sup> Baptism in water pictures this and why it is very important for believers to observe.

Water baptism is a real *spiritual* picture of dying to self and of one becoming *a new creation* in Yeshua (Jn. 3:5-6; Rom. 6:1f., 2nd Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; 2nd Pet. 1:1-4). *In the Beginning*, Yeshua *came forth* from the Father and the Spirit, begotten, not created. Looking at the very first words recorded in Scripture that the Father uttered, 'Let there be light!' (Gen. 1:3) we see Yeshua *coming forth* from the Father and the Spirit. Yeshua *was not created*, but *came forth*—as a baby comes forth from the womb of its mother, *begotten* of the father. The *waters* of Genesis 1:2 picture the Father.<sup>43</sup> The verse speaks of the Spirit of God *hovering* over the *waters*, 'like a bird...with fluttering wings...that moves its wings back and forth constantly.'<sup>44</sup> This beautiful picture speaks of the active involvement of the Holy Spirit in both the Son

<sup>39</sup> John 8:46; 2nd Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1st John 3:5; 1st Peter 2:22.

<sup>40</sup> See [Yeshua—God the Son](#) for the Hebraic concept of how Yeshua is deity, along with His Father (and the Holy Spirit).

<sup>41</sup> Psalm 2:7; 89:26-37; John 1:14, 18; 3:16; with John 16:27-28 and 17:8 where Yeshua says that He 'came forth' from the Father. John 8:42 has the identical concept, that Yeshua 'proceeded forth' from the Father. See also Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; 1st Jn. 4:9.

<sup>42</sup> See [Salvation—The Promise!](#) for the Gift that God holds out to every human being.

<sup>43</sup> The 'waters' of Genesis 1:2 picture of the Father (cf. Psalm 104:3; 148:4; Is. 8:6; 55:1; Jer. 51:16; Ezk. 1:24-26; 2nd Peter 3:5). The waters in Gen. 1:2 are not the waters of the oceans of the Earth because on Day Two (Gen. 1:6-8) these waters are divided by a 'firmament,' which God calls 'Heaven.' The creation of the universe took place in the waters *under* Heaven, while God *dwells* in the waters *above* the firmament, above Heaven. This may help to explain how Paul could say that he was caught up to the *third* Heaven (2nd Cor. 12:2).

coming forth, and the Creation of the universe (Prov. 8:22-36).

In Genesis 1:2-3 we see the Father and the Spirit...and then the Son comes forth as both the Living Word of God,<sup>45</sup> and the Light of God. This, then—how Yeshua *came forth* from the *Waters* of the Father is *why* Yeshua was baptized in water 2,000 years ago in Israel. It was *a living reenactment* of His coming forth from the Father and the Spirit on Day One, and as such, a picture of us being Born Again into His Image, and hence, why physical covenantal circumcision for the Gentile is absolutely not necessary. As a Christian he is the living embodiment of what PyCC symbolized: a new creature, a human being who was totally dedicated to God, like Yeshua was:

“Yeshua answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of Water *and* the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.’” (John 3:5)

“Yeshua answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is Born Again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.’” (John 3:3)

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be conformed to the image of His Son*, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29)

“And as we have borne the image of the man of dust” (i.e. Adam), “we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.” (1st Cor. 15:49)

When Yeshua *came forth from the waters of His baptism*, the Father *spoke* and the Spirit *descended* upon Him *like a dove*, reminiscent of the Three being there on Day One of Creation:

“When He had been baptized, Yeshua came up immediately *from the water*, and behold! Heaven was opened to him (John) and he saw the Spirit of God *descending* like a dove and alighting upon Yeshua, and suddenly, *a Voice came from Heaven*, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!’” (Matthew 3:16-17)

*This* is why God commands us to be immersed in water—it’s a spiritual picture of *our coming forth* from the Father (and the Holy Spirit), like Yeshua—of being *begotten* like Yeshua was (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, etc.), although, technically, we are created anew—it’s the new creation (2nd Cor. 5:17). This is why water baptism is mandatory and why physical covenantal circumcision (PCC), although *symbolizing* this, is not the sign of the New Covenant. When salvation in the name of Messiah Yeshua was first proclaimed it was immediately linked to water (and Spirit) baptism. Now we know why Peter said:

“Repent! Let every one of you *be baptized in the name of Yeshua the Messiah* for the remission of sins *and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*. For the promise is to you and to your sons, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:38–39; see also 10:44-48)

Water baptism is the *sign* of the *New Covenant*. This is why the Gentile Christian *must not* be *physically, covenantally* circumcised.<sup>46</sup> He mocks the redemptive Work of Messiah Yeshua. Both Jew and Gentile

<sup>44</sup> Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* vol. 3 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), pp. 1219-1220. The Hebrew word in Gen. 1:2 for the Spirit *hovering* over the waters is מְרַחֵף מִיָּדָאּ *mira’heh’fet* and it speaks of the motion made by the wings of a dove as it hover sover an object (Dt. 32:11).

<sup>45</sup> In Hebrew the first words of the Father are, ‘*Light be!*’ which makes Yeshua both the living *Word* of God and the *Light* (of the world; John 1:1-9; 8:12; 1st John 1:1-4; Rev. 19:13). God’s living Word came forth from the Waters (which picture the Father), and the action of the Holy Spirit. This living Word was the Light of Day One. This Light wasn’t the sun, moon or the stars, for they weren’t created until Day Four (Gen. 1:14-19).

<sup>46</sup> Many Gentiles were circumcised by their parents for medical-health reasons and that’s alright because it has nothing to do with the theological, covenantal circumcision of Gen. 17:9-14 and Ex. 12:43-49.

Any Gentile, though, who has wrongly followed the teaching (that he must be circumcised in order to keep the Passover, etc.), has grievously sinned against God. He should repent and ask God the Father, who is rich in



enter into the New Covenant not by the sign of physical covenantal circumcision, but by being Born Again, which sign is water baptism. Unfortunately, most Christians don't understand this, and those who teach that the Gentile must be PyCC negate God's word in the New Testament and *trample* over the shed blood of Yeshua's sacrifice. *Physical covenantal circumcision marks entry into the Old Covenant and links the Gentile to the wrong sacrifice, and it places him 'under the Law,'* which means that Torah condemns him for every sin. Circumcision of the flesh brings the Gentile to the animals of Abram's sacrifice, which cannot make anyone into Messiah's Image, nor make him acceptable for celebrating Messiah's Passover. Those who teach Gentile circumcision are *adding* to all that the Father has done in sacrificing His Son, and so negating their salvation.

Those who teach Gentile circumcision *assume* that since it's commanded in the Old Testament it must also be kept in the New. They refuse, however, to hear the many New Testament Scriptures that forbid and deny it. They walk in the deadly sin of presumption. They assume that God wants something kept when He doesn't, *even though He may have wanted it earlier, in the Old Testament.* An example of presumption is God wanting Israel to conquer Canaan after coming out from Egypt, but because Israel believed the faithless witness of the 10 spies, God told Moses for Israel 'to turn around' and go back into the Wilderness where they would die over the next 40 years because of their unbelief *and contempt* for Him and His promises to them (His Word; Num. 14:11, 27). After the incident, though, some of the Hebrews said that they wanted to obey God now and go into the land, but Moses *warned them not to go* because God had *changed His mind*, and neither He nor the Ark of the Covenant nor Moses was going with them (Num. 14:42, 44). Moses said to them, 'Why do you *transgress the commandment of Yahveh?!*' (Num. 14:41) They insisted, however, on 'obeying' what God had *previously said*, and most of them were killed by the Amalekites and the Canaanites (Num. 14:1-45; cf. Dt. 1:19-46). It's not a superficial sin to presume upon God and His Word, *but this is exactly what those who teach Gentile circumcision are guilty of, and they don't have the blood of Messiah to cleanse them of this sin:*

'the person who does anything *presumptuously*, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings *reproach* on Yahveh, and *he shall be cut off from among his people* because he has *despised the Word of Yahveh* and has broken His commandment—that person shall be *completely cut off*. His guilt shall be upon him!' (Num. 15:30-31; see also Dt. 1:19-43)

The New Testament *never modifies or revises* the decision of Acts 15, which struck down Gentile covenantal circumcision in order to be saved, to make allowance for Gentile circumcision for Passover and/or to fulfill the commandment given to Abraham for any reason because God has changed both the sacrifice for entry into the New Covenant and its *sign*. The Old sign means nothing in terms of entry into the New Covenant or Messiah's Kingdom, or for the keeping of *Messiah's* Passover, and this is exactly what Paul means in Corinthians. Circumcision of the flesh didn't change the Hebrew infant's *nature*, but circumcision of the heart, the physical sign of which is baptism in water, does change our nature for it reflects the spiritual reality of the New Birth; the New Creation. What physical circumcision pointed to, the circumcision of the heart (Dt. 30:6), being Born Again is the reality for, and baptism in water symbolizes. *This is why* covenantal circumcision of the flesh doesn't do a Gentile (or a Jew) any good and why Paul wrote:

*"But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk, and so, I ordain in all the Assemblies. Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised!<sup>47</sup> Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not*

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mercy, to forgive him, in the name of Yeshua.

<sup>47</sup> Paul's admonition to the Jewish Christian to not become uncircumcised was a real prohibition. In Paul's day there was an operation that attached some skin to the remaining foreskin of a Jew so that the Jewish man would look like he hadn't been circumcised—in other words, he would look like a Gentile. Gentiles would be naked in their gymnasiums, and so any Jew who was with them would automatically be seen to be Jewish (and despised

***be circumcised!*** Circumcision is *nothing* and uncircumcision is *nothing*’ (in terms of entering Messiah’s Kingdom) “but keeping the commandments of God is what matters! *Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.*”<sup>48</sup> (1st Corinthians 7:17-20)

The sign of covenantal circumcision given to Abram has given way to water baptism. Physical circumcision has given way to the reality that God promised in Dt. 30:6—the circumcision of the heart. Those who insist on PCC for the male Gentile Christian are walking in the sins of presumption and rebellion against God and all His words in the New Covenant that deal with PCC.

Gentile covenantal circumcision is a false and a very dangerous heresy because one loses their salvation. This is one reason why the Apostle Paul wrote against it and said:

“Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the ***false circumcision***, *For we are the circumcision*, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Messiah Yeshua and *have no confidence in the flesh*” (i.e. being PyCC), “though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so—*circumcised* the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews! (Philippians 3:2-5; see also vv. 17-19).

Paul was saying that he, too, could have *confidence in the flesh* (physical covenantal circumcision) if that was what God wanted, but that is not what God wants in the New Covenant. The Old has given way to the New. The sign of the Old has given way to the reality of the New.

The Gentile Christian is a new creature in Messiah and circumcised in his heart, to the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and he is able to partake of Messiah’s Passover without PCC. On the other hand, the Jew must continue to physically, covenantally circumcise his sons because he is born into the Covenant that God made with Abram, and all Abraham’s descendants through Isaac and Jacob. The Old Covenant and God’s promises to ancient Israel<sup>49</sup> will be gloriously fulfilled in the thousand year reign of King Yeshua, the Son of David (Lk. 1:31-33), from Jerusalem, the city of the great king (Ps. 48:2; Mt. 5:35) to the glory and praise of God the Father.

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in Gentile eyes) unless he had the operation. It was better for the Jew if he wanted to do business with the Gentile/s This operation was prevalent about 200 years earlier in the days of the Maccabees. See 1st Maccabees 1:15; 1:2f; Josephus, Antiquities xii. 241.

<sup>48</sup> Some might say that Gen. 17:9-14 and Ex. 12:43-49 are part of the commandments of God for Gentile Christians, but this totally negates what God says about it in the New Covenant.

<sup>49</sup> Gen. 12:7; 13:14-15; 15:7, 12-16, 18-21; 17:7-8, 19-22; 24:7; 26:2-5; 28:3-4, 13-15; 35:9-13; 48:3-4; 50:24-25; Ex. 3:7-10, 14-17; 6:1-8; 12:21-25; 13:3-5, 11-12; 23:20-33; 32:7-14; Ezk. 40-48; Rev. 20:3-6.

# CIRCUMCISION, SALVATION AND COVENANT

Those who advocate Gentile circumcision are careful to say that they are not doing it ‘for salvation.’ They realize that Acts 15 expressly forbids this, as well as Gal. 2:1–5:12 and Phil. 3:2-4, but this is exactly what they’re doing whether they realize it or not because biblical circumcision is always covenantal. Physical covenantal circumcision was given by God as a sign of the *covenant* that He had with Abraham (Gen. 15:1-21; 17:1-27). When God gave that covenant He spoke of *saving* the Sons of Abraham out of slavery (Gen. 15:13-14). In Exodus 12 God *saves* the Sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from Egyptian slavery. The mentioning of the need for a Gentile who wanted to keep the Passover to be circumcised (Ex. 12:43-49) only emphasized the salvation aspect of the covenant of circumcision because Exodus chapter 12 is *the* chapter on the *salvation* (redemption/deliverance) of Israel out of Egypt—the very promise that God had given to Abram (Gen. 15:13-14). Any Gentile who wanted to keep the Passover (i.e. to become a part of an *already* saved *carnal* Israel out of Egypt) had to be PyCC.

The keeping of future Passovers after Israel left Egypt were a time for *remembrance* of the *salvation* that God *had already done* for Israel. Physical circumcision, then, done at God’s direction in Genesis 17 and Exodus 12, is the sign of entry into *the covenant of Abraham* to become part of God’s *saved* (past tense), *already redeemed* people Israel (from Egypt), but this covenant has given way to the New Covenant. We are in the ‘Abrahamic stage’ of the New Covenant, so to speak—*we have not yet been saved (glorified)*. We have been given a promise—we await eternal glorification, and like Abraham, await the fulfillment of the promise (Rom. 8:24-25; 1st Pet. 1:3-5). Therefore, the very concept which Gentile circumcisers insist that they are not doing is what they are doing. Gentiles who are circumcised ‘in order to keep the Passover’ and/or ‘to obey Torah,’ etc., enter into the covenant of Abraham to become part of the ‘already saved from Egypt’ people of Israel *after the flesh*. PCC makes the Gentile part of *natural* Israel, which *was* saved, *but who are still enslaved to their carnal nature*, which Mosaic Law condemns them for (Rom. 6:1–8:8). The salvation that the New Covenant speaks of is one that is yet to come, for we have not yet been glorified.

With the circumcision of our hearts we receive the divine downpayment—the heavenly assurance that we will be glorified, as we persevere. We are made new creatures in Messiah (2nd Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), symbolized by water baptism. *This* brings us into Messiah’s Kingdom *without* PCC, as Cornelius demonstrates and Peter testifies to (Acts 10:1–11:18; 15:7-9f.). The Gentile comes into the Kingdom of Messiah because of the circumcision of his heart, not his flesh. This is what Peter said in Acts 15:7-9:

‘Men and brethren! You know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe.<sup>50</sup> So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, *just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them*, purifying their hearts by faith.’

Peter declared that there was no need for the Gentile to be PyCC (see also Acts 15:1-6). God had not made a difference between the circumcised and the uncircumcised, bringing both into Messiah’s Kingdom by water and Spirit baptism, and God didn’t require that they be physically, covenantally circumcised after their baptism in the Spirit. They only needed to be baptized in water.

The Gentile who is PyCC places himself within a covenant people who *aren’t* saved by the blood of Messiah Yeshua. The Gentile who does that places himself *under the Old Covenant, and under Mosaic Law*, to his detriment. He has gone from the New to the Old—from freedom in Christ to slavery ‘in self.’ It’s a spiritual oxymoron and a major heresy because it negates Messiah’s sacrifice, which brought him into the New Covenant. Yeshua didn’t die to bring the Gentile into the Old Covenant and to an enslaved people, but to bring them into the freedom of His Kingdom, which is another Kingdom, another Covenant, an-

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<sup>50</sup> This is Cornelius, his Gentile household and some of his friends that Peter is referring to (Acts 10:1-48; 11:1f.).

other Priesthood, and another Israel.<sup>51</sup> It also has another sign. Physical covenantal circumcision for the male Gentile believer is the wrong sign for the wrong covenant. It is truly the Old covenantal sign of salvation that Hegg, despite objections that he, and all those like him, might say to the contrary, perform. That's why it's such a grievous sin. The sign and the covenant have changed. Hegg & Co. truly jeopardize their salvation by their sin of presumption.

## GENTILE CIRCUMCISION IN EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE?

### EZEKIEL 44:7-9

Ezekiel 44:7-9 is a favorite Scripture for Gentile circumcisers because they think it gives them biblical justification for Gentile circumcision. It primarily speaks about the Sons of Zadok performing the priestly rites of the future Temple in Jerusalem due to their faithfulness to God. Zadok was the High Priest in Solomon's Temple. He and his sons, and their sons, etc., remained true to God,<sup>52</sup> while the other Sons of Aaron (and the Levites) didn't.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, Zadok's descendants will perform the priestly duties of sacrifice, etc., in the future 'Temple of Ezekiel,' as it's known.

Ezekiel 44:7-9 is *not* about the priesthood of all believers or that Gentile Christians are to be circumcised in the flesh in order to enter the Temple grounds. It's about which priests will be able to enter into the Holy Place and also, minister at the Altar of Sacrifice in this Temple when Messiah Yeshua reigns for a thousand years. According to Mosaic Law this ministry can only be done by Aaron and his Sons,<sup>54</sup> and here God is making a distinction between *which Sons of Aaron* will be able to sacrifice and minister in His Name (Zadok and his Sons), and which will not be able to (any other Sons of Aaron).

Only 3 of the 31 verses in the chapter pertain to specific foreigners (i.e. Gentile; vv. 7-9) who worked for the priests, whom God isn't going to permit to enter *into the Holy Place* (His Sanctuary), etc., because of their *evil attitude toward God*, symbolized by their not being circumcised in the flesh and the heart. Some point to Ezekiel 44:9 and interpret it to mean that male Gentile Christians will be physically circumcised to enter the future Temple, and so they believe that they have scriptural authority to be circumcised now, but their thought is based on a poor understanding of the verse, and also, there is no other verse in Scripture they have to support their idea. The passage reads:

<sup>7</sup>“When you brought in foreigners (plural בְּנֵי נֹכַר *b'nae nay'har*) uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh to be in My Sanctuary to defile it—My House—and when you offered My food, the fat and the blood, then they broke My Covenant because of all your abominations! <sup>8</sup>You have not kept charge of My holy things, but **you have set others to keep charge of My Sanctuary for you.** <sup>9</sup>Thus says the Lord Yahveh! ‘Every foreigner (singular בֶּן נֹכַר *ben nay'har*) uncircumcised in heart and<sup>55</sup> uncircumcised in flesh will *not enter into My (future) Sanctuary*—of every foreigner (singular בֶּן נֹכַר *ben nay'har*) who is among the Sons of Israel!’” (Ezekiel 44:7-9)<sup>56</sup>

<sup>51</sup> The ‘Israel of God,’ etc. (Gal. 6:10-16; also Ps. 110:4; Jer. 31:31-34; Mt. 16:19; Heb. 7:1–8:13; Rev. 3:12; 21:2).

<sup>52</sup> Ezekiel 40:46; 44:15-16f.

<sup>53</sup> Ezekiel 44:6-8 implied, v. 10f.

<sup>54</sup> Exodus 28:43; 30:20; Numbers 16:40.

<sup>55</sup> Some English translations have ‘or’ (NKJV), or ‘nor’ (KJV), and the Hebrew letter for those two is the *vav* ך but 90% of the time it's translated as ‘and’ (so, the NASB, NIV, NCBS, etc.). It's a judgment call because the word can be translated as ‘or,’ but translating it as ‘and’ will make the sentence to be correctly understood because the condition of ‘either’ (i.e. ‘or’ or ‘nor’) cannot be applied to the foreigner because this foreigner was uncircumcised in both his heart *and* his flesh.

In Ezekiel's time Israel had allowed this type of Gentile, this *particular* foreigner (בֶּן נֵיִ'הַר *ben nay'har*) who was uncircumcised in both his flesh *and* his heart, to be, at the very least, a priest's assistant to help the priest minister, and quite possibly, to take the priest's responsibility of ministering unto Yahveh and *offering sacrifice* ('blood and fat') to Him and/or going into the Holy Place (Sanctuary/House), which would entail the offering up of incense on the gold Altar of Incense, the lighting and extinguishing of the gold Lampstand, and the placing of the Bread of the Presence upon the gold Table of Bread ('you have set others to keep charge of My Sanctuary for you'). Of course, the Lord wasn't pleased for two reasons:

1. *This specific* Gentile *despised* Yahveh, which is seen when God refers to him as uncircumcised in both body *and* heart, and calls him a *ben nay'har*. *This Gentile slave had no interest* whatsoever in the God of Israel, nor the things of God (i.e. His Torah), nor the people of God (Israel) and,
2. Only the Sons of Aaron were to minister in the Holy Place and the Altar of Sacrifice. Not even the Sons of Israel nor the Levitical Priests could do that, yet here were pagan Gentiles performing in that capacity. The Levites could assist the Sons of Aaron, but they couldn't take over their responsibilities of sacrifice and attending to the Holy Place, etc.<sup>57</sup>

*This* is what the Lord is addressing in Ezekiel 44:7-9 (cf. Zech. 14:22). It has nothing to do with a Gentile Christian needing to be circumcised in his body in order to enter onto the Temple grounds and worship the Lord in the future, but of God excluding that type of Gentile in Ezekiel's time. Ralph Alexander states that Israel had brought these men into the service of the Temple 'to help' the Aaronic Priests:

“The religions of the ancient Near East *frequently used foreign captives as temple servants to aid the priests*. The Lord's rebuke of Israel in these verses reflected ancient Israel's *adoption of this practice*...the Mosaic covenant expressed that foreigners who were uncircumcised in flesh and heart **were not to minister in the temple as priests**, along with all other Israelites not of the Aaronic line (cf. Num 3:10)...Israel had broken the Mosaic covenant...having foreign temple-servants not only entering the sanctuary **but also taking charge of the temple duties**. By their handling priestly functions related to the holy things (vv. 6-8), they had desecrated the temple...foreigners should never have been permitted to take over the priests' functions. This showed a great disregard for God's covenant on the part of the priests.”<sup>58</sup> (cf. Zech. 14:21)

In other words, when God spoke of not having any Gentiles uncircumcised in heart and flesh, He was specifically referring to this Hebrew practice in Ezekiel's time where the Aaronic Priests used Gentile slaves to perform some or all of their priestly tasks in the Holy Place and at the Altar, etc. This has nothing to do with Gentile Christians worshipping God in the future millennial Temple, where Yeshua will reign for a thousand years. In other words, Gentiles do not need to be circumcised in the flesh.

This particular Gentile foreigner is one of five types of Gentiles mentioned in the Old Testament that resided within Israel who weren't of the racial Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Law of Moses applied to only two types of Gentiles—the slave (by circumstance) and the גֵר (*ger*) 'stranger' (by choice).

The King James Version Bible poorly translates *foreigner* in Ezk. 44:9 as *stranger* and in these verses it's not noticeable, but in Ex. 12:43-48, which speaks of the five different categories of Gentiles, the KJV is very confusing because it uses the same term, *stranger*, for both the *ben nay'har* #1 below (בֶּן נֵיִ'הַר) and

<sup>56</sup> Verse nine is my translation. This is supported by the NASB, which reads, “Thus says the Lord God, ‘No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart *and* uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners *who are among the Sons of Israel*, shall enter My Sanctuary” (Ezk. 44:9). There are translations that separate and make a distinction between the first *foreigner* and the second *foreigner* by saying ‘*including any foreigner*’ and ‘*not even the foreigners who live among Israel* (NKJV and NIV respectively), but this is not supported by the Hebrew.

<sup>57</sup> Lev. 1:7; 6:14; Num. 3:2, 10; 8:19; 18:13, 22.

<sup>58</sup> Ralph H. Alexander, author; Frank E. Gaebelin and J. D. Douglas, ed.; *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, *Ezekiel* (Accordance electronic ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), n.p.

the *ger* #5 (גֵּר).<sup>59</sup> The former (#1) could *never* partake of the Passover (i.e. become a part of Israel, and this is the person that God is speaking about in Ezekiel 44), while the latter (#5) could, by being physically, covenantally circumcised (the only circumcision in the Old Testament). Number 1 and number 5 are two totally different Gentiles, as their Hebrew words bring out. The following five Hebrew words are found in the Passover chapter (Ex. 12:43-48) where the Lord says who can, and who cannot, become a part of Israel and take part in the Passover once he's physically, covenantally circumcised:

- |                       |            |                        |          |                |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------------|----------|----------------|
| 1. Foreigner          | בֶּן-נֶכֶר | ( <i>ben nay'har</i> ) | ...No    | .....Ex. 12:43 |
| 2. Hired worker       | שָׂכִיר    | ( <i>sah'here</i> )    | .....No  | .....Ex. 12:45 |
| 3. Temporary resident | תּוֹשָׁב   | ( <i>toe'shav</i> )    | .....No  | .....Ex. 12:45 |
| 4. Slave              | עֶבֶד      | ( <i>eh'ved</i> )      | .....Yes | .....Ex. 12:44 |
| 5. Stranger           | גֵּר       | ( <i>ger</i> )         | .....Yes | .....Ex. 12:48 |

The KJV, in not making a distinction between the foreigner (#1) and the stranger (#5), calling them both *strangers*, distorts the Word of God because it seems that God is contradicting Himself!<sup>60</sup> The KJV has God saying that the *stranger* (#1, Ex. 12:43) *cannot* keep the Passover, while the *stranger* (#5, Ex. 12:48) can keep it! What God is saying though, is that the foreigner #1 (בֶּן נֶכֶר *ben nay'har*) *can never* keep the Passover, while the stranger #5 (*ger* גֵּר) can keep it, once he's PyCC. What's the difference between these two Gentiles? It revolves around what was *in their heart* toward God, and this reveals what God said to Ezekiel about the *foreigner* (#1) not being being circumcised in his heart. The definition of the Hebrew words bring this out:

1. The foreigner (#1 *ben nay'char*) *may never eat* of the Passover (Ex. 12:43). The noun means, 'what is strange, foreign;' the verb means, 'to estrange, alienate...to seem strange...to reject.'<sup>61</sup> The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* says that it speaks of 'a foreign god...Dt. 32:12' and 'everything foreign (Neh. 13:30).'<sup>62</sup> This person worships other gods and *wants* to be alienated from Israel, her God and His Torah, all of which appear 'foreign' and wrong to him.
2. The hired worker (#2) *could not eat* of the Passover (Ex. 12:45). The noun means a 'hired laborer, hireling.'<sup>63</sup> He's not interested in Israel's God, only in himself and finding work (cf. Jn. 10:12-13).
3. The temporary resident (#3) *could not eat* of the Passover (Ex. 12:45). This is a person who is also called a 'sojourner.'<sup>64</sup> He's a migrant, a 'temporary, landless wage earner.' The word can also be 'a synonym for a hired servant (Lev. 22:10; 25:40).'<sup>65</sup>
4. The slave (#4) *could eat* of the Passover *after* he was covenantally circumcised (Ex. 12:44). The slave served his master, doing his will.<sup>66</sup> This slave is 'one' with his Hebrew master (Gen. 17:9-13, 23-27).

<sup>59</sup> Most Bibles translate *ben nay'char* (בֶּן נֶכֶר) as *foreigner* (e.g. ASV, NASB, NKJV, NRSV, and NIV) and use something else for *ger* (e.g. ASV, NASB *stranger*; NIV, NRSV *alien*).

<sup>60</sup> The NET and HCSB use the term *foreigner* for both verses, which of course, is as confusing as the KJV using *strangers* for both verses. Even if a #1 *ben nay'char* could become a #5 *ger* it's best to distinguish them so as not to cause obvious confusion, especially as the Hebrew words used for them are totally different.

<sup>61</sup> Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 549.

<sup>62</sup> R. L. Harris, editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, associate editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 580.

<sup>63</sup> Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 715.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 352.

<sup>65</sup> Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. I, p. 412.

<sup>66</sup> Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 583.

5. The stranger (#5 *ger*) could eat the Passover once he and all the males in his house were circumcised (Ex. 12:48). The verb means, to ‘dwell for a time.’<sup>67</sup> Once circumcised the stranger kept the Sabbath laws (Ex. 20:10; 23:12) and *expressed the same loyalty to God as the native-born Hebrew* (Lev. 20:2).<sup>68</sup> He was to hear the Law read (Dt. 31:12), and the Feasts applied to him also (Ex. 12:19; Lev. 16:29; Num. 9:14; Dt. 16:14).
  - a. His punishment was death if he sacrificed to a foreign god (Lev. 17:8f.) and he was forbidden to eat blood (Lev. 17:10-13). The special cleansing of the red heifer’s ashes applied to him (Num. 19:10) as well as all the laws of forbidden sexual unions (Lev. 18:26).
  - b. It’s written that Yahveh loves *this* stranger, giving him his food and clothing (Dt. 10:18). He was not to be oppressed by a Hebrew, and he enjoyed the same rights as the native born Israeli (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:3; Jer. 7:6). He was to be helped if he was poor (Lev. 19:10; Dt. 14:29; 16:11) and he could take of the gleanings of the olive trees and vineyards, which were only reserved for the widow and the orphan and he (Dt. 24:20-21).

This stranger (#5 *ger*) loved Israel and was covenantally circumcised, like Abraham, became part of Israel and followed God’s Torah. He remained a *ger* (#5) ‘a stranger’ all his life, but was *one* with Israel and kept all of Torah that applied to him.<sup>69</sup> The foreigner (#1 *ben nay’har*) didn’t want to have anything to do with Israel, her God or His laws. It’s specifically this foreigner (#1 *ben nay’har*) that Yahveh comes against in the future Temple of Ezekiel in 44:7-9.

The five designations are consistent, but aren’t ‘set in stone.’<sup>70</sup> They offer a basic, thematic understanding of who could be part of ancient Israel and who couldn’t. In other words, it may be that a #1, *ben nay’har*, could ‘move over’ into the category of a #5 (*ger*), but the biblical understanding is that the *ben nay’har* wasn’t interested in the God of Israel, etc. With this mindset it’s easy to understand why God would say that no foreigner (#1), uncircumcised in heart *and* flesh, would ever help, let alone take over the responsibilities of an Aaronic priest. Ezekiel 44:7-9 does not teach that Gentiles should be physically, covenantally circumcised, either now or in the future. It places the responsibility for keeping the rites of the Temple squarely upon the Sons of Aaron, specifically, the Sons of Zadok (cf. Mt. 5:17-19).

## CHURCH HISTORY AND GENTILE CIRCUMCISION

If Gentile circumcision was valid in the days of the Apostles, and thereafter, we should find something written of physically, covenantally circumcised Gentiles in Church history, but there isn’t anything.<sup>71</sup> Yet, with things like the 7th day Sabbath and the Passover, Church history, after about 130 AD, abounds with railings against the many Gentile believers who rightfully were keeping the 7th day Sabbath, Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, etc.<sup>72</sup> Why, then, isn’t anything mentioned or written against Gentile

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>68</sup> Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. I, p. 156.

<sup>69</sup> For why this stranger didn’t become a Jew or a Hebrew, see [Is the Gentile Now a Jew?](#)

<sup>70</sup> Although the stranger (#5 *ger*) is in a separate category from other foreigners who weren’t native Hebrews, there are times when the word seems to be used as a general designation for anyone not of Israel (e.g. Dt. 10:19; 28:43). Also, see Isaiah 56: 3, 6-7 where God allows #1 to be part of Israel, and 1st Kings 8:41-43 where Solomon prays that the prayers of #1, who come from a distant land to the Temple, be heard by God. It may be possible that a *ben nay’char* could ‘change’ and become a *ger* and become part of Israel, or that God’s Spirit would be able to woo even some of them.

<sup>71</sup> Gentile circumcision is mentioned (e.g. Justin, *Dialogue* 47:2, about 140 AD), but this relates to Judaizers who told the Gentiles that *they couldn’t be saved without it*, not Gentiles doing it for ‘the right reason’ and/or in order to keep Torah and the Passover.

circumcision by the so-called Church Fathers? There should have been numerous Gentiles, if not all of them, who were following this practice of PCC, no? Were there no Gentile baby boys whose fathers wanted them circumcised to comply with Torah in the days of the Apostles and thereafter? Were there no Gentile Christians who wanted to be ‘Torah compliant’?

The New Testament, as well as Church history, reveal that PCC for the Gentile was never a biblical practice. The teaching that Gentiles need to be PyCC in order to keep the Torah and the Passover (and to be acceptable to God) is only a recent aberration.

## CONCLUSION

For the Gentile before the crucifixion, physical covenantal circumcision was necessary to enter into the Covenant of Father Abraham (and Moses). PCC was how the Gentile became part of Israel, but God changed the sign for the New Covenant to the physical rite of water baptism, which reflects what PCC symbolized—the circumcision of the heart by being Born Again. The nullification of PCC by God for the Gentile is seen through Peter and James in Acts 15, and by Paul in First Corinthians, Galatians and Philipians.<sup>73</sup> Those who teach PCC for the Gentile don’t realize that entry into the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16), which is also the Israel of Messiah Yeshua, has changed with the New Covenant and its ‘circumcision made without hands’ (Col. 2:11). *This* circumcision allows the Gentile (and the PyCC Jew) to come into Messiah’s Kingdom and partake of His Passover.

Acts 15 declares that Gentiles aren’t to be PyCC. There are no extenuating reasons or circumstances given for a Gentile to be PyCC and there isn’t a single instance in the New Covenant of a Gentile being PyCC, despite Tim Hegg’s attempt at making Timothy a Gentile. The only Gentiles who were circumcised in New Testament times was done by Judaizers ‘for the wrong reason.’<sup>74</sup> PCC was given as the *sign* of the Abrahamic Covenant. Yeshua, though, came with the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Mt. 16:19; Heb. 7:1–8:13; Gal. 6:16), which has a new sign. PCC for the Gentile is the wrong sign for the New Covenant.

Many so-called Hebrew Roots and One Law people think that the Apostle Paul is the culprit in this teaching against Gentiles not being PyCC ‘in order to obey Torah,’ but Paul was correctly following the decision of the Apostles and Elders at the Council of Acts 15, led by James, who authoritatively ruled that Gentiles weren’t to be circumcised, period. Paul acted and wrote on the authority of the Council, even though Barnabas and he had a proper understanding of the issue before it was brought to the Council (Acts 15:1-2).

Are we to think that Barnabas, Paul, James and Peter didn’t know what the Law said about the need for Gentiles to be PyCC in order to keep the Passover? Or that they weren’t hearing from God on this issue? None of them, nor anyone else in the New Testament, ever speak of Gentiles being PyCC in order to be ‘Torah obedient,’ and/or to keep Passover, and/or ‘for the right reason,’ or any reason. On the contrary, Paul admonishes the Corinthians to keep the Passover *and* then tells the Gentiles *not* to be PyCC (1st Cor. 5:6-8; 7:17-24; see also Rom. 3:30; 4:9-12).

It’s not without theological significance that Gentile circumcision ‘for the right reason’ is never found in the New Testament. Also, Paul’s Gospel was endorsed by the Apostles and Yakov (James in English; Gal. 2:1-10), as well as specifically by the chief Apostle, Peter (2nd Peter 3:14-18). Paul is not the offender,

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<sup>72</sup> For references to the many thousands of believers, both Jew and Gentile, who kept the holy days, etc., ask for the PDF, *Passover, Sabbath, Sunday and the Lord’s Supper*.

<sup>73</sup> Acts 15:1-31; 16:4-5; Rom. 3:30; 4:9-12, 16-18; 1st Cor. 7:17-24; Gal. 2:1–5:12; 6:15; Phil. 3:2-5, 17-19; Col. 2:11.

<sup>74</sup> There were Gentile believers who, following the false teaching of the Judaizers, were circumcised, but this was condemned by Paul, following the Council of Acts 15 (48 AD), in his letter to the Galatians (ca. 54 AD).



but rather all those who twist and pervert the Word of God to their logical, but carnal way of thinking. Those who teach that Gentiles should be physically, covenantally circumcised are not only heretics, but they have lost their salvation in Messiah Yeshua. Here are nine points why:

1. Acts 15 authoritatively rules that the Gentile isn't to be circumcised in order to be saved. There is nothing in Acts, nor in the New Testament, where the ruling is ever modified to allow Gentile (physical covenantal) circumcision *for any reason*. The subject is never brought up again in Acts, which was written 34 years *after* the resurrection by Luke, a Gentile Christian.
2. Tim Hegg's teaching that Timothy was a Gentile, whom Paul circumcised, and therefore, Gentile circumcision is taught in the New Testament, fails for at least seven reasons:
  - a. It defies logic and common sense to think that Paul circumcised 'a *Gentile Timothy*' for the *non-believing Jews* in the area. This would have been meaningless to the Jews, except to possibly anger them that a Gentile had been circumcised who believed in Yeshua, and therefore, it would have gone directly against the Apostle's desire that Timothy could help him minister to the Jews in the area so that they could be won to Messiah.
  - b. Timothy hadn't been circumcised as an infant because his father was a Greek, and apparently, his father hadn't wanted it done to his son because Jewish circumcision was a stigma in the eyes of the Romans and the Greeks; a mutilation of the body. Timothy is seen, though, fulfilling his Torah obligation *as a Jew*, so that he wouldn't be a hindrance to the furtherance of the Gospel among the unbelieving Jews who would have wondered why this Jewish boy, proclaiming the Jewish Messiah, wasn't circumcised (i.e. hadn't followed/obeyed Torah in this vital area; cf. Gen. 17:10-14).
  - c. Timothy's Jewishness is established by his mother being Jewish (Acts 16:1) and is the reason why Paul had him circumcised, as a Jew (Acts 16:3; '*because of the Jews in the region*'). There would have been no reason to circumcise a Gentile Timothy for '*the Jews in the region*.'
  - d. Luke would certainly not have written of Paul reversing himself against his own understanding on the subject (Acts 15:1-2), and also, the Council's Decree of Acts 15 (vv. 6-11, 13-27f.), without explaining why.
  - e. Also, Paul *never* writes that he circumcised any Gentiles *or that it was alright or necessary to do so* if they knew that it wasn't being done for salvation, but to be '*Torah compliant*.'
  - f. Luke places Timothy's circumcision (Acts 16:1-3) immediately after Acts 15, which states that Gentiles weren't to be circumcised, and just before the Apostle Paul and he take the Decree of Acts 15 to some believing congregations (Acts 16:4-5). Placing a '*just-circumcised Gentile*' between these two sections defies reason, logic, common sense and Scripture. On the other hand, by placing it where he does, Luke reveals that Timothy was a believing *Jewish man* who became PyCC in order to obey God's desire for every Jewish man to be PyCC, even *after* the resurrection. Luke reveals that the prohibition for the Gentiles, *not to be circumcised, didn't effect the Jewish Christians* nor his sons even if the Jewish man was already part of the New Covenant (cf. Acts 21:20-25).
  - g. There's no '*second witness*' in the New Testament to support Hegg's assertion that Timothy was a Gentile.
  - h. There's also no '*second witness*' in Scripture to support Hegg's assertion that Timothy was an example of a *Gentile Christian* circumcised '*in order to be Torah submissive*,' but on the contrary, there are a number of passages that speak against Gentile PCC.
3. The Gentile who is circumcised '*in order to keep Passover*' is guilty of works righteousness and the sin of presumption. He thinks that if he doesn't have PCC he can't keep the Passover, and therefore, he will be cut off from Israel. This is tantamount to losing one's salvation, but God has made another way to enter into the Kingdom of His Son, and therefore, to partake of Messiah's Passover. Being

PCC nullifies God's way of salvation and the taking of the Passover for him. These people do not rightly divide (interpret/understand) God's Word (2nd Tim. 2:15), and cause many a man's faith to be shipwrecked (cf. 1st Timothy 1:9).

4. Neither Cornelius, Titus, or Dr. Luke were ever PyCC, yet they kept Torah, Passover and the *Fast* of the Day of Atonement (Acts 15:21; 20:6; 27:9f.; Gal. 2:1-3). Obviously, there was no need for them to be PyCC in order to participate in the Feasts of Israel, and specifically Passover. This reveals that PCC for the Gentile wasn't needed.
  - a. The Feast of the New Testament Passover is the celebration of God's salvation through His Lamb. Those who say that the Gentile must be PyCC in order to keep the Passover are saying that the Gentile *can't be saved* (is not acceptable to God) without it! This totally negates what the Lamb of God has done for the Gentile Christian and why it's such a heinous teaching.
  - b. The New Testament expressly prohibits PCC for the Gentile Christian. There is no Gentile in all the New Testament who is ever *authorized* to become PyCC. Yes, some did, but they did it because they listened to *false teachers* (Gal. 1:6-8ff.), which many are doing today. The 'circumcision made without hands,' done by the Holy Spirit, using the divine blood of Yeshua (Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11) allows the Gentile (and the Jew!) to enter His Kingdom *and* partake of His Passover. The Gentile Christian is fully acceptable to the Lord by his faith in Yeshua and nothing more.
5. Paul commands the Corinthian Gentiles to keep the Passover, and only two chapters later he says to the Gentiles that they were *to remain the way they were* and *not* be PyCC (1st Cor. 5:6-8; 7:18). Paul never teaches otherwise nor does anyone else in the New Testament. This reveals that uncircumcised Gentiles *were keeping the Passover*, the very thing that the Hebrew Roots and One Law people say an uncircumcised Gentile cannot do! Paul's words in First Corinthians (circa 53 AD) affirm the Decree of Acts 15 (48 AD), and also, that Gentile PCC 'for the right reason' was never a valid biblical teaching (see also Romans 2:26; 3:30; 4:11, 16-18).
  - a. By the time that Paul wrote Colossians, about 60 AD, he speaks of his *fellow workers of the circumcision*, distinguishing them from the Gentile Christians. Here we see that 30 years *after* the resurrection, no male Gentile had been circumcised 'in order to keep Passover.'<sup>75</sup>
  - b. One of those Gentiles mentioned by Paul had been following Messiah for at least 17 years, but Dr. Luke hadn't been PyCC because there was no theological reason for him to be so.
6. Physical covenantal circumcision brought (and continues to bring) the Hebrew baby boy into the Old Covenant redeemed people of God, and protected him from being cut off from Israel. Covenantal circumcision personally linked the Jewish infant, by the shedding of his own blood, back to the sacrifices of the Covenant that God had made with Father Abraham. It was a sacrificial blood covering for every Hebrew male.<sup>76</sup> Water baptism personally links the Christian, by the spiritually symbolic shedding of his own blood, in dying to self, to the sacrifice of Yeshua, a blood covering for every believer, and makes him part of redeemed Israel 'after the Spirit.'<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> There is an exception to this rule. It involves the Gentile (who didn't believe in Yeshua), who became a so-called proselyte *and was circumcised* according to Gen. 17:10-14 and Ex. 12:43f. This Gentile is seen by the Rabbis and the Jewish people 'as Jewish,' even though Scripture declares him to still be a Gentile or 'a stranger' in the midst of Israel—one with Israel, but not Jewish. If this Gentile comes to faith in Messiah Yeshua he must continue to circumcise his sons and bring them into the Covenant of Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because he is literally part of the Old Covenant, just as the Jewish believers are.

<sup>76</sup> Females didn't need it because they were/are 'one' with their fathers and husbands.

<sup>77</sup> Interesting to note, God ordained PCC for the eight day old *infant*. All those who believe in Yeshua are said to be **Born** Again, which means that they are *spiritual infants*, but instead of being PyCC, God requires the infinitely more powerful spiritual sign of water baptism—which pictures the circumcision of the heart—the giving of the new nature to man.

- a. Baptism in water, with its circumcision made without hands, is the *covenantal sign* of the New Covenant for both Jew and Gentile (Acts 2:38-39; 15:7-11; Rom. 6:1ff.; Col. 2:11).
- b. Water baptism pictures both Jew and Gentile dying to self, having been Born Again, the spiritual reality undergirding water baptism, which links them to both the sacrifice, death and resurrection of Messiah, and also, how Yeshua *came forth* as God the Son on Day One of Creation. This is a picture of what awaits every Christian on the Day of Judgment (i.e. to be exactly like Yeshua is now, except that He was always God the Son, whereby we will be deity [glorified] by the power of His life-transforming blood and the Spirit. Glory to God!).<sup>78</sup> This reality is what PCC pictured.
- c. What physical covenantal circumcision pointed to, the circumcision of the heart, the transformation of the carnal nature and total consecration to Papa God, being Born Again accomplished. Water baptism is the physical sign of this, that Christians are new creatures in Messiah, *circumcised by God the Son*, fulfilling Dt. 30:6, which says that *God would circumcise the hearts/nature* of Israel, and hence, why the one physical sign gives way to the other, and why the Gentile must not be PyCC.
- d. The sign of the Covenant that God made with Father Abraham was very important to God, so much so that anyone failing to keep it would be cut off from the Covenant. Is water baptism of any less importance to God? As the New Covenant is the flowering and fulfillment of the Old, so is water baptism to PCC and why all who call upon the name of Yeshua need to be *fully immersed* in water, not sprinkled, and certainly *not* immersed in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>79</sup> We are immersed into Yeshua's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:1f.)—neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, died for us.
  - 1) Water baptism also biblically implies the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-41f.), which is extremely important for every Christian so he can walk in all of Torah that applies to him, starting with the two great commandments, which are defined by all the other commandments and statutes and rules of Moses (Mt. 22:35-40). Immersion in water is also a picture of the immersion or the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:44-48).
7. The Gentile who is PyCC for alleged biblical reasons places himself *under* Mosaic Law (see Rom. 6:1f.), and is without the aid of the blood of Messiah, and has attached himself to Israel *after the flesh*, a people who are enslaved to sin and death. He has left the New for the Old by his own 'works' (of righteousness), which defies God's instructions in the New Covenant. This is known as rebellion.
8. Ezekiel 44:9 cannot be used to support Gentile PCC because God was speaking about a specific Gentile slave to the priests. This slave had no interest in the God of Israel, yet he was performing rites that only the Sons of Aaron were supposed to do. God wasn't demanding that this Gentile (#1 *ben nay'har*), uncircumcised in heart and flesh, was to be physically circumcised, but on the contrary, that *this* Gentile would never perform the priestly rites for the future Temple (Holy Place, etc.) of Messiah Yeshua. Only those Sons of Zadok, circumcised in both their flesh and their heart, would serve Him.
9. Church history (after 150 AD), which vociferously comes against Gentile Christians who rightly kept the 7th day Sabbath and the Passover is glaringly silent on Gentile PCC 'for the right reason.' This reveals that Gentiles weren't being circumcised after Apostolic times, and also stands in solidarity with

<sup>78</sup> Gen. 1:24-27; 2:18, 20, 21-24; 6:19-20; Psalm 17:15; Isaiah 43:7; John 1:12-13; 17:11, 22; Romans 8:15-17, 18-21, 29-30; 1st Cor. 6:15; 15:48-49, 53; Eph. 1:3-5; 5:30-32; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:15, 18; 2nd Thess. 2:13-14; Heb. 2:1-3; 12:10; 2nd Peter 1:2-4; 1st John 2:25, 29; 3:2; Rev. 19:7; 21:9; 22:17.

<sup>79</sup> The formula found in Mt. 28:19 (baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit) is not authentic, but false. It was changed by the Roman Catholic Church in the days of Constantine (4th century). The Apostles *always* baptized in the name of Yeshua (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12-13, 16, 36, 38; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16). For an article on how Mt. 28:19 originally didn't speak of baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, ask for *Mt. 28:19—Father, Son & Holy Spirit?*

the biblical fact that Gentile Christians weren't being PyCC during Apostolic times (except for the wrong reason by the Judaizers).

The New Testament does not authorize Gentile PCC, but strongly comes against it every time it speaks about it. Authority from God, knowing His will in any matter, is found in Scripture. For the Gentile Christian to be physically covenantally circumcised is glaringly absent. That's why Hegg has to manufacture a 'Gentile Timothy,' while others decry Paul to be a false Apostle because of his passages in the New Testament that come against their heretical position. 'After all,' they say, 'how could God say one thing in the Old and deny it in the New?' We saw, though, *how* God could change His mind in the rebellion of Israel (Num. 14),<sup>80</sup> and as each covenant has a different sign (e.g. God's Covenant with Noah is the sign of the rainbow), so too with the New Covenant.

The proponents of Gentile circumcision say that the New Testament only comes against it 'for salvation,' but there isn't *any* New Testament teaching that plainly and clearly declares that Gentile circumcision is required, or even suggested, in order 'to be Torah obedient.' With all the Scriptures in the New Testament that speak against Gentile circumcision, there certainly would have been the need for God to further clarify and distinctly address the issue of Gentile PCC, if such a concept was divine. It doesn't exist, though, because Gentile circumcision 'for the right reason' is not a biblical teaching.

Gentile circumcision 'for the right reason,' in order to keep the Passover (Ex. 12:43-49), etc., is a major heresy because it negates the efficacy of Yeshua's sacrifice and the meaning of water baptism, the sign of the New Covenant. It's a teaching of arrogant presumption and works righteousness because it defies God's Word in the New Covenant. They say that without PCC the male Gentile isn't able to keep the Passover, or be 'Torah observant,' and hence, he should/would be cut off from Israel (lose his salvation). The Apostle Paul, though, declares that anyone presenting 'another Gospel,' and Gentile circumcision 'in order to obey Torah' is certainly that, is accursed (cut off!, the very thing they are trying to avoid):

"I am astonished that you are *so quickly deserting* the One who called you in the grace of Messiah and are turning to *another Gospel*—not that there is another Gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the Gospel of Messiah, but even if we, or an angel from Heaven, should proclaim to you a Gospel *contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!*" (Galatians 1:6-8)

Gentile circumcision is an act of pride and ignorance, presumption and rebellion because it's works righteousness in order to be acceptable to God. Gentiles who teach and/or circumcise themselves, and/or their sons, 'for religious reasons' have crossed over a red line. The Gentile who becomes physically covenantally circumcised *negates God's design* of eternal redemption and he voluntarily places himself *under* the Law's ability to condemn him to Hell. Gentiles must *not* be circumcised 'in order to obey the Law' and/or for any religious reasons.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> See also Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; 5:1, 5-6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 15, 17, 20-21, 26; 8:1-4; 9:11; where the High Priest for the New Covenant doesn't come from the Tribe of Levi, as the Law demands (Lev. 8-9), but from Judah.

<sup>81</sup> *Religious* or covenantal means that one shouldn't do it in order to follow what's written in Gen. 17:10-14 and/or Ex. 12:43-49, or because he thinks that it would strengthen his faith, or that it would be a cause for unity, or that it would glorify Jesus, etc. Those who proclaim and/or practice this teaching are under a spirit of deception. They've opened a door into spiritual Darkness and have lost their salvation.

Of course, there have been many Gentile baby boys that were circumcised for medical reasons at birth, or three days later, or five days later, etc., but unless their circumcision was done as an act of entering into the Abrahamic Covenant, it didn't make it a *covenantal* circumcision. In other words, if one was circumcised for medical reasons it doesn't make it the theological covenantal circumcision of Abraham—no more than salt, looking exactly like sugar, is sugar because of its looks.

There are tribes in Africa, etc., that practice circumcision as a cultural and/or religious-covenantal rite, for circumcision predates Father Abraham. Also, Muslims circumcise their 13 year old sons, following the age of Ishmael when he was covenantally circumcised (Gen. 17:24), but these don't enter the realm of being done by

For those Gentiles that have had themselves physically covenantally circumcised, wrongly following the teaching of Hegg and others, there is a need for repentance and of asking forgiveness from Papa God, in the name of Yeshua. He will forgive all those who come to Him. The Gift of God, through faith in Yeshua, has made the Gentile acceptable to Papa God, and therefore, able to keep His New Covenant Passover without physical biblical circumcision.

On Paul's way to chains in Jerusalem, the Apostle told the Ephesian Elders that some *Christians* would arise and teach perverse things. His words clearly speak to us today concerning Gentile PCC:

‘For I know...that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the Flock. Also, from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves’ (Acts 20:29-30).<sup>82</sup>

The perverse, heretical and damnable teaching of Gentile PCC has not taken God by surprise. Paul also spoke prophetically about our time, and no doubt, times before us, in his first letter to his spiritual son, Timothy:

‘Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons’ (1st Tim. 4:1).

Gentile circumcision ‘for the right reason,’ etc., is a doctrine of demons. The reason why the Lord doesn't want Gentiles to be circumcised is also conceptually seen in the Letter to the Hebrews:

‘Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holy of Holies by the blood of Yeshua, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,’<sup>83</sup>

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Gentile *Christians* for alleged obedience to Torah. When a Muslim comes to faith in the Jewish Messiah, he is cleansed from the false theological meaning of his circumcision, as he never kept Passover or the Sabbath, etc.

Individual cases are just that. If the Holy Spirit leads a Gentile to be PCC, that's a matter of God directing an individual who obviously has some physical lineage to the House of Israel that he might not have known about, but he best be sure that's it's the Holy Spirit that's leading him, and not that he's doing it to follow Hegg & Co. Teaching that all male Gentiles should be physically covenantally circumcised is a false and perverse doctrine. False, because obviously, there's nothing in the New Testament to support this circumcision for the Gentile, and perverse because it perverts both the Word of God and the Body of Messiah.

<sup>82</sup> Another heresy has arisen in the Messianic/Hebrew Roots/One Law communities that is closely related to Gentile circumcision and that is Gentile *conversion*, where a Gentile seeks to become a Jew. This is an odious teaching and totally unscriptural (Acts 15:1-21; 1st Cor. 7:17-24; Gal. 1:6-9). In Judaism there is Gentile conversion, but this is just another instance of rabbinic fantasy. In Scripture there is not one instance of a Gentile becoming a Jew or a Hebrew. In other words, Gentiles becoming Jewish proselytes are rabbinic nonsense. Ruth, the great grandmother of King David, after aligning herself with Israel, was still called and seen as a Moabitess (Ruth 1:16-17; 4:5, 10). If Gentile circumcision is a false theological teaching, how much more so, Gentile conversion? This obviously entails physical covenantal circumcision for the male Gentile, and has no Scripture to support it. In other words, God never says in the Old (or the New) that a Gentile becomes a Jew. What spiritual need is there on the part of a Gentile ‘to convert’ to being a Jew when the Gentile is already ‘one’ with Israel in Messiah Yeshua (Rom. 11:13f; Gal. 6:16; Eph. 2:11-22)? For an article on this see p. 19, note 69.

<sup>83</sup> There were two curtains in the Tabernacle of Moses that acted as its ceiling, completely covering the top of it and draping over its three sides to the ground. One curtain covered the Holy of Holies, picturing God the Father, and the other curtain covered the Holy Place, picturing the Holy Spirit. A third curtain hung from where the two ceiling curtains came together, and all three were fastened together by gold hooks or clasps to blue loops on the edges of the curtains where they met (Exodus 26:1-6, 11). The divine design had the two ceiling curtains coming together directly over where the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place met. The third curtain hung from them to the ground and separated the two holy rooms. It was this third curtain/veil that was torn in two, from top to bottom, when Yeshua was crucified because *this* curtain symbolized God the Son (Mt. 27:51; Mk. 15:38; Lk. 23:45). This is how the author of Hebrews can speak of the veil that was torn as being Messiah Yeshua's flesh (Heb. 10:19-20). For more on the Tabernacle of Moses and what it represented, see [BOOKS AND CDS](#); *The Tabernacle of Moses: A Picture of Heaven*, with its CDs and diagrams.

and having a High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water' (Heb. 10:19-22).

The body of our Messiah was destroyed so that we, our Adamic nature, could 'die to self' and be Born Again and transformed into His Image, which is what PCC pictured (Dt. 10:16; 30:6). Jew and Gentile enter Messiah's Kingdom through His sacrifice by being Born Again, which sign is baptism in water, not the circumcision of the flesh. There's absolutely no good *scriptural* reason for a Gentile to be physically covenantally circumcised. As the Apostle to the Gentile wrote in his Letters to the Galatians and others:

"Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become (physically covenantally) circumcised, Messiah *will profit you nothing*... You have become estranged from Messiah; *you have fallen from Grace*." (Galatians 5:2, 4)

'In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Messiah.' (Colossians 2:11)

'Beware of dogs! Beware of evil workers! Beware of the mutilation!<sup>84</sup> *For we are the circumcision* who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Messiah Yeshua, and *have no confidence in the flesh*, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so—*circumcised* the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin—a Hebrew of the Hebrews! Concerning (Mosaic) Law—a Pharisee! Concerning zeal—persecuting the Assembly! Concerning the righteousness, which is in (Mosaic) Law—blameless! But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Messiah. Yet, indeed, I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Messiah Yeshua my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Messiah and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from (Mosaic) Law, but that which is through faith in Messiah, *the righteousness which is from God by faith*—that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.' (Philippians 3:2-11; see also 2nd Peter 2:1-2, 18-22; 3:15-18; 2nd Timothy 4:3-4)<sup>85</sup>

"But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition (teachings), which he received from us." (2nd Thessalonians 3:6)

By his belief in Messiah Yeshua, the Gentile is *already* part of Israel, *acceptable* to God the Father, and

<sup>84</sup> This whole phrase, from 'dogs' to 'mutilation,' refers to those who wanted to circumcise the Gentile. The first part of the quote speaks directly against PCC for the male Gentile Christian. The Apostle never modifies his stance for any supposed need 'to keep the Passover or Torah.'

<sup>85</sup> It's not as though I can't sympathize with Tim Hegg and others who teach Gentile circumcision. It seems so logical and reasonable. It was in the mid 1980s when I first began to wrestle with this issue. As much as I imagined that it was right for the Gentile to be PyCC, to comply with Torah, I found that it was prohibited everywhere it spoke of it in the New Testament, and so, I realized that it wasn't God's will, as I've brought out in this paper. I thank the Lord Yeshua for the insights that He has given me, to be able to write and refute PCC for the Gentile.

On the other hand, the issue of the Jewish Christian, continuing to circumcise his sons, is upheld in the New Testament (Acts 16:1-3; 21: 20-24; 1st Cor. 7:17-19). This is because the Jew is still literally part of the Covenant of Circumcision that God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When a Jew, such as myself, is circumcised on the eighth day of his life, and then comes into the New Covenant with its circumcision of the heart, God's Word is literally fulfilled yet another time. In Dt. 30:6 God says that He will circumcise the heart of Israel. I am a living witness to that. The Gentile, however, not having ever been a part of the Covenant of Circumcision, must not be physically covenantally circumcised for any alleged theological, spiritual or biblical reason. As *illogical* as "Jew 'yes,' but Gentile 'no'" might seem, it's actually of God. It's up to us to obey Him whether we understand it or not. Praise God that He has given us much understanding of why the Gentile male believer must not be PCC.

able to partake of Passover. There is no reason for him to be physically covenantally circumcised, by every reason not to be:

Galatians 3:2-3: “This only I want to learn from you! Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?! Are you so foolish?! Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the *flesh?!?*” (i.e. PCC)

**We must not bend God’s Word to our ways, but bend our ways to God’s Word.**

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2. [Luke the Jew?](#)
3. *Matthew 28:19—Father, Son & Holy Spirit?* (ask for the PDF)
4. *Passover, Sabbath, Sunday and the Lord's Supper* (ask for the PDF)
5. [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21](#)
6. [Yeshua—God the Son](#)<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> This article was revised on Wednesday, April 19, 2023.