



LESSON NO. 13

BEING CIRCUMCISED IN HEART AND IN FLESH

The question has often come up should a male of the Gentiles or Hebrews be circumcised in order to receive salvation. Many read the controversy with the Pharisees who had come to Christ in Acts chapter 15 and come away with one of two understandings, 1) either circumcision of the flesh is not required at all for the gentiles only the circumcision of the heart or 2) they adhere to the thoughts of the Pharisees that gentiles must comply with the law of Moses and be circumcised for salvation. Many do not necessarily look into exactly what the law of Moses requires for salvation or was circumcision first given to Moses in the Torah. Let us look into this question as new saints in the Kingdom of YAH.

A. CIRCUMCISION

1. When was circumcision given to Abraham? (GE 17:1-14 17:21-27)

- a. **Genesis 17:1** And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, YAH appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am ELOHIM Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect.
2 And I will make my **covenant between me and thee**, and will multiply thee exceedingly.
3 And Abram fell on his face: and ELOHIM talked with him, saying,
4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations.
5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee.
6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.
7 And **I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a ELOHIM unto thee and to thy seed after thee.**
8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their ELOHIM.

9 And ELOHIM said unto Abraham, And as for thee, thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations.

10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised.

11 And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you.

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

13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14 And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Genesis 17:21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

22 And he left off talking with him, and ELOHIM went up from Abraham.

23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as ELOHIM had said unto him.

24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

26 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

27 And all the men of his house, those born in the house, and those bought with money of a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

2. By whom was circumcision initiated? (GE 17:1-2)

- a. Genesis 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, YAH appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am ELOHIM Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3. Who had to be circumcised? (GE 17:10-13)

- a. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised.
- 11 And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you.
- 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner that is not of thy seed.

13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

4. What was the penalty for not being circumcised? (GE 17:14)

- a. 14 And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

As we can see the Law of Circumcision given to Abraham was for all the males of his household born into or bought with money (servants). **It did not include anyone else.**

B. HOW WAS THE LAW OF CIRCUMCISION GIVEN TO MOSES DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE GIVEN TO ABRAHAM?

5. What was the Law of Circumcision given to Mosses?

- a) Leviticus 12:1 And YAH spake unto Moses, saying,
 - 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman conceive seed, and bear a man-child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of the impurity of her sickness **shall she be unclean.**
 - 3 **And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. (As given to Abraham)**
 - 4 And she shall **continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days**; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.
 - 5 But if she bear a maid-child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her impurity; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.
 - 6 And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she **shall bring a lamb a year old for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tent of meeting, unto the priest:**
 - 7 and he shall offer it before YAH, and make atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the fountain of her blood. This is the law for her that beareth, whether a male or a female.
 - 8 And if her means suffice not for a lamb, then she shall take two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons; the one for a burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering: and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.

6. Did the stranger that lived in Israel have to keep the Passover? No

7. Was the stranger/sojourner or hired servant able to partake of the Passover? (Ex 12:43-49)

- a. Ex 12:43 And YAH said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the **ordinance of the passover: there shall no foreigner eat thereof;**

44 but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45 A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47 All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

8. What did the stranger/sojourner have to do to partake of the Passover? (Ex 12:48)

- a. Exodus 12:48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to YAH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

49 One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

- b. Numbers 9:14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto YAH; according to the statute of the passover, and according to the ordinance thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one statute, both for the sojourner, and for him that is born in the land.

9. Could the sojourner that had been circumcised make the same offerings as one that was home-born? (Num 15:1-16)

- a. Numbers 15:1 And YAH spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye are come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,
3 and will make an offering by fire unto YAH, a burnt-offering, or a sacrifice, to accomplish a vow, or as a freewill-offering, or in your set feasts, to make a sweet savor unto YAH, of the herd, or of the flock;
4 then shall he that offereth his oblation offer unto YAH a meal-offering of a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour mingled with the fourth part of a hin of oil:
5 and wine for the drink-offering, the fourth part of a hin, shalt thou prepare with the burnt-offering, or for the sacrifice, for each lamb.
6 Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meal-offering two tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour mingled with the third part of a hin of oil:
7 and for the drink-offering thou shalt offer the third part of a hin of wine, of a sweet savor unto YAH.
8 And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt-offering, or for a sacrifice, to accomplish a vow, or for peace-offerings unto YAH;
9 then shall he offer with the bullock a meal-offering of three tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour mingled with half a hin of oil:
10 and thou shalt offer for the drink-offering half a hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto YAH.
11 Thus shall it be done for each bullock, or for each ram, or for each of the he-lambs, or of the kids.

12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number.

13 All that are home-born shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto YAH.

14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever may be among you throughout your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto YAH; as ye do, so he shall do.

15 For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you, a statute for ever throughout your generations: as ye are, so shall the sojourner be before YAH.

16 One law and one ordinance shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

As we can see the stranger/sojourner that wanted to become part of Israel had to be circumcised to take part of the feast days and to offer sacrifice just as the home-born did. This is a change from the Abrahamic covenant that only required circumcision for home-born and purchased servants. No provision existed for someone voluntarily joining to Israel. This was added under the Moses.

10. How should Israel look at the stranger that sojourn amongst us? (Lev 19:33-34)

- a. **Leviticus 19:33** And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong.

34 The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt: I am YAH your Elohim.

11. Did the priest have to make sacrifice for unwitting sin among the home-born and for the stranger? (Num 15:22-29)

- a. **Numbers 15:22** And when ye shall err, and not observe all these commandments, which YAH hath spoken unto Moses,

23 even all that YAH hath commanded you by Moses, from the day that YAH gave commandment, and onward throughout your generations;

24 then it shall be, if it be done unwittingly, without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bullock for a burnt-offering, for a sweet savor unto YAH, with the meal-offering thereof, and the drink-offering thereof, according to the ordinance, and one he-goat for a sin-offering.

25 And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and they shall be forgiven; for it was an error, and they have brought their oblation, an offering made by fire unto YAH, and their sin-offering before YAH, for their error:

26 and all the congregation of the children of Israel shall be forgiven, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; for in respect of all the people it was done unwittingly.

27 And if one person sin unwittingly, then he shall offer a she-goat a year old for a sin-offering.

28 And the priest shall make atonement for the soul that erreth, when he sinneth unwittingly, before YAH, to make atonement for him; and he shall be forgiven.
29 Ye shall have one law for him that doeth aught unwittingly, for him that is home-born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

12. Was the penalty the same for the stranger as for the home-born? (Numbers 15:30)

- a. **Numbers 15:30** But the soul that doeth aught with a high hand, whether he be home-born or a sojourner, the same blasphemeth YAH; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

13. Were all the men that came out of Egypt circumcised? (Jos 5:1-8)

- a. **Joshua 5:1** And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, that were by the sea, heard how that YAH had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.
2 At that time YAH said unto Joshua, **Make thee knives of flint, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.**
3 And Joshua made him knives of flint, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.
4 **And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: all the people that came forth out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war,** died in the wilderness by the way, after they came forth out of Egypt.
5 **For all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness** by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, **they had not circumcised.**
6 For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the nation, even the men of war that came forth out of Egypt, were consumed, because they hearkened not unto the voice of YAH: unto whom YAH swore that he would not let them see the land which YAH swore unto their fathers that he would give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.
7 **And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them did Joshua circumcise: for they were uncircumcised,** because they had not circumcised them by the way.
8 And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the nation, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole.

14. IS CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART A NEW CONCEPT INTRODUCED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? (DEU 10:16, JER 4:4)

- a. **Deuteronomy 10:16** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.
- b. **Jeremiah 4:4** Circumcise yourselves to YAH, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn so that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

In Deuteronomy 10:16 and Jerimiah 4:4 we see that YAH wanted the people to be circumcised of heart as well as flesh. The requirement to circumcise the foreskin of your heart was to repent (be genuinely sorry for your sin and to cut sin out of your life). This did not annul the requirement for circumcision of the flesh in all the males.

C. ABRAHAM'S SEED

1. Who are Abraham's seed according to the Gospel? (Rom 9:6-8, Ga 3:26)

A. **Romans 9:6** Not as though the word of Elohim hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Romans 9:8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of Elohim: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

B. Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. **He saith not, And to seeds**, as of many; **but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.**

17 And this I say, **that the covenant, that was confirmed before of Elohim in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.**

C. **Galatians 3:26** For ye are all the children of Elohim by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 **For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.**

28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.**

29 **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

2. **Is circumcision required for gentiles to become part of Abraham's seed? (Acts 15:1-29)**

Acts 15:1 And **certain men** which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, **Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.**

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that Elohim had done with them.

5 **But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.**

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago Elohim made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And Elohim, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye Elohim, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of YAH Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders Elohim had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how Elohim at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after YAH, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith YAH, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto Elohim are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to Elohim:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 **For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;**

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (to be saved they were to be subjected gradually as they learned the law of Moses on each Sabbath. This was not to hinder their entrance into the Kingdom.).

The Jerusalem Council

1. The Council's Decision in Light of Paul's Teachings:

Paul was present at the Jerusalem Council and agreed with the decision (Acts 15:12, 22-23). In his letters, he consistently taught that Gentiles were not required to be circumcised or take on the Mosaic Law as a prerequisite for salvation. However, Paul did not negate the value of Elohim's moral laws for guiding righteous living. Let's see how Paul's teachings align with the decision:

- Galatians 3:23-25 – The Purpose of the Law:

- Paul explains that the Law acted as a "schoolmaster" to lead us to the Messiah. Once faith in the Messiah is established, believers are no longer "under" the schoolmaster (Galatians 3:24-25).

- This doesn't mean the Law is irrelevant but that its function as a covenant of external rituals and identity markers (e.g., circumcision) is no longer the basis of inclusion in the covenant community.

- Galatians 5:1-6 – The Issue of Circumcision:

- Paul argues that Gentiles should not be compelled to be circumcised because doing so would obligate them to keep the entire Mosaic Law (Galatians 5:3).

- Paul's concern was that circumcision, as a sign of legalistic observance, would detract from the sufficiency of faith in the Messiah for salvation.

- Romans 14 – Accepting Weaker and Stronger Believers:

- Paul addresses divisions between Jewish and Gentile believers regarding dietary laws and holy days. His solution is mutual respect and not judging one another over matters of conscience (Romans 14:5-6, 10-12).

- This supports the idea that Gentiles were not required to take on the full yoke of the Mosaic Law immediately but were expected to grow in understanding and respect for others.

2. The Teaching of Jesus:

Jesus upheld the Torah but also redefined certain aspects, focusing on the heart and intent behind the commandments:

- Matthew 5:17-19 – Fulfilling the Law:

- Jesus stated that He did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. He taught that those who follow and teach the commandments are considered great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

- His fulfillment of the Law emphasized its spiritual intent rather than its ritualistic observance. This is consistent with the New Testament's teaching that believers are called to live holy lives according to Elohim's principles without relying on ritual observance for salvation.

- Matthew 22:37-40 – The Greatest Commandments:

- Jesus summed up the entire Law with two commandments: Love Elohim and love your neighbor. This focus on love as the fulfillment of the Law is echoed by Paul in Romans 13:8-10.

- This teaching harmonizes with the Jerusalem Council's decision to focus on core prohibitions that embodied respect and love (avoiding idolatry, sexual immorality, and things offensive to Jewish believers).

3. James's Later Teaching in the Epistle of James:

James, who gave the final ruling in Acts 15, emphasized that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). He upheld the value of the Law as a guide for righteous conduct, especially in moral and ethical matters. His epistle reinforces the expectation that believers should grow in obedience and maturity:

- James 1:22-25 – Being Doers of the Word:

- James encourages believers to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only," showing that while the ceremonial aspects of the Law might not be binding, the ethical and moral teachings continue to be relevant for righteous living.

- James 4:17 – Knowing and Doing Good:

- “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” This indicates an expectation that believers are responsible for living according to Elohim’s revealed will as they come to understand it.

4. The Broader Apostolic Consensus:

- 1 Corinthians 7:18-19 – Circumcision is Nothing, But Keeping Elohim’s Commandments Matters:

- Paul states that circumcision is not the determining factor for believers; instead, what matters is “the keeping of the commandments of Elohim.” This statement echoes the balance seen in Acts 15: maintaining core moral principles while avoiding unnecessary legalistic burdens.

- 1 Peter 2:9-12 – A Holy Nation:

- Peter refers to believers as a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.” This identity language suggests that Gentiles, too, are part of Elohim’s covenant community, called to live holy lives in accordance with Elohim’s will.

Summary of Alignment:

Your interpretation of Acts 15:20-21 — that the initial requirements were a starting point and that Gentiles were expected to grow in their knowledge and observance of Elohim’s laws over time — aligns well with the broader New Testament teachings. The apostles never rejected the value of Elohim’s commandments for holy living; rather, they focused on faith in the Messiah as the basis for salvation, with the expectation that believers (both Jew and Gentile) would grow in obedience and understanding of Elohim’s moral and ethical standards.

- The Jerusalem Council’s decision does not contradict the rest of the New Testament but complements it by laying a foundation for how Gentiles should begin their walk in the faith.

- The progressive nature of learning and applying the Law of Moses is in line with the New Testament emphasis on sanctification, growth, and obedience to Elohim’s will.

Therefore, this contextual understanding is well-supported by the broader New Testament teaching and the apostolic approach to integrating Gentiles into the faith community without compromising the centrality of faith in the Messiah.

The argument that people are saved through faith alone in Christ is a foundational belief in many Christian traditions. It is often based on key passages such as Ephesians 2:8-9, which states: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of Elohim: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” However, Acts 15 and the rest of the New Testament suggest that while salvation itself comes through faith, a transformed life characterized by obedience to Elohim’s commandments is expected to follow.

Understanding the Argument: Faith Alone vs. Obedience to Elohim’s Commands:

The debate hinges on the relationship between faith and works. Let’s look at how Acts 15, the teachings of Paul, and other apostolic instructions address this relationship.

1. Acts 15: Saved Through Faith but Called to Righteous Living:

- The Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 acknowledged that Gentiles **are saved** by faith alone, without the need for circumcision or the ritual aspects of the Mosaic Law.

- Peter’s statement in Acts 15:11 is clear: “But we believe that through the grace of YAH Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”

- This confirmed that Gentiles did not need to adhere to the whole Law of Moses (i.e., circumcision, ritual purity laws, etc.) **as a means of salvation**.

2. The Four Requirements (Acts 15:20-21):

- However, the council did issue four immediate requirements, indicating that certain actions were still necessary for Gentile believers to maintain purity and holiness in their new lives.

- These were prohibitions against idolatry, sexual immorality, consuming blood, and eating things strangled. While these were not presented as requirements for salvation, they were necessary for sanctification and unity within the Jewish-Gentile community.

3. Faith Alone for Salvation — Yet Not Without Transformation:

- The New Testament consistently teaches that salvation is by grace through faith, but it also emphasizes that true faith produces obedience. James 2:17 says, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

- Paul’s letters, which are often cited in support of the “faith alone” doctrine, do not contradict this. For instance:

- Ephesians 2:10: Right after emphasizing grace and faith for salvation, Paul states: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which Elohim hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

- Romans 3:31: “Do we then make void the law through faith? Elohim forbid: yea, we establish the law.” Paul’s argument is that faith does not nullify Elohim’s moral standards but rather upholds them.

4. James’s Teaching: Faith Without Works is Dead (James 2:14-26):

- James directly addresses the idea that one can have faith alone without demonstrating it through righteous actions. He argues that even demons have faith (James 2:19), but their belief does not lead to obedience or salvation.

- True faith, according to James, is evidenced by works that align with Elohim’s commandments, including loving one’s neighbor and living righteously.

The Role of the Acts 15 Requirements:

The four requirements in Acts 15 were not requirements for salvation, but they were necessary for:

1. Maintaining Purity:

- These commands were drawn from Levitical laws that applied to “strangers” (Gentiles) living among Israel. They were meant to establish a baseline for holiness and separation from idolatrous practices.

2. Facilitating Fellowship Between Jewish and Gentile Believers:

- These prohibitions made it possible for Gentiles to have table fellowship and participate in the community without offending Jewish sensitivities.

3. Establishing a Pathway for Growth:

- Acts 15:21 indicates that these requirements were just a starting point, with the expectation that Gentiles would continue to learn and grow in their understanding of Elohim’s will as expressed in the Law of Moses.

Does This Contradict “Faith Alone” Doctrine?

No, the decision in Acts 15 does not contradict the doctrine of being saved through faith alone. Instead, **it clarifies the role of works in the life of a believer:**

1. Salvation and Initial Inclusion:

- Gentiles were saved through faith alone and received the Holy Spirit without circumcision or adherence to the full Mosaic Law (Acts 10:44-48, Acts 11:15-17). This was the basis for Peter's argument at the council (Acts 15:8-11).

2. Sanctification and Growing in Holiness:

- After receiving salvation, believers were expected to live holy lives, avoiding practices that were contrary to Elohim's will and learning more of Elohim's commandments.

- The requirements in Acts 15 were not about how to be saved but how to live once saved. They were necessary for the practical outworking of a holy life in the context of a diverse faith community.

The New Testament's Consistent Message:

Throughout the New Testament, the message is consistent: salvation comes through faith alone in the Messiah, but faith is never alone. Genuine faith leads to a life of obedience, transformation, and alignment with Elohim's will:

1. Romans 6:1-2 – Shall We Continue in Sin?

- Paul answers the question: If we are saved by grace through faith, does that mean we can continue in sin? He responds: "Elohim forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

- This emphasizes that grace leads to freedom from sin and a life of righteousness, not license to continue in disobedience.

2. Titus 2:11-12 – Grace Teaches Us to Live Righteously:

- "For the grace of Elohim that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying unElohimliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Elohimly, in this present world."

- Grace is not opposed to good works; it produces them in the lives of believers.

Conclusion:

The requirements of Acts 15 do not contradict the teaching that salvation is by faith alone. Instead, they affirm that while salvation itself is through faith, living out that salvation involves obedience to Elohim's standards. The decision was about maintaining purity, unity, and a starting point for Gentile believers, with the understanding that they would grow in obedience over time.

3. Was Yahshuah (Jesus) circumcised? (Luke 2:21-24)

A. Luke 2:21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to YAH;

23 (As it is written in the law of YAH, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to YAH;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of YAH, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

4. Are you commanded to walk as Yahshuah (Jesus) walked? (1 John 2:5-6)

A. 1 John 2:5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of Elohim perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. (Messiah did it so why wouldn't you?)

5. What was the purpose of circumcision? (Rom 4:11-12)

A. Romans 4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Romans 4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law (the law not being given for another 430 years), but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even Elohim, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of Elohim through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to Elohim;
21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.
22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.
23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;
24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;
25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

6. For purpose of salvation does being circumcised or uncircumcised matter? (1 Cor 7:18-19)

- A. **1 Corinthians 7:18** Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.
19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of Elohim.

7. What is the result of being circumcised to be saved? (Ga 5:1-6)

- A. Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.
2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if **ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (This is speaking of being circumcised to be saved)**
3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.
4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, **whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.**
5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.
6 **For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;** but faith which worketh by love.

8. What is the motivating factor for someone that requires you to be circumcised to receive salvation? (Ga 6:12-16)

- A. Galatians 6:12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.
13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, **that they may glory in your flesh.**
14 But Elohim forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.
15 **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.**

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy,
and upon the Israel of Elohim.

9. A discussion of Col 2:1-17 What is a shadow of things to come?

Colossians 2:1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them
at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches
of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of
Elohim, and of the Father, and of Christ;

3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding
your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus YAH, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught,
abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition
of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Elohimhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in
putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of
the operation of Elohim, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he
quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to
us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly,
triumphing over them in it.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of
the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are **a shadow of things to come**; but the body is of Christ.

1. Why be circumcised as the seed of Abraham? Gen 17:7-8

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a ELOHIM unto thee and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their ELOHIM.

You get circumcised as the seed of Abraham to come into the covenant of Abraham to possess the land. If you are not circumcised in Abraham, you do not get to take possession of the land but you return to your own land as a citizen of the Kingdom of YAH with eternal life in Christ as a citizen of the land you come out of, but not as a citizen of Israel.

Abraham received the promises from YAH and believed (had faith) in YAH concerning the promises. Because he believed YAH he was circumcised along with Ishmael his son, all the free males of his and those that had been purchased. Because he believed YAH he sealed the deal with YAH by circumcising as YAH had required. Because he believed YAH (shows he was circumcised in heart) which cause him to circumcise his flesh.

YAH has always wanted a nation that is circumcised in heart and flesh according to the Abrahamic covenant. You may not part take of the Holy Things being uncircumcised heart and flesh. You may get your citizenship into the kingdom, but once you are a citizen you must be circumcised in the flesh as well as in heart. These ordinance were not done away with. But are a test to see who will follow YAH or who will do that which is right in their own mind. All of Abraham's seed is commanded to be circumcised. If you are Abraham seed of the flesh or Abraham seed by faith. If you are Abraham seed by faith and you want to keep the feast days then you must be circumcised. If you are Abraham's seed by flesh well that was given to you in the law. There shall be one law to the home-born and to the stranger. Our Messiah was baptized and circumcised in the flesh, why would we think we have to do less?

2. Will YAH except those that are uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh? (Eze 44:1-9)

- A. **Ezekiel 44:1** Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut.
2 Then said YAH unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because YAH, the Elohim of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.
3 It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before YAH; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.
4 Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of YAH filled the house of YAH: and I fell upon my face.
5 And YAH said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of

the house of YAH, and all the laws thereof; and mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary.

6 And **thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel**, Thus saith YAH ELOHIM; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations,

7 In that ye have brought into my sanctuary **strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh**, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations.

8 And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves.

9 **Thus saith YAH ELOHIM; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.**