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## CIRCUMCISION: What the Bible teaches

Circumcision was a necessary part of the old covenant under the law given by Moses (although it was not "of Moses, but of the fathers", meaning it was commanded of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel before Moses was ever born)—John 7:22. It began with Abraham in Genesis 17:9-14, and continued until the day of Pentecost (Acts chapter 2), when the new covenant began. We can see from Acts 15:1-29, as well as Paul's teachings in Romans 2:25-29 and Galatians 5:2, 6:12-16, etc... that physical circumcision (that of the removing of the foreskin of the male member) is no longer required of God for salvation.

But— There is another circumcision; one which God actually prefers, and is still necessary to become a part of his household... in fact even in the Old Testament, it was this circumcision that he really wanted all along. (Deuteronomy 10:16, Jeremiah 4:4) The apostle Paul wrote it this way: "...circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter (of the law)..." (Romans 2:29). This circumcision was commanded of God and illustrated by "shadows of things to come" (Colossians 2:17) in the Old Testament (see 1 Corinthians 10:11, Romans 15:4); but until Jesus Christ was glorified (John 7:39, Acts 2:33), which was evidenced by the outpouring of his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, 33 A.D., this "circumcision of the heart" had not yet been fully revealed to the sons of men. It was part of a mystery which had not been made known in other ages to the sons of men, "as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit". (Ephesians 3:5).

We know that circumcision (that of the heart, and not in the flesh) is still a requirement of God for salvation, because the apostles of Christ taught it in the New Testament, and the prophets spoke of it in the Old. God told Abraham that the uncircumcised man among them would be "cut off from among his people; he hath broken my covenant." (Genesis 17:14). He also told the prophet Ezekiel, "No stranger, uncircumcised in heart... shall enter into my sanctuary." (Ezekiel 44:9).

If we want to know the Lord, and see his power and glory, we must enter into his sanctuary. Psalm 63:2

In order to worship him in truth, we must enter into his sanctuary.

Psalm 134:2, 150:1

When we need to pray to the Lord, we must enter into his sanctuary.

Isaiah 56:7, Matthew 21:12,13,

Hebrews 6:19,20, 9:1-15

How can we get this circumcision of the heart?

Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:5:

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"Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Jesus knew that the flood of Noah's day was a baptism. The apostle Peter confirmed that in 1 Peter 3:20,21. Through that flood of water:

the world was destroyed,

Noah and his family were saved,

and God made a new covenant with him when he came out of the ark,

(Genesis 9:11)

...and gave him the "token" of that covenant—the rainbow (Genesis 9:13).

A rainbow, seen from heaven, is a complete circle, and was given to Noah and his generations as a shadow, or type, of circumcision.

At the Red Sea (which was also a baptism—see 1 Corinthians 10:1,2),

the enemy of Israel (Egypt, which represents the world and bondage to sin) was destroyed,

Israel was saved,

God gave unto them the pillar of cloud (sea and cloud—water and Spirit), and took them to Mount Sinai and made a covenant with them.

(Exodus 14-20)

At the Jordan river 40 years later,

Israel came through the river (water),

entered into the land of promise (Spirit),

and they were circumcised at Gilgal, where God declared that he had rolled the reproach of Egypt off of them.

(Joshua 3:1-5:9)

That is why Jesus expected Nicodemus to understand about being born of water and of the Spirit. And when it was evident that he did not understand, Jesus replied,

"Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

(John 3:10)

When Jesus was glorified, and the New Testament church was born, this birth of water and

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Spirit which had been illustrated by types and shadows in the Old Testament was revealed; first to his apostles (Luke 24:45-49, John 20:21-23), and then by their word to the world (Matthew 16:19, John 17:20); to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile (Acts 13:46, Romans 1:16).

It was first preached by Simon Peter on the day of Pentecost, 33 A.D., saying,

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost..."

(Acts 2:38).

Paul the apostle taught in Colossians 2:11 that Christians are "...circumcised with the circumcision made without hands", and that this circumcision is for the "...putting off [of] the body of the sins of the flesh" (remission of sins) "by the circumcision of Christ"...

There is a circumcision of Christ!

It is how we get our sins remitted  
(Webster's "remit"—"to release one from

the guilt or penalty of: PARDON, FORGIVE").

It is the secret that Jesus gave his apostles in

John 20:21-23;

that he opened their understanding to in

Luke 24:45-49.

How can we get this circumcision of Christ? Let us keep reading in the book of Colossians, for verse 11 is still not the end of the sentence. Paul continues, "...Buried with him in baptism..." (verse 12)...

That is where it is.

New Testament baptism is for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38, Luke 24:47, Acts 22:16, 1 Peter 3:21)

It is a baptism of water and Spirit (Colossians 2:12, Titus 3:5, 1 Corinthians 6:11, 12:13); and it is how a man or woman is circumcised unto God by Christ Jesus and becomes a Christian.

In the 8th century B.C., the prophet Joel wrote, "...whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered..." (Joel 2:32), which Paul quoted in Romans 10:13.

And the only way, after the New Testament had begun, that we see anyone calling on the name of the Lord for salvation, is by calling on his name in water baptism.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,

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calling on the name of the Lord."

(Acts 22:16)...

And when the apostle Peter preached this baptism for the first time, he said to the people, "SAVE yourselves from this untoward generation. . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine..."

(Acts 2:40-42)

That is how they were saved. And that is the only way that anyone can be saved. As Paul wrote to Titus, "...according to his mercy he saved us, by the WASHING of REGENERATION, and RENEWING of the HOLY GHOST..." (Titus 3:5).

This is the birth of water and Spirit.

This is the circumcision of the heart.

This is the gospel of Christ.

And as it is written,

"But if we (the apostles of Christ), or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you,

let him be accursed."

(Galatians 1:8)

And,

"If there come any unto you,

and bring not this doctrine

(the doctrine of Christ),

receive him not into your house,

neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

(2 John 1:10,11).

God Almighty is holy. We cannot come unto him any way we choose. We must come HIS way if we will find true salvation.

David said it.

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1 Chronicles 13:6-12,

15:11-13

Jesus confirmed it.

John 4:24,

14:6,

Mark 16:16

The apostles preached it.

Acts 2:38-42,

8:12-17,

9:17,18,

10:43-48,

16:14,15,30-34,

18:8,

19:1-6

"Having therefore, brethren,

boldness to enter into the holiest

(the sanctuary)

by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way...

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."

(Hebrews 10:19-22)

-AMEN-