

Ephesians Series

Lesson #066

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Dean Bible Ministries

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EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK
& WARFARE
OF THE BELIEVER

The “Uncircumcision” vs. the “Circumcision”
Ephesians 2:11

Eph. 2:11, “Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

Eph. 2:12, “that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Eph. 2:13, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

6. Acts 15 at the Council of Jerusalem we see the recognition of Jew and Gentile in the body of Christ.

Acts 15:5, “But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.’ ”

Acts 15:15, “And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:

Acts 15:16, “ ‘*After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up;*

Acts 15:17, “ ‘*So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.*’ ” [Amos 9:11, 12]

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You = Gentiles

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Phil. 3:4, “though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:

Phil. 3:5, “circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;

Phil. 3:6, “concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

**What the Bible Teaches
About**

Circumcision



1. Circumcision is the removal of the foreskin of the male's genital organ.

**ל...wm (*mûl*) II, v. circumcise, let oneself be circumcised, be cut off; v. used 31x
הַלְּמָה(*mûlâ*) n. circumcision.**

περιτέμνω (*peritemno*), v. to circumcise; 14x Acts–Jude.

περιτομή (*peritomē*), n. circumcision; 34x from Acts–Jude

**2. Circumcision was the sign of the
Abrahamic Covenant.**

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Gen. 17:10, “This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised;

Gen. 17:11, “and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.”

2. Circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Gen. 17:12, “He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.

Gen. 17:13, “He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.”

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.”

Gen. 17:26, “That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael;”

1 Cor. 11:3, “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

Eph. 5:23, “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”

- a. Separation to God.**
- b. Because sin came from Adam, the man is the head of the human race.**
- c. Because the man is the head of the home.**

d. In Israel, the tribe of Levi was the designated priestly tribe, only male Levites served. This continues that *distinct role of the male* focus in the Old Testament.

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3. Circumcision was already practiced as part of different cultures in the Ancient Near East.

4. Circumcision in post-Second Temple Judaism.

**Ezek. 16:6, “And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’
Yes, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ ”**

Comments on Ezek. 16:6

Rabbi Matia ben Cheresh used to say, “... But as yet they had no commandments to perform, by virtue of which they might merit redemption”

“God therefore assigned them two commandments: the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, and circumcision, which they were to perform so as to merit being saved, One cannot obtain reward except by deeds.”

~Mekhilta Bo, Chap. 5

“As the Ezekiel exegesis demonstrates, the central symbol of the circumcision ritual was its blood. Regularly, therefore, we find reference not only to the salvific nature of the rite in general, but more specifically, to the saving merit of circumcision blood. Nowadays, a blessing accompanies the symbolic placing of wine on the lips of the baby boy just after the circumcision wound has been cauterized.”

~Jacob Neusner, et al ed., *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, 92

“At any rate, the symbolic value of circumcision as an act of salvation is evident throughout our second century sources. It is the sign of the covenant that saves. ...”

“It is the paradigmatic salvific example of a good work, practiced in every generation from Abraham onward. As such, it has commanded the universal allegiance of Jews throughout history.”

~Jacob Neusner, et al ed., *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, 92

**5. The Mosaic Law mandated
circumcision for every male child on
the eighth day. Lev. 12:2, 3**

6. The spiritual significance of circumcision is related to dedication and submission to God and His plan.

Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16, and Deut. 30:6

Lev. 26:41, “and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt—”

Deut. 10:16, “Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.”

Context

Deut. 10:12, “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deut. 10:13, “and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”

Deut. 30:6, “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”

Ezek. 36:25, “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Ezek. 36:26, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezek. 36:27, “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”

7. It's not the physical circumcision that is important, but the internal circumcision.

Jer. 9:24, “ ‘But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,’ says the LORD.

Jer. 9:25, “ ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will punish all who are circumcised with the uncircumcised—’ ”
Compare Acts 7:51

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Jer. 9:25, “ ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will punish all who are circumcised with the uncircumcised—’ ” Compare Acts 7:51

hDI√rDoV;b l...wm literally, circumcised with the foreskin, i.e., “circumcised yet uncircumcised”

Acts 7:51, “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

Acts 7:52, “Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

Acts 7:53, “who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.”

Gal. 5:6, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.”

Gal. 5:11, “And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.”

Gal. 6:15, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.”

Col. 2:11, “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 Christ,”