

Passover and the Circumcision

Is it still required for observance?

Slide 1: Intro

- This is a very passionate and controversial subject
- Inspiration for teaching and why this topic is important:
 - Many in the Hebrew Roots struggle with this
 - Mention the FaceBook woman whose son could not observe due to circumcision, and she was sad and confused.
 - Many of the comments were concerning, saying her child should be excluded from Passover
 - It is a very important Feast in which we can learn about the end times

Slide 2: Overview

- **CLICK THROUGH POINTS**
 - How circumcision applies in the past
 - The discussion of works vs. faith
 - How circumcision applies to us today
 - Circumcision in the Passover
 - King Hezekiah's Example

Slide 3: Genesis 17:9-14

- To start off, we will be laying the groundwork of circumcision:
 - (ESV will be used for everything)

9 And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, 13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

- For a male that is born into Israel, circumcision was (and is) a sign of God's covenant between Him and His people.

- All males were to be circumcised at 8 days old, this was a requirement of the father, and if he did not do this, it would be a sin on him. (due to the breaking of this commandment.) It is not the son's sin.
- But eventually, if an uncircumcised man truly loves God and wants to follow him, as verse 14 says, they must be circumcised.
- Circumcision is similar to Shabbat in being a sign that we are God's people. It is our own physical reminder, Shabbat being a reminder to others.
- To be heirs of this covenant God gave to Abraham, circumcision is required...(to this day)

Slide 4: Galatians 3:28-29

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

- So what exactly are we heirs to?

Slide 5: Genesis 12:1-3

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- If we want all these blessings and so many more, we must be circumcised, or else we will never truly receive the fullness of the His blessings.

Slide 6: Exodus 4:24-26

24 At a lodging place on the way the Lord met him and sought to put him to death. **25** Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it and said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" **26** So he let him alone. It was then that she said, "A bridegroom of blood," because of the circumcision.

- Circumcision is so important to God that he was ready to kill Moses due to him possibly refusing to circumcise his son.
 - If God reveals truth to us in our lives, like Torah for example, and we refuse to follow it due to our own hearts...then God will hold us accountable for those actions.
- We know that circumcision is very important for our future too.

Slide 7: Ezekiel 44:9

9 “Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary.

- This passage is speaking of the Third Temple, which we do not yet have, so obviously God still does expect us to circumcise ourselves.
 - On a side note, it is very interesting that this is not a requirement of the Tabernacle or first two Temples.
- But there is a flip side to circumcision. One that must also be considered.
 - Once in a debate I made the comment to someone that if one’s heart is not right with God, then he cares nothing about your circumcised flesh. But is that true?

Slide 8: Romans 4:1-8

What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: 7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; 8 blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”

- So let’s dissect this a little bit:
 - Abraham was first justified by his faith, which was accredited to him as righteousness.
 - Verses 4 and 5 stumped me a little bit, but essentially, he is speaking to someone who is trying to justify themselves by works.
 - Verse 5: The second person isn’t attempting to justify themselves through works.
 - **CLICK: Greek “dikaioó” to render just or innocent.**
 - They know they are found innocent by God, and therefore, their faith is their righteousness, which cannot be first proven by works.
 - At first you are found righteous because of faith, but to continue walking in righteousness, you must apply works too.

Slide 9: Romans 4:9-12

9 Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. 10 How then was it counted to

him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. **11** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, **12** and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

- Verse 11: **11** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised.
- Again, God is saying that through faith we are first justified
- In the first century, many Jews believed they were saved simply because someone else had circumcised them. Paul hotly debates this throughout his letters.
- We are saved by our own actions, not the actions of our physical fathers.
- Only we can circumcise our own hearts.
- Side note: Paul was referencing the beginning of Psalm 32.
- I want to show a few more scriptures that further confirms what is being said in Romans 4.

Slide 10: Romans 5:1-3

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Slide 11: Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Slide 12: James 2:18-26

- James also says this on the matter:

18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **19** You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! **20** Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? **21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when

he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

- When dealing with faith verses works, it can be confusing.
 - James and Paul are talking about two things that are similar, yet different.
 - Paul is dealing with people who believe they are saved by works alone.
 - James is dealing with people who believe they are saved by faith alone.
 - Faith alone leads to nothing, because if all you ever do is tell God, “Yes, I love in you.” but he tells you, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Then you just say “No, I don’t want to do that.” Then did you ever truly love him in the first place?
 - Marriage is another example. (Disclaimer: I am not married but I ran this by my parents.)
 - When you say “I do.”, that is a leap of faith in which you are trusting that person to perform all the duties required of a spouse. The duties, the works, come after that.
 - If both do not go hand in hand, if there is no faith, then the marriage fails. If there are no works, it will fail. The same is true of our relationship with God.
 - Paul and James are saying two different things to two different people.
 - In the beginning of a relationship like marriage, love is what carries it, the “I do.” This is what Paul is trying to explain.
 - James is explaining that later on, it takes both to prove the results of faith.

Slide 13: Titus 3:4-8

- Paul sums it all up amazingly in this passage.

4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **5** he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, **6** whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **8** The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

- Now that we have solved the issue of faith and works, what about my original point, does God care more about our circumcised hearts? Let's go through some scriptures:

Slide 14: Galatians 5:6

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

Slide 15: Deuteronomy 10:15-16

15 Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. **16** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.

Slide 16: Romans 2:29

29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

- Having a pure heart, separated from evil and loving God comes first. The physical part always comes second.
- We also know from the Acts 15 conference about what new believers should do:

Slide 17: Acts 15:1

- This is what started the debate:

But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Slide 18: Acts 15:19-21

- This is James' final judgment:

19 Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, **20** but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. **21** For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues."

- James is saying that the new believers who were coming in should not be forced to circumcise themselves for salvation, they will learn that in the synagogues on

the Sabbath. These are the only beginning stipulations, in addition to Yeshua's own words:

Slide 19: Matthew 22:34-40

34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. **35** And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. **36** "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" **37** And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. **40** On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

- The heart always comes first even if there is a previous circumcision at 8 days old.

Slide 20: Now what about Passover?

- With this, I believe we can now see very clearly that God still requires circumcision, and that it is still very important today.
 - But now, it begs the question: Is it required for Passover?
 - We will dive into this subject, taking what we already know about circumcision.
- Firstly, it is very important to note that there was only one Passover, when they put the blood on the doorposts and God passed over the land of Egypt.
 - We cannot do this anymore, we simply partake of an observance of Passover.
 - But the true observance of Passover as God commands isn't possible for us to do today either. We can see this in Exodus 12:

Slide 21: Exodus 12:43-47

43 And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, **44** but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. **45** No foreigner or hired worker may eat of it. **46** It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. **47** All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

Slide 22: Exodus 12:48-50

48 If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native

of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. **49** There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

50 All the people of Israel did just as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron. **51** And on that very day the Lord brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

- We'll go through all the points here:
 - First, It says that all of the males must be circumcised to eat of the Passover. This seems pretty cut and dry.
 - **Point out everywhere that it says eating of the Passover (verse 44, 45, 46, 48)**
 - So must we be circumcised to EAT of the Passover or OBSERVE the Passover?

Slide 23: Exodus 12:26-27

26 And when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ **27** you shall say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.’” And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

- Verse 27 hints that it is something that is sacrificed, it is a meal between us and God. Which makes the Passover lamb holy after it is sacrificed.
 - It makes sense that God would not want someone who is not part of his covenant to partake of one of the blessings.
 - But this is what I was mentioning earlier, we cannot sacrifice a lamb to eat to truly observe Passover today.
- Let's go over some more scriptures talking about the sacrifice

Slide 24: Exodus 34:25

25 “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover remain until the morning.

Slide 25: Deuteronomy 16:1-4

“Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the Lord your God, for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night. **2** And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the Lord your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the Lord will choose, to make his name dwell there. **3** You shall eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life

you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. **4** No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning.

Slide 26: Deuteronomy 16:5-8

5 You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, **6** but at the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt. **7** And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the Lord your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. **8** For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord your God. You shall do no work on it.

- This passage again reaffirms that, even after the sin of the golden calf, it is still a sacrifice holy to God that **MUST** be done at the Tabernacle/Temple.
- So we've seen how God applies circumcision in the remembrance which seems to be in the land. But as we hinted at before, what about while they were in the wilderness?

Slide 27: Numbers 9:1-5

And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, **2** "Let the people of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time. **3** On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time; according to all its statutes and all its rules you shall keep it." **4** So Moses told the people of Israel that they should keep the Passover. **5** And they kept the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the people of Israel did.

- This is the first example we have of Israel having the first remembrance of the Passover.
- If we look closely at verse 3, it says, "according to all its statutes and all its rules..."
 - But the Israelites weren't circumcising...right? How could they keep the Passover?

Slide 28: Joshua 5:5

Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people who were born on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

- So at this point, I will have to walk back what I have been saying for a while...they were circumcising their children in Egypt the entire 400 years.
 - The only time they stopped was in the wilderness. But why? Why stop when God is walking in your midst?
 - It is my belief that the Israelites rejected God after the failure of going into the Promised Land.
 - And how did they reject God? By rejecting his covenant, in many ways. And what was the most important sign of the covenant? Circumcision.
 - It doesn't necessarily say that they stopped after the event of the spies, but it is an educated guess.
 - After the spies in Numbers 14, almost every other chapter after that event has some type of rebellion, back to back. They were constantly opposing Moses, and by extension, God.

Slide 29: Israelites wandering in the desert

- So should we exclude people, our own children, from a remembrance of Passover in which we are not eating of a sacrificed lamb?
 - I would say no.
 - We must remember what God says, and is in my opinion, one of the most important reasons for Passover.

Slide 30: Exodus 12:24-27

24 You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. **25** And when you come to the land that the Lord will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. **26** And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' **27** you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

- Teaching these things to our children, what God did for his people and how he brought about the promises to Abraham, that is why we remember.

Slide 31: Deuteronomy 15:12-16

12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. **13** Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that

your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. **14** But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. **15** As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. **16** And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

- Passover is one example that God will always honor the promises to His people, whether we deserve it or not.
- So we know we cannot do the *correct* thing in regards to Passover, we have no Temple. But what is the *right* thing to do?
 - The story of Hezekiah’s Passover comes to mind.

Slide 32: Hezekiah

- We’re going to open our Bibles and turn to 2nd Chronicles 30:1-9
- What Hezekiah was doing was actually against Torah, technically speaking, he was sinning by doing this.
 - Verse 3 says that the Levites had not yet consecrated themselves, yet they were performing the priestly duties.
 - **Drop down to verse 18.** The northern tribes would not have been allowed by Torah to partake of the Passover.
 - **Continue reading verses 19, 20 and 21, then 27**
 - It is interesting that even though they were doing wrong, *and they knew it*, God still blesses the people for desiring to do good and serve Him.
 - Hezekiah’s example can be applied in many different ways, but do not willfully break commandments
 - But it shows us that sometimes, God will reward us for doing the best we can.
- I think I will close with this:
 - We can’t necessarily do the *correct* thing in regards to Passover, but we can do the *right* thing, for us and our children.
 - I believe excluding people who want to learn more about God’s Passover due to a command which doesn’t apply is a mistake.
 - Passover is meant to be an intimate event between the *family*.
 - And in regards to the woman and her son, I bet it would help him draw closer to God.

Slide 33: END

