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# CIRCUMCISION

## ***Should Messianic Believers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century be circumcised?***

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### INTRODUCTION

This is possibly one of the most hotly debated issues confronting the Messianic and Christian communities in the twenty-first century. It is the same question that has been debated since Gentiles first joined with their Jewish counterparts as Talmidim of Yeshua.

Progressively through the latter half of the first century, Gentiles within the Messianic community took on leading roles ahead of their Jewish brothers, more particularly after the first Talmidim of Yeshua (the emissaries) started passing off the scene as martyrs for the Name of Yeshua. The shift in leadership moved to a point where, during the second and third centuries the Messianic community became overpowered by the doctrines and teachings of the Early Church Fathers. They were the ones who founded the new religious community, that later became known as Christianity. Those ones considered themselves to be the divinely ordained replacements for the original emissaries and their Jewish brothers. Hence, following the destruction of the Second Temple by Rome in 70CE, the Gentile leaders took advantage of the harsh environment, under post-Temple Roman rule, where to be born Jewish or to have any connection with the religion or culture of Judaism meant inevitable death or slavery. So, the Early Church Fathers divested themselves and their new religion of all aspects of Jewish life.

Those same anti-Jewish attitudes, meant that Gentiles joining the Christian community would never be circumcised, as to receive the mark of circumcision would imply that the Christianity was somehow connected with Judaism. The anti-circumcision doctrine gained its strength from the belief that Christianity was now God's chosen and set apart community and therefore, had no reason to connect with the ones they perceived were responsible for the death of the Messiah.

But, how do the doctrines of the early Church measure up with Scripture?

What does the Tanakh (OT) say on these matters? What did the emissaries of Yeshua and more particularly, Sha'ul the emissary to the Gentiles teach?

Does the Bible differentiate between Jews and Gentiles particularly after the Gentiles started being called into the Messianic community? Are those joining the Messianic community, either Jew or Gentile, meant to be circumcised?

These are just some of the questions that this paper sets out to explore directly from the words of Scripture. As you read through you will find that there are large blocks of text taken directly from Scripture. Please read each passage as you go, because the

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words of the Bible develop their own true argument about the real purpose behind circumcision and the reason why it was given to Isra'el and not the Gentiles.

Throughout this paper I have used the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) – translated by Dr. David Stern. While other translations can also be used, I favour the CJB, because it uses Hebrew names, place names and phrases, which help one to identify more accurately with the Hebraic character of the Scriptures. After all the whole Bible was written by Hebrews for Hebrews against a Hebraic background. Therefore, the many Greek and English words that have been used by translators down through the last twenty centuries, have changed the meaning of verses and drawn the reader away from the Hebraic context. Those same changes played into the hands of those wanting to view Christianity as having permanently replaced Isra'el.

This paper has been divided into three separate parts, starting in Part One with the Tanakh and looking at the purpose of circumcision in relation to Isra'el both ancient and modern.

Then in Part Two we will explore how the emissaries of Yeshua and the leaders of the first century Messianic community viewed circumcision, firstly for Jews and then Gentiles who were called to know and trust Yeshua.

Finally, in Part Three we will look at the role and relationship between those who have been called to know and trust Yeshua and the remainder of Isra'el, both in the first and twenty-first centuries. Against that backdrop we will see how the message from Scripture is totally different from the man-made doctrines that have developed around circumcision through the teachings of both Christianity and Rabbinical Judaism, during the intervening centuries.

Both religions, having grown from the same root – pre-Messianic Isra'el – with each having developed well defined reasons for avoiding any relationship with the other. The agendas driving both parties – namely the rejection of Yeshua by Judaism and the rejection of Torah (the Law) by Christendom – have clouded the real purpose of circumcision as it is revealed through Scripture. It is only when the Bible is allowed to speak for it's self that the true message about circumcision can be seen and how it relates differently for Jews, Christians and the Body of Messiah. Come on a journey through the Scriptures and allow YHVH to reveal through his own words the truth about this matter. A question that has perplexed many truth seekers in every generation, since Yeshua gathered his twelve talmidim (disciples).

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## PART ONE

### *The Land Of Promise*

The first reference to circumcision appears in B'reshet (Genesis) Chapter seventeen as the seal of a covenant made between YHVH and Avraham.

*“I will make my covenant between me and you, and I will increase your numbers greatly.” (B'reshet 17:2)*

When did this occur?

*When Avram was 99 years old YHVH appeared to Avram and said to him, “I am El Shaddai. (God Almighty) Walk in my presence and be pure-hearted.” (B'reshet 17:1)*

What was the purpose of the covenant?

*“I am establishing my covenant between me and you, along with your descendants after you, generation after generation, as an everlasting covenant, to be God for you and for your descendants after you. I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are now foreigners, all the land of Kena'an, as a permanent possession; and I will be their God.” (B'reshet 17:7 & 8)*

What is “all the land of Kena'an” that was being discussed here?

*That day YHVH made a covenant with Avram: “I have given this land to your descendants— from the Vadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River— the territory of the Keni, the K'nizi, the Kadmoni, the Hitti, the P'rizi, the Refa'im, the Emori, the Kena'ani, the Girgashi and the Y'vusi.” (B'reshet 15:18 – 20)*

So, how would each successive generation remember the promise relating to the covenant? YHVH is timeless and will never forget, but what about the human parties to the covenant. Once Avraham died the promise would soon be forgotten, unless each subsequent generation had it's own reminder. Each individual born into the family of Avraham needed a personal reminder. It was a unilateral covenant from YHVH to Avraham and his descendants, but still YHVH required Avraham and all generations that followed to take a specific action in return. That action would be their commitment to the covenant. But, what action did God expect from Avraham and his descendants?

*Here is my covenant, which you are to keep, between me and you, along with your descendants after you: every male among you is to be circumcised. You are to be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; this will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. Generation after generation, every male among you who is eight days old is to be circumcised, including slaves born within your household and those bought from a foreigner not descended from you. The slave born in your house and the person bought with your money*

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*must be circumcised; thus my covenant will be in your flesh as an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who will not let himself be circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin— that person will be cut off from his people, because he has broken my covenant.” (B’resheet 17:10 – 14)*

Avraham trusted in all that YHVH had promised, so at 99 years old he circumcised himself and all his household as YHVH commanded:-

*Avraham took Yishma’el his son, all the slaves born in his house and all who had been bought with his money, every male among the people in Avraham’s household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin that very day, just as God had said to him. Avraham was ninety–nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, and Yishma’el his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. Avraham and Yishma’el his son were circumcised on the same day; and all the men in his household, both slaves born in his house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him. (B’resheet 17:23–27)*

Did this mean that the descendants of Yishma’el would inherit the Land of Promise? After all at the time Avraham circumcised himself and his family, he had only one son! No, that was not the way God intended the line of inheritance to go as read in verses 15-22 of the same chapter.

*God said to Avraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are not to call her Sarai (mockery) ; her name is to be Sarah. (princess) I will bless her; moreover, I will give you a son by her. Truly I will bless her: she will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” At this Avraham fell on his face and laughed— he thought to himself, “Will a child be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah give birth at ninety?” Avraham said to God, “If only Yishma’el could live in your presence!” God answered, “No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you are to call him Yitz’chak. (laughter) I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. But as for Yishma’el, I have heard you. I have blessed him. I will make him fruitful and give him many descendants. He will father twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Yitz’chak, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year.” With that, God finished speaking with Avraham and went up from him.*

So, we see from this that YHVH has a definite line of descendent that will receive the Land of Promise. Just because someone is circumcised does not automatically guarantee that man will be entitled to inherit a portion of the Land YHVH calls his own. The descendants of Yishma’el have been circumcised down through the centuries in accordance with the command given to their father Avraham, but theirs is not the line of descendants chosen by YHVH. Also, many European males, during the mid-twentieth century were circumcised for health reasons, but again that does not entitle them to inheritance in the Land of Israel.

So, what about Yitz’chak?

*Avraham circumcised his son Yitz’chak when he was eight days old, as God had ordered him to do. (B’resheet 21:4)*

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There is no further reference to circumcision in B'resheet. The next time it appears is when Moshe is returning to Egypt after his encounter with YHVH at the burning bush while tending the sheep of his father-in-law Yitro in the land of Midyan east of the Gulf of Aquaba, in what is now the territory of Saudi Arabia. While on the road back to Egypt, YHVH comes to Moshe and reminds him that his son(s) have not been circumcised.

*Moshe left, returned to Yitro his father-in-law and said to him, "I beg you to let me go and return to my kinsmen in Egypt, to see if they are still alive." Yitro said to Moshe, "Go in peace. YHVH said to Moshe in Midyan, "Go on back to Egypt, because all the men who wanted to kill you are dead. So Moshe took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and started out for Egypt. .... At a lodging-place on the way, YHVH met Moshe and would have killed him, had not Tzipporah taken a flintstone and cut off the foreskin of her son. She threw it at his feet, saying, "What a bloody bridegroom you are for me! But then, God let Moshe be. She added, "A bloody bridegroom because of the circumcision! (Sh'mot 4:18-20 & 24-26)*

Moshe, now 80 years old had been removed from his people since he was three months old, having been raised in the palace of Pharaoh and then at age forty, (after killing an Egyptian slave master) fled for forty more years to Midyan. It is little wonder he had forgotten or maybe did not even know that as a descendant of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, he having been circumcised on the eighth day, should have done the same to his own two sons. What ever the reason Tzipporah takes the matter into her own hands and circumcises his son.

Having returned to Egypt, Moshe is guided by YHVH to prepare Israel for the pending exodus from slavery. After the plagues on Pharaoh and Egypt, came the night of Pesach and again YHVH reminded Moshe who may and who may not eat Pesach. It is clear from Exodus Chapter 12 that Pesach can only be eaten by those who have been circumcised, along with their wives and children and all those in their household, including slaves, but not a foreigner and any other uncircumcised males nor their female relatives. If a foreigner wanted to partake of Pesach they too had to be circumcised, in other words be joined to Israel.

*YHVH said to Moshe and Aharon, "This is the regulation for the Pesach lamb: no foreigner is to eat it. But if anyone has a slave he bought for money, when you have circumcised him, he may eat it. Neither a traveller nor a hired servant may eat it. It is to be eaten in one house. You are not to take any of the meat outside the house, and you are not to break any of its bones. The whole community of Isra'el is to keep it. If a foreigner staying with you wants to observe YHVH's Pesach, all his males must be circumcised. Then he may take part and observe it; he will be like a citizen of the land. But no uncircumcised person is to eat it. (Sh'mot 12:43-48)*

Clearly only Israel and those joined to Israel by circumcision can partake of Pesach. So, all who left Egypt on 15<sup>th</sup> Aviv both the sons of Ya'akov (Israel) and the mixed multitude that went out with them, must have all been circumcised.

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At Mt. Sinai fifty days later, YHVH gave Moshe the Torah (instructions) for the relationship between YHVH and his Holy (set apart) people Israel. Among the many Mitzvot (commands) given was the mitzvot regarding the circumcision of all male babies.

*YHVH said to Moshe, On the eighth day, the baby's foreskin is to be circumcised. (Vayikra 12:1 & 3)*

While at Mt. Sinai YHVH also gave Moshe a list of blessings that would go with Israel when they entered and took possession of the Land Promised to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov. So long as Israel kept the Torah commands and trusted in YHVH as their God, all the blessings would be bestowed upon them as we read:-

*'You are not to make yourselves any idols, erect a carved statue or a standing stone, or place any carved stone anywhere in your land in order to bow down to it. I am YHVH your God. "Keep my Shabbats, and revere my sanctuary; I am YHVH. "If you live by my regulations, observe my mitzvot and obey them; then I will provide the rain you need in its season, the land will yield its produce, and the trees in the field will yield their fruit. Your threshing time will extend until the grape harvest, and your grape harvesting will extend until the time for sowing seed. You will eat as much food as you want and live securely in your land. "I will give shalom in the land— you will lie down to sleep unafraid of anyone. I will rid the land of wild animals. The sword will not go through your land. You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall before your sword. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand— your enemies will fall before your sword. "I will turn toward you, make you productive, increase your numbers and uphold my covenant with you. You will eat all you want from last year's harvest and throw out what remains of the old to make room for the new. I will put my tabernacle among you, and I will not reject you, but I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. I am YHVH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, so that you would not be their slaves. I have broken the bars of your yoke, so that you can walk upright. (Vayikra 26:1-13)*

However, if Israel turned their back on YHVH they would be punished for their actions and finally be cast out of the Land of the Promise. We must remember that although YHVH made a promise to the three Patriarchs that his chosen people would possess the land generation after generation, the Promise came with a condition. The descendants of Avraham like Avraham himself had to trust YHVH always. It was trust that sealed the Promise that Avraham received. So, if Israel lost their trust they would lose their right to the promise made by YHVH. Instead of being blessed in the Land they would be inflicted with increasingly severe curses, culminating in total rejection from the Land. Hence, to balance the promised blessings YHVH instructs Moshe to tell the people of Israel what would befall them if they turn their back to YHVH as we read:-

*"But if you will not listen to me and obey all these mitzvot, if you loathe my regulations and reject my rulings, in order not to obey all my mitzvot but cancel my covenant; then I, for my part, will do this to you: I will bring terror upon you—wasting disease and chronic fever to dim your sight and sap your*

strength. You will sow your seed for nothing, because your enemies will eat the crops. I will set my face against you— your enemies will defeat you, those who hate you will hound you, and you will flee when no one is pursuing you.

If these things don't make you listen to me, then I will discipline you seven times over for your sins. I will break the pride you have in your own power. I will make your sky like iron, your soil like bronze— you will spend your strength in vain, because the land will not yield its produce or the trees in the field their fruit. "Yes, if you go against me and don't listen to me, I will increase your calamities sevenfold, according to your sins. I will send wild animals among you; they will rob you of your children, destroy your livestock and reduce your numbers, until your roads are deserted.

"If, in spite of all this, you refuse my correction and still go against me; then I too will go against you; and I, yes I, will strike you seven times over for your sins. I will bring a sword against you which will execute the vengeance of the covenant. You will be huddled inside your cities, I will send sickness among you, and you will be handed over to the power of the enemy. I will cut off your supply of bread, so that ten women will bake your bread in one oven and dole out your bread by weight, and you will eat but not be satisfied.

"And if, for all this, you still will not listen to me, but go against me; then I will go against you furiously, and I also will chastise you yet seven times more for your sins. You will eat the flesh of your own sons, you will eat the flesh of your own daughters. I will destroy your high places, cut down your pillars for sun worship, and throw your carcasses on the carcasses of your idols; and I will detest you. I will lay waste to your cities and make your sanctuaries desolate, so as not to smell your fragrant aromas. I will desolate the land, so that your enemies living in it will be astounded by it. You I will disperse among the nations, and I will draw out the sword in pursuit after you; your land will be a desolation and your cities a wasteland. Then, at last, the land will be paid its Shabbats. As long as it lies desolate and you are in the lands of your enemies, the land will rest and be repaid its Shabbats. Yes, as long as it lies desolate it will have rest, the rest it did not have during your Shabbats, when you lived there. As for those of you who are left, I will fill their hearts with anxiety in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a driven leaf will frighten them, so that they will flee as one flees from the sword and fall when no one is pursuing. Yes, with no one pursuing they will stumble over each other as if fleeing the sword—you will have no power to stand before your enemies. And among the nations you will perish; the land of your enemies will devour you.

Those of you who remain will pine away in the lands of your enemies from guilt over your misdeeds and those of your ancestors. Then they will confess their misdeeds and those of their ancestors which they committed against me in their rebellion; they will admit that they went against me. At that time I will be going against them, bringing them into the lands of their enemies. But if their uncircumcised hearts will grow humble, and they are paid the punishment for their misdeeds; then I will remember my covenant with Ya'akov, also my covenant with Yitz'chak and my covenant with Avraham; and I will remember the land. For the land will lie abandoned without them, and it will be paid its Shabbats while it lies desolate without them; and they will be paid the punishment for their misdeeds, because they rejected my rulings and loathed

*my regulations. Yet, in spite of all that, I will not reject them when they are in the lands of their enemies, nor will I loathe them to the point of utterly destroying them and thus break my covenant with them, because I am YHVH their God. Rather, for their sakes, I will remember the covenant of their ancestors whom I brought out of the land of Egypt— with the nations watching— so that I might be their God; I am YHVH.”*

*These are the laws, rulings and teachings that YHVH himself gave to the people of Isra’el on Mount Sinai through Moshe. (Vayikra 26:14–55).*

Having received both the blessings and the curses that YHVH gave to Israel through Moshe, it was now time to move on from Mt. Sinai and march toward the Land of Promise. In just eleven months at Sinai they had been transformed from the rabble of slaves that left Egypt into a strong fighting force, ready to conquer the Land of Promise. But, upon spying out the land, ten out of the twelve leaders returned to the camp with a bad report. YHVH in his anger told Moshe that the generation who left Egypt, would, because of their lack of trust, die in the wilderness and that the next generation who had grown to maturity in the wilderness would be the ones to enter and conquer the Land. This whole account is written about in Numbers Chapters 13 & 14.

But, what about circumcision? The next reference to it is in the last book of Moshe – D’varim (Deuteronomy) where in Chapter Ten – Moshe is preparing the second generation of Israel for entry into the Land. In the first part of this chapter Moshe is recounting all that transpired from the time their fathers left Egypt up to this point where they are being prepared to cross the Yarden into the land. Having completed the discourse in verses 1-11 Moshe then moves on to talk directly to the second generation and their relationship with YHVH. He again refers to their circumcision, but this time he refers to “circumcision of the heart” rather than the external circumcision, as we read:-

*“So now, Isra’el, all that YHVH your God asks from you is to fear YHVH your God, follow all his ways, love him and serve YHVH your God with all your heart and all your being; to obey, for your own good, the mitzvot and regulations of YHVH which I am giving you today. See, the sky, the heaven beyond the sky, the earth and everything on it all belong to YHVH your God. Only YHVH took enough pleasure in your ancestors to love them and choose their descendants after them— yourselves— above all peoples, as he still does today. Therefore, circumcise the foreskin of your heart; and don’t be stiffnecked any longer! For YHVH your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awesome God, who has no favourites and accepts no bribes. He secures justice for the orphan and the widow; he loves the foreigner, giving him food and clothing. Therefore you are to love the foreigner, since you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. You are to fear YHVH your God, serve him, cling to him and swear by his name. He is your praise, and he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things, which you have seen with your own eyes. Your ancestors went down into Egypt with only seventy people, but now YHVH your God has made your numbers as many as the stars in the sky! (D’varim 10:12-22)*

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Standing on the eastern banks of the Yarden river, Israel once again receives the Word of YHVH through Moshe. Chapters 29 of D'varim lays out clearly what stands before Israel when they enter the land. Again YHVH reminds them of the promise he made to their ancestors Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov. How they must remain faithful to his mitzvot that he gave to their fathers in Leviticus Chapter 26. Moshe also acts as a prophet at this point and reminds about the curses that will befall Israel when in future they will fall away from YHVH to follow other gods. He reminds them that because of the actions of some in future generations, the whole nation will be punished and the curses of Leviticus Chapter 26 will be invoked ending with them being cast out of the Land to live among the nations of the world.

Chapter 30 takes a prophetic leap forward many generations. In this chapter Moshe is prophesying about Israel being outside the Land, that they will be living in constant fear among the nations and how YHVH will remember his people and the promises he made with their ancestors and how he will return them to the Land as he says:-

*“When the time arrives that all these things have come upon you, both the blessing and the curse which I have presented to you; and you are there among the nations to which YHVH your God has driven you; then, at last, you will start thinking about what has happened to you; and you will return to YHVH your God and pay attention to what he has said, which will be exactly what I am ordering you to do today—you and your children, with all your heart and all your being. At that point, YHVH your God will reverse your exile and show you mercy; he will return and gather you from all the peoples to which YHVH your God scattered you. If one of yours was scattered to the far end of the sky, YHVH your God will gather you even from there; he will go there and get you. YHVH your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors.*

*Then YHVH your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love YHVH your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live.*

*YHVH your God will put all these curses on your enemies, on those who hated and persecuted you; but you will return and pay attention to what YHVH says and obey all his mitzvot which I am giving you today. Then YHVH your God will give you more than enough in everything you set out to do—the fruit of your body, the fruit of your livestock, and the fruit of your land will all do well; for YHVH will once again rejoice to see you do well, just as he rejoiced in your ancestors.*

*“However, all this will happen only if you pay attention to what YHVH your God says, so that you obey his mitzvot and regulations which are written in this book of the Torah, if you turn to YHVH your God with all your heart and all your being. (D'varim 30:1-10)*

The prophet Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) in the first three chapters of his book recounts how Israel for a long time had wandered far from YHVH and corrupted themselves by seeking after the idols of the nations and their false gods. However, in Chapter 4 the prophet speaks again just like Moshe, about their return to the Land at some future time when he says:-

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*“Isra’el, if you will return, ”says YHVH, “yes, return to me; and if you will banish your abominations from my presence without wandering astray again; and if you will swear, ‘As YHVH lives, ‘in truth, justice and righteousness; then the nations will bless themselves by him, and in him will they glory.” For here is what YHVH says to the people of Y’hudah and Yerushalayim: “Break up your ground that hasn’t been ploughed, and do not sow among thorns.”  
“People of Y’hudah and inhabitants of Yerushalayim, circumcise yourselves for YHVH, remove the foreskins of your heart! Otherwise my fury will lash out like fire, burning so hot that no one can quench it, because of how evil your actions are. (Yirmeyhu 4:1-4)*

These are the main references in Tanakh (OT) about circumcision as it is required by YHVH. It is clear that all Israel had to be circumcised to live in the Land of Promise. However, because of their errant ways and constant rejection of YHVH all Israel was finally banished from the Land. Firstly the ten northern tribes, in 721 BCE who were taken away into captivity by the Assyrians and assimilated into the Goyim (Gentile Nations). This was followed 135 years later by the overthrow of the two remaining tribes of the south who were taken into exile in Babylon.

Seventy years later the tribe of Y’hudah returned to the Land and established the Second Temple in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) and the city wall. Both remained standing in accordance with prophecy of Daniel for 483 years until the coming of Messiah. Following the death of Yeshua the Temple remained for a further forty years until it too was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. For the next 1878 years the Land of Israel remained under direct domination of Gentile empires, until on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1948 CE when the new State of Israel was born in one day.

- Did Israel upon returning to the Land also return to the Torah of YHVH?
- Did all twelve tribes return in 1948?
- Where they circumcised in the heart at the time of the return in 1948, in accordance with D’varim 30:6?

Clearly the answer to all three questions must be a resounding – No! So, if the prophecy of Moshe in D’varim was not fulfilled in 1948, what was the purpose of the return?

Was the hand of God really upon the return or was it just the work of the United Nations? Surely if it was the work of YHVH the answer must lie somewhere in Scripture!

Clearly the answer is in Scripture, but it is necessary to trace the links between the original promise made to Avraham and the two returns of the remnant of Y’hudah (Jews) from years in exile. The links can be found in the pages of the Tanakh, with support from Yeshua’s words in the Brit Hadashah (NT). In considering these various links we will see why only a remnant of Y’hudah returned from both the 70 year exile in Babylon and the 1878 years exile among the Goyim. We will also see how only a very small remnant of the other ten tribes returned with the remnant of Y’hudah on the return from Babylon and none in 1948.

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- Going back to the original promise to Avraham the covenant YHVH made was for a people who would be separated from Avraham's descendants, as set-apart people to inherit the Land of Promise.
  - The line of the set-apart ones would be through Yitz'chak and Ya'akov (Israel).
  - The people of Israel were brought out of Egypt and forty years later the second generation were given possession of the Land of Promise.
  - The blessings and curses given by YHVH were part of the covenant given at Mt. Sinai. A covenant that transformed Israel from slaves to a fighting nation, with the Torah as their national constitution.
  - Israel under the covering of YHVH took possession of the Land and received the promised blessings for a period of 480 years between the time of entering the Land and the end of the reign of King Solomon.
  - Following the reign of Solomon the kingdom divided. Ten tribes in the north and two in the south. The division accelerated the drift from the mitzvot of YHVH, which had started soon after Israel conquered the Land. This increased drift from the mitzvot brought about a fewer blessings and more of the curses as prophesied by Moshe in D'varim Chapter 29.
  - Finally, the ten northern tribes were removed from the Land as prophesied and 135 years later Y'hudah also went into exile in Babylon for seventy years.
  - However, at the end of seventy years YHVH returned a remnant of Y'hudah to the Land for another 586 years until the destruction of the second Temple.
  - Why were they not sent off into permanent exile like the ten northern tribes? Because their role in the Land was not yet complete.

We see in B'reshet Chapter 49 that Ya'akov when he was about to die called his twelve sons together and said:-

*Then Ya'akov called for his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the acharit-hayamim [The End Times]. Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Ya'akov; pay attention to Isra'el your father. (Gen 49:1-2)*

During the blessing upon his sons Ya'akov said of Y'hudah:-

*The sceptre will not pass from Y'hudah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes to whom (obedience) belongs; (or: until Shiloh comes) and it is he whom the peoples will obey. (Gen 49:10)*

The one called "Shiloh" appears to be none other than Yeshua HaMaisach.

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Hence, Y'hudah was returned to the Land after the 70 year exile so that the one to be born through the line of Y'hudah would take the ruler's staff from between the legs of Y'hudah. By his sacrificial death Yeshua took the mantle of rulership from the kingly line of Y'hudah. He as the son of David was prophesied to take the mantle of kingship.

After his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God there was no reason for the errant tribe of Y'hudah to remain in the Land. The prophesy of Ya'akov had been fulfilled. Hence, the Temple was destroyed 40 years later and most of Y'hudah were either killed or dispersed into the Roman Empire. The blessings had completely given way to the curses just as it says in Luke Chapter 21 were we read:-

*“However, when you see Yerushalayim surrounded by armies, then you are to understand that she is about to be destroyed. Those in Y'hudah must escape to the hills, those inside the city must get out, and those in the country must not enter it. For these are the days of vengeance, when everything that has been written in the Tanakh will come true. What a terrible time it will be for pregnant women and nursing mothers! For there will be great distress in the Land and judgment on the people. Some will fall by the edge of the sword, others will be carried into all the countries of the Goyim, and Yerushalayim will be trampled down by the Goyim until the age of the Goyim has run its course.  
(Luke 21:20-24)*

The trampling down of Yerushalayim must come to an end according to the words of Yeshua so, for return of the sovereignty of city back into the hands of the people chosen as heirs to the covenant made with Avraham, there needed to be at least a remnant of Y'hudah present in the Land and Yerushalayim. So, finally after the 1878 years of constant persecution among the Goyim the State of Israel was rebirthed in one day on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1948. As it was with the first return in 512 BCE, only a remnant went back to the Land in 1948. But, this time rather than returning for the fulfilment of the prophesy from Ya'akov, the latter return was to prepare the way for the ending of the age of the Goyim. A time when descendants of Y'hudah would once again take ownership of the Land and Yerushalayim. Hence, just nineteen years later in June 1967 armies from Egypt, Jordan and Syria attacked Israel on every flank, but in six short days all three armies were forced away from the soil of Israel. In fact in that one working week the boundaries of the Land of Promise were greatly expanded, but still remaining well short of the area originally promised to Avraham. However, the most significant thing was not the land increase, but the fact that, once again the sovereignty of Yerushalayim reverted to the control of the descendants of Avraham. At no time since the conquest of Alexander the Great in 333 BCE had the sovereignty of Yerushalayim been in the hands of the people of Israel. At this time the prophesies of Dani'el and Yeshua about the city were fulfilled – *“the age of the Goyim has run its course.”*

But, why have successive governments of Israel given away the land that was gained at the hand of YHVH in those six short days? The same land that was named in the covenant with Avraham nearly 4000 years ago. Why would they want to trust the Goyim to support an exchange of land for peace? Is it possibly a fulfilment of Yeshua's words in Matityahu (Matthew) were he said?

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*As Yeshua left the Temple and was going away, his talmidim came and called his attention to its buildings. But he answered them, "You see all these? Yes! I tell you, they will be totally destroyed – not a single stone will be left standing!" When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the talmidim came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that you are coming, and that the 'olam haze' (this age) is ending?"*

*Yeshua replied: "Watch out! Don't let anyone fool you! For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will lead many astray. You will hear the noise of wars nearby and the news of wars far off; see to it that you don't become frightened. Such things must happen, but the end is yet to come. For peoples will fight each other, nations will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various parts of the world; all this is but the beginning of the 'birth pains.' At that time you will be arrested and handed over to be punished and put to death, and all peoples will hate you because of me. At that time many will be trapped into betraying and hating each other, many false prophets will appear and fool many people; and many people's love will grow cold because of increased distance from Torah. But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered. And this Good News about the Kingdom will be announced throughout the whole world as a witness to all the Goyim. It is then that the end will come. (Mattityahu 24:1-14)*

Many from Y'hudah who are now living in the Land of Promise, still have no love for YHVH or Torah. Instead they are more concerned with keeping alongside the Goyim who provide financial assistance through both government and church institutions. This constant seeking for support from the Goyim is a reflection of what our forefathers did while living in the Land before being exiled. Why has nothing changed? For an answer we need to turn yet again to the Prophets, this time to Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) where YHVH states:-

*"Now you, human being, prophesy to the mountains of Isra'el. Say: 'Mountains of Isra'el, hear the message from YHVH. YHVH ELOHIM says: "The enemy is boasting over you, 'Ha! Even the ancient high places are ours now!'" Therefore prophesy, and say that YHVH ELOHIM says, 'Because they desolated you and swallowed you up from every side, so that the other nations could take possession of you; and now people are gossiping about you and slandering you; therefore, mountains of Isra'el, hear the message of YHVH ELOHIM — this is what YHVH ELOHIM says to the mountains and hills, the streams and valleys, the desolate wastes and the abandoned cities, now preyed on and derided by the other surrounding nations — therefore this is what YHVH ELOHIM says: "In the heat of my jealousy I speak against the other nations and all of Edom, since, rejoicing with all their heart, they have arrogated my land to themselves as a possession and, with utter contempt, seized it as prey."*

*"Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Isra'el, and say to the mountains, the hills, the streams and the valleys that YHVH ELOHIM says this: 'I speak in my jealousy and fury, because you have endured being shamed by the nations. Therefore thus says YHVH ELOHIM: "I have raised my hand and sworn that the nations surrounding you will bear their shame. But you, mountains of Isra'el, you will sprout your branches and bear your fruit for my*

*people Isra'el, who will soon return. I am here for you, and I will turn toward you; then you will be tilled and sown; and I will multiply your population, all the house of Isra'el, all of it. The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will multiply both the human and animal populations, they will increase and be productive; and I will cause you to be inhabited as you were before — indeed, I will do you more good than before; and you will know that I am YHVH. I will cause people to walk on you, my people Isra'el; they will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; never again will you make them childless.” YHVH ELOHIM says, “Because they say to you, ‘Land, you devour people and make your nations childless, ‘ therefore you will no longer devour people, and you will not make your nations childless any more, ”says YHVH ELOHIM. “I will not permit the nations to shame you, or the peoples to reproach you any longer; and you will no more cause your nations to stumble, ”says YHVH ELOHIM.”*  
(Yechezk'el 36:1-15)

The Land of Promise is still being given away in exchange for supposed peace, because Torah is not yet in the hearts of most Israeli citizens. But, at the return of Yeshua, all that will change just as Yechezk'el says following on in the same chapter:-

*For I will take you from among the nations, gather you from all the countries, and return you to your own soil.*

*Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them. You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and increase it, and not send famine against you. I will multiply the yield of fruit from the trees and increase production in the fields, so that you never again suffer the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your actions that were not good; as you look at yourselves, you will loathe yourselves for your guilt and disgusting practices. Understand, ‘says YHVH ELOHIM, ‘that I am not doing this for your sake. Instead, be ashamed and dismayed for your ways, house of Isra'el.’ “YHVH ELOHIM says, ‘When the day comes for me to cleanse you from all your guilt, I will cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins to be rebuilt. The land that was desolate will be tilled, whereas formerly it lay desolate for all passing by to see. Then they will say, “The land that used to be desolate has become like Gan-‘Eden, and the cities formerly ruined, abandoned and wasted have been fortified and are inhabited!” Then the nations around you that remain will know that I, YHVH, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was abandoned. I, YHVH, have spoken; and I will do it.’ “YHVH ELOHIM says, ‘In addition, I will let the house of Isra'el pray to me to do this for them: to increase their numbers like sheep — like flocks of sheep for sacrifices, like the flocks of sheep in Yerushalayim at its designated times, in this degree will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am YHVH.”* (Yechezk'el 36:24-38)

Finally, we come to the time when YHVH will circumcise the hearts of his people Israel. He will remove the oppression of the Goyim and reunite both Y'hudah and Efrayim as one kingdom in the Land of Promise. Only then will the covenant made with Avraham be truly fulfilled as Yechezk'el says:-

*The word of YHVH came to me: "You, human being, take one stick and write on it, 'For Y'hudah and those joined with him (among) the people of Isra'el.' Next, take another stick and write on it, 'For Yosef, the stick of Efrayim, and all the house of Isra'el who are joined with him.' Finally, bring them together into a single stick, so that they become one in your hand. When your people ask you what all this means, tell them that YHVH ELOHIM says this: 'I will take the stick of Yosef, which is in the hand of Efrayim, together with the tribes of Isra'el who are joined with him, and put them together with the stick of Y'hudah and make them a single stick, so that they become one in my hand.' The sticks on which you write are to be in your hand as they watch. Then say to them that YHVH ELOHIM says: 'I will take the people of Isra'el from among the nations where they have gone and gather them from every side and bring them back to their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Isra'el; and one king will be king for all of them. They will no longer be two nations, and they will never again be divided into two kingdoms. "They will never again defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things, or any of their transgressions; but I will save them from all the places where they have been living and sinning; and I will cleanse them, so that they will be my people, and I will be their God. My servant David will be king over them, and all of them will have one shepherd; they will live by my rulings and keep and observe my regulations. They will live in the land I gave to Ya'akov my servant, where your ancestors lived; they will live there — they, their children, and their grandchildren, forever; and David my servant will be their leader forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them, an everlasting covenant. I will give to them, increase their numbers, and set my sanctuary among them forever. My home will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. The nations will know that I am YHVH, who sets Isra'el apart as holy, when my sanctuary is with them forever.'" (Yechezk'el 37:15-28)*

Only then will all Israel finally live in peace with the Son of David –Yeshua on the throne and then the prophetic words of Moshe in D'varim Chapter 30, which were given in the wilderness over 3500 years ago, will finally be fulfilled as YHVH originally intended.

*YHVH your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors. Then YHVH your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love YHVH your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live.*

*(D'varim 30:5-6)* **Amein!**

## PART TWO

### ***Should The Gentiles Be Circumcised?***

In the first chapter of Luke we see that Yochanan underwent b'rit-milah on the eight day.

*The time arrived for Elisheva to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard how good YHVH had been to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day, they came to do the child's b'rit-milah. They were about to name him Z'kharyah, after his father, when his mother spoke up and said, "No, he is to be called Yochanan. (Luke 1:57-60)*

Later in chapter two of Luke we see Yeshua also undergoes b'rit-milah on the eight day.

*On the eighth day, when it was time for his b'rit-milah, he was given the name Yeshua, which is what the angel had called him before his conception. (Luke 2:21)*

In accordance with Jewish custom both boys were named at the time of their b'rit-milah, but beyond this point until the circumcision of Timothy, all intervening b'rit Hadashah references are reflecting the words in the Tanakh.

The only remaining reference to b'rit milah in the Gospels is in Yochanan chapter seven where it is a side issue in a discourse between Yeshua and the Judeans who are accusing him of violating Shabbat by healing sick people on that day. Here, Yeshua is saying that the Torah command about b'rit-milah must be carried out even on Shabbat if that is the boy's eight day of life. However, his real focus is that it is good to heal someone on the Shabbat. These verses still give us no clue about whether or not Yeshua considered b'rit-milah to be a requirement for acceptance into what, after his death and resurrection, would become the Messianic community. After all his twelve talmidim and others who followed him were already circumcised on the eight day, as at that stage all his followers were Jewish by birth.

*"Moshe gave you b'rit-milah —not that it came from Moshe but from the Patriarchs—and you do a boy's b'rit-milah on Shabbat. If a boy is circumcised on Shabbat so that the Torah of Moshe will not be broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man's whole body well on Shabbat? Stop judging by surface appearances, and judge the right way!" (Yochanan 7:22-24)*

Acts Chapter seven is the next reference to b'rit-milah, where we see Stephen, when questioned by the cohen hagadol, gives a testimony for his trust in Yeshua. Like Yeshua before him he attests to the fact that b'rit-milah was given to Avraham and his descendants as an everlasting covenant through the line of Yitz'chak, Ya'akov and the sons of Ya'akov.

*The cohen hagadol asked, "Are these accusations true?" and Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to Avraham*

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*avinu in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran and said to him, 'Leave your land and your family, and go into the land that I will show you.' So he left the land of the Kasdim and lived in Haran. After his father died, God made him move to this land where you are living now. He gave him no inheritance in it, not even space for one foot; yet he promised to give it to him as a possession and to his descendants after him, even though at the time he was childless. What God said to him was, 'Your descendants will be aliens in a foreign land, where they will be in slavery and oppressed for four hundred years. But I will judge the nation that enslaves them,' God said, 'and afterwards they will leave and worship me in this place.' And he gave him b'rit-milah. So he became the father of Yitz'chak and did his b'rit-milah on the eighth day, and Yitz'chak became the father of Ya'akov, and Ya'akov became the father of the Twelve Patriarchs. (Acts 7:1-8)*

The next b'rit-milah mentioned is in Antioch, where a conflict develops between Sha'ul, Bar-Nabba and the visiting talmidim from the Yerushalayim community. The conflict arises because the visiting talmidim are insisting that the Goyim (Gentiles) who have been called by the Ruach HaKodesh, to trust in Yeshua, must undergo b'rit-milah like themselves, before they can be considered members of the Messianic community.

Apparently this is the first time that Gentile believers have been faced with the obligation to be circumcised. What the visiting talmidim from Yerushalayim are saying is; that unless the new believers from among the Goyim convert to Judaism, by way of circumcision, they cannot be considered as part of the Messianic community. This is completely contrary to what Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba have been teaching. So, to resolve the conflict the Antioch community despatch Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba and others to seek council from the Zakinim (elders) in Yerushalayim.

The obligation to undergo b'rit-milah was being imposed upon the Goyim, so that they could observe the Torah of Moshe; as we read in chapters fourteen and fifteen.

*Passing through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. After speaking the message in Perga, they came down to Attalia; and from there, they sailed back to Antioch, the place where they had been handed over to the care of God for the work which they had now completed. When they arrived, they gathered the Messianic community together and reported what God had done through them, that he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed for some time there with the talmidim. But some men came down from Y'hudah to Antioch and began teaching the brothers, "You can't be saved unless you undergo b'rit-milah in the manner prescribed by Moshe." This brought them into no small measure of discord and dispute with Sha'ul and Bar-Nabba. So the congregation assigned Sha'ul, Bar-Nabba and some of themselves to go and put this sh'eilah (question about Jewish Law) before the emissaries and the Zakinim up in Yerushalayim. After being sent off by the congregation, they made their way through Phoenicia and Shomron, recounting in detail how the Gentiles had turned to God; and this news brought great joy to all the brothers. On arrival in Yerushalayim, they were welcomed by the Messianic community, including the emissaries and the Zakinim; and they reported what God had done through them. But some of those who had come to trust were from the*

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*party of the P'rushim; and they stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and direct them to observe the Torah of Moshe." (Acts 14:24 – 15:5)*

The rest of chapter fifteen recounts how the Zakinim in Yerushalayim agreed that circumcision was not to be imposed upon the Goyim. In fact the Zakinim sent Y'hudah, Bar-abba and Sila back to Antioch with other brothers along with a letter of encouragement and instructions about what they, the Zakinim believed the Ruach HaKodesh required of the Goyim to enable them to become full members of the Messianic community. The only requirements they put upon the Gentiles were what are known as the Noachide Laws:-

*"Therefore, my opinion is that we should not put obstacles in the way of the Goyim who are turning to God. Instead, we should write them a letter telling them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from fornication, from what is strangled and from blood." (Acts 15:19-20)*

Simple rejection of things that have always been detestable to YHVH.

- *things polluted by idols,*
- *from fornication,*
- *from what is strangled and*
- *from blood.*

These are the universal laws given to Noach (Noah) when he stepped out of the ark. They are things that YHVH has always hated and always will. These are common practices among the nations. But, Israel had been warned at Mt. Sinai and through the prophets to avoid these four things. Now these same prohibitions were being imposed upon the believing Goyim, who were not required to be convert to Judaism to become brothers within the Messianic community. But, verse twenty-one does bind them to YHVH's people Israel when Ya'akov the leading Yerushalayim Zaken concludes his discourse by saying:-

*"For from the earliest times, Moshe has had in every city those who proclaim him, with his words being read in the synagogues every Shabbat." (Acts 15:21)*

This verse seals the obligation being laid upon the Goyim, which is simple, just keep the Noachide Laws, then progressively as they (the Goyim) gathered together each Motzaei Shabbat (which literally means – "the going out of Shabbat"- i.e. Saturday evening) with their Jewish brothers to break bread (eat together) in the Messianic community, they would hear the words of the Torah of Moshe being read and discussed. By hearing Torah, the prophets and teachings about the miracles of Yeshua, in this way, they would become more deeply immersed into the truth and knowledge of YHVH and his redemptive power through the death of Yeshua.

So, why then did the Sha'ul, Bar-Nabba, Ya'akov and the Zakinim in the Yerushalayim community refrain from imposing b'rit-milah (circumcision) upon these believing Goyim?

The answer to this vital question reveals the true relationship between the Messianic community and the rest of Israel, in both the first and twenty-first centuries.

What does Scripture say on this most important matter?

The first step in finding the answer is to look at the next reference b'rit-milah as it relates to Sha'ul and Timothy in Acts chapter sixteen. There we read:-

*“Sha’ul came down to Derbe and went on to Lystra, where there lived a talmid named Timothy. He was the son of a Jewish woman who had come to trust, and a Greek father. All the brothers in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of Timothy. Sha’ul wanted Timothy to accompany him; so he took him and did a b’rit–milah, because of the Jews living in those areas; for they all knew that his father had been a Greek. As they went on through the towns, they delivered to the people the decisions reached by the emissaries and the Zakinim in Yerushalayim for them to observe. Accordingly, the congregations were strengthened in the faith and increased in number day by day.” (Acts 16:1 – 5)*

So why would he Sha'ul do a b'rit-milah when he had earlier agreed that the Goyim were not to undergo b'rit-milah? As Timothy's father was Greek it is highly unlikely that Timothy ever lived as a Jew. So, why would Sha'ul supposedly convert him to Judaism as an adult?

Luke (as author of Acts) gives no reason apart from the words in verse three – *“because of the Jews living in those areas”* – did Sha'ul reason that in taking Timothy among Jews of the diaspora he would need to be circumcised to be eligible to enter their synagogues? As that was where Sha'ul shared the message about Yeshua. Jews would not accept a Gentile into their communities unless he had been circumcised. Maybe the events that occurred in Acts chapter twenty-one reinforced Sha'ul's reasoning about b'rit-milah for a Jewish brother as we read:-

*“So at the end of our stay, we packed and went up to Yerushalayim; and with us went some of the talmidim from Caesarea. They brought us to the home of the man with whom we were to stay, Manson from Cyprus, who had been a talmid since the early days. In Yerushalayim, the brothers received us warmly. The next day Sha’ul and the rest of us went in to Ya’akov, and all the Zakinim were present. After greeting them, Sha’ul described in detail each of the things God had done among the Gentiles through his efforts. On hearing it, they praised God; but they also said to him, “You see, brother, how many tens of thousands of believers there are among the Judeans, and they are all zealots for the Torah. Now what they have been told about you is that you are teaching all the Jews living among the Goyim to apostatize from Moshe, telling them not to have a b’rit–milah for their sons and not to follow the traditions. “What, then, is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. So do what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow. Take them with you, be purified with them, and pay the expenses connected with having their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that there is nothing to these rumours which they have heard about you; but that, on the contrary, you yourself stay in line and keep the Torah. “However, in regard to the Goyim who have come to trust in Yeshua, we all joined in writing them a letter with our decision that they should abstain from what had been sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled and from fornication.” The next day Sha’ul took the men, purified himself along with them and entered the Temple to give notice of when the period of purification would be finished and the offering would have*

*to be made for each of them. The seven days were almost up when some unbelieving Jews from the province of Asia saw him in the Temple, stirred up all the crowd and grabbed him. "Men of Isra'el, help!" they shouted. "This is the man who goes everywhere teaching everyone things against the people, against the Torah and against this place! And now he has even brought some Goyim into the Temple and defiled this holy place!" (They had previously seen Trophimus from Ephesus in the city with him and assumed that Sha'ul had brought him into the Temple.) The whole city was aroused, and people came running from all over. They seized Sha'ul and dragged him out of the Temple, and at once the gates were shut. But while they were attempting to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman battalion that all Yerushalayim was in turmoil. Immediately he took officers and soldiers and charged down upon them. As soon as they saw the commander, they quit beating Sha'ul. Then the commander came up, arrested him and ordered him to be tied up with two chains. He asked who he was and what he had done. Everyone in the crowd shouted something different; so, since he couldn't find out what had happened because of the uproar, he ordered him brought to the barracks. When Sha'ul got to the steps, he actually had to be carried by the soldiers, because the mob was so wild—the crowd kept following and screaming, "Kill him!" As Sha'ul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander, "Is it all right if I say something to you?" The commander said, "You know Greek! Say, aren't you that Egyptian who tried to start a revolution a while back, and led four thousand armed terrorists out into the desert?" Sha'ul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city; and I ask your permission to let me speak to the people." Having received permission, Sha'ul stood on the steps and motioned with his hand to the people. When they finally became still, he addressed them in Hebrew: (Acts 15:15 – 40)*

Clearly the unbelieving Jews were in an uproar about the possibility that Gentiles were being brought into the Temple. If they felt that way at just seeing Sha'ul and a Gentile together in the streets, not actually in the Temple courts, then it is likely that they would have reacted equally violently toward Timothy if Sha'ul had tried to take him into their synagogues in an uncircumcised state. This uproar among the Judeans is the event that lead to Sha'ul's arrest. But, it still does not conclusively address the question – 'should Gentiles be circumcised?'

So Sha'ul, having been arrested and sent to Rome, faced trial for insighting a riot amongst his fellows Jews. At this time while Sha'ul was under house arrest, he wrote his letter to the Messianic community in Rome, where in the first half of Romans Chapter two, we see Sha'ul comparing the contrast between Torah observance by Gentiles who have never known Torah, with Jews who consider themselves well versed in the requirements of Torah. Here he is possibly reflecting on the riot that lead to his arrest. Through that contrast he is showing how worthless b'rit-milah is to a Jew if he does not obey Torah. Sha'ul's comments in verse seventeen are contrasting the relationship between circumcision and uncircumcision.

*"You call yourself a Jew and rest on Torah and boast about God and know his will and give your approval to what is right, because you have been instructed from the Torah; and if you have persuaded yourself that you are a guide to the*

*blind, a light in the darkness, an instructor for the spiritually unaware and a teacher of children, since in the Torah you have the embodiment of knowledge and truth; then, you who teach others, don't you teach yourself? Preaching, "You shall not steal," do you steal? Saying, "You shall not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? Detesting idols, do you commit idolatrous acts? You who take such pride in Torah, do you, by disobeying the Torah, dishonour God? – as it says in the Tanakh, "For it is because of you that God's name is blasphemed by the Goyim." but he who obeys the Torah will stand as a judgment on you who have had a b'rit-milah and have Torah written out but violate it! For circumcision is indeed of value if you do what Torah says. But if you are a transgressor of Torah, your circumcision has become uncircumcision! Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the Torah, won't his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? Indeed, the man who is physically uncircumcised but obeys the Torah will stand as a judgment on you who have had a b'rit-milah and have Torah written out but violate it! For the real Jew is not merely Jewish outwardly: true circumcision is not only external and physical. On the contrary, the real Jew is one inwardly; and true circumcision is of the heart, spiritual not literal; so that his praise comes not from other people but from God." (Romans 2:17 – 29)*

Here Sha'ul is expressing his indignation toward the circumcised Jews who had been responsible for his arrest and delivery to Rome for trial. Thus he finally reveals the beneficial significance of circumcision for the Jew providing he follows Torah, but how meaningless his circumcision would become once the Jew transgresses Torah. In chapter two he appears to be reflecting back upon his experience in the Yerushalayim riot, where many Jews in spite of their circumcision, had acted as if they were uncircumcised.

Does this mean that even for a Jew circumcision no longer had any value? Reading on in Chapter three Sha'ul develops his understanding of the Jews in relation to circumcision.

*"Then what advantage has the Jew? What is the value of being circumcised? Much in every way! In the first place, the Jews were entrusted with the very words of God. If some of them were unfaithful, so what? Does their faithlessness cancel God's faithfulness? Heaven forbid! God would be true even if everyone were a liar! .....Therefore, we hold the view that a person comes to be considered righteous by God on the ground of trusting, which has nothing to do with legalistic observance of Torah commands. Or is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, he is indeed the God of the Gentiles; because, as you will admit, God is one. Therefore, he will consider righteous the circumcised on the ground of trusting and the uncircumcised through that same trusting. Does it follow that we abolish Torah by this trusting? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm Torah." (Romans 2:1-9 & 28-31)*

So, if as Sha'ul reasons there is no difference between circumcision and uncircumcision, because both Jew and Gentiles together can only be considered righteous through trusting, then is he saying that the Jews no longer have a place before YHVH? - No! On the contrary he is saying that it is the legalistic observance

of Torah that has no place before YHVH. Instead one can only be considered righteous through trusting. Trusting in what? Sha'ul gives the answer in the middle of Chapter three where he says:-

*“...although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well, it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Yeshua the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile, since all have sinned and come short of earning God’s praise. By God’s grace, without earning it, all are granted the status of being considered righteous before him, through the act redeeming us from our enslavement to sin that was accomplished by the Messiah Yeshua. God put Yeshua forward as the kapparah for sin through his faithfulness in respect to his bloody sacrificial death. This vindicated God’s righteousness; because, in his forbearance, he had passed over (with neither punishment nor remission) the sins people had committed in the past; and it vindicates his righteousness in the present age by showing that he [YHVH] is righteous himself and is also the one who makes people righteous on the ground of Yeshua’s faithfulness.”*  
(Romans 3:21b -26)

So, what are we to say? If we cannot be made righteous through legalistic observance of Torah, but only through trusting in the sacrificial death of Yeshua, should both Jews and Gentiles completely set aside Torah? No! For as Sha'ul said in the final verse of chapter two:- *“Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm Torah.”* But, how do we confirm Torah?

By trusting in Yeshua, just as Philip did when he met Yeshua –

*“Philip found Natan’el and told him, “We’ve found the one that Moshe wrote about in the Torah, also the Prophets—it’s Yeshua Ben–Yosef from Natzeret!”*  
(Yochanan 1:45)

It was because of this same trust in Yeshua that Sha'ul was able to say in Romans 2:29,

*“For the real Jew is not merely Jewish outwardly: true circumcision is not only external and physical. On the contrary, the real Jew is one inwardly; and true circumcision is of the heart, spiritual not literal; so that his praise comes not from other people but from God.”*

So, only by trusting in Yeshua can a Jewish person become part of the true circumcision, which is the circumcision of the heart and in the same way, Gentiles by trusting, can also become one with the real Jews, while at the same time remaining uncircumcised in the flesh.

Because of the “circumcision of the heart” – for both Jews and Gentiles, Sha'ul was able to say in his letter to the Ephesians:-

*“... you Gentiles by birth—called the Uncircumcised by those who, merely because of an operation on their flesh, are called the Circumcised—at that time had no Messiah. You were estranged from the national life of Isra’el. You were foreigners to the covenants embodying God’s promise. You were in this*

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*world without hope and without God. But now, you who were once far off have been brought near through the shedding of the Messiah's blood. For he himself is our shalom —he has made us both one and has broken down the m'chitzah (wall of partition) which divided us by destroying in his own body the enmity occasioned by the Torah, with its commands set forth in the form of ordinances. He did this in order to create in union with himself from the two groups a single new humanity (one new man) and thus make shalom, and in order to reconcile to God both in a single body by being executed on a stake as a criminal and thus in himself killing that enmity.” (Ephesians 2:11-16)*

“He [Yeshua] did this in order to create in union with himself from the two groups a single new humanity.” (verse 15) What does this “one new humanity” (as expressed by many English translations – “one new man”) really mean? Does it mean that Jews must give up being Jews and become Gentiles? Heaven forbid!

As we have clearly seen throughout the Tanakh, YHVH has commanded circumcision as a continual reminder to natural Israel that they are the people he has chosen to live in his Land of Promise. All the way from Avraham to the twenty-first century, males born into Israel have been circumcised on the eighth day. At no stage in the Tanakh has YHVH ever forsaken his people or caused circumcision to cease. While he has dispersed them throughout the Gentile nations as punishment for their disregard for his Torah, he never abandoned them or cancelled his covenant. Instead, natural Israel who are born as direct descendants of Ya'akov, still remain part of the covenant. Even though they have not yet come to know Yeshua as Messiah; and most will fail to do so, until he returns as the conquering king.

So, then who are the Jews that become part of the “one new man” along with those chosen from among the Gentiles, are they ones who have renounced Judaism and become Christians?

Ever, since the second century C.E. most churches of Christendom have taught that all Jews must become Christians by being baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. This pressure to convert was based on the assumption that Israel was rejected by God. It has caused much Jewish blood to be shed at the hands of zealous Christian Crusaders. If that was what YHVH wanted, then over the last two thousand years, since Sha'ul wrote to the Ephesians, most if not all Jewish people would have been assimilated into churches, thus preventing the future fulfilment of YHVH's ancient promise to Avraham. But, as a covenant made by YHVH cannot be voided or cancelled, what the institutions of Christendom have been teaching on this matter has been a complete lie.

So, if YHVH did not want any of his circumcised people to be assimilated into the Christian Church, did the Gentiles have to convert to Judaism to become part of the “one new man”?

The answer is again a resounding NO!

As we saw earlier Sha'ul, Bar-Nabba, Ya'akov and others all agreed that Gentiles who came to know and trust Yeshua should not be circumcised. So, if the Jews do not become Christians and the Gentiles do not become part of Judaism, then the “one new man” must be a separate, set apart, body of people who walk in the middle

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of the road between Judaism and Christianity, while at the same time believing and trusting that Yeshua is the Messiah, just as Sha'ul says in the closing verses of Ephesians chapter two:-

*“When he [Yeshua] came, he announced as Good News shalom to you far off and shalom to those nearby, news that through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers. On the contrary, you are fellow–citizens with God’s people and members of God’s family. You have been built on the foundation of the emissaries and the prophets, with the cornerstone being Yeshua the Messiah himself. In union with him the whole building is held together, and it is growing into a holy temple in union with the Lord (Master). Yes, in union with him, you yourselves are being built together into a spiritual dwelling–place for God! (Ephesians 2:17-22)*

Here Sha'ul is saying that the “one new man” together with Yeshua become a spiritual dwelling place for God. Now where in Tanakh does YHVH ever call Israel a “holy temple”, yet in these verses, the “one new man” becomes God’s dwelling place. Throughout the Tanakh there was the Tent of Meeting followed by the First Temple, where YHVH dwelt in the midst of his people Israel, but never within individual people. This is a radically new concept that Sha'ul is displaying in these verses. He is showing that YHVH is choosing people to become Holy (set-part) for himself in a way that is completely different from – and yet one with Israel.

So, if these ones are set-apart by YHVH himself, as a holy dwelling place for God, then what about the matter of circumcision? Are they to undergo b'rit-milah or not? Sha'ul finally answers this question for us in first Corinthians chapter seven where he says:-

*“Let each person live the life the [Master] has assigned him and live it in the condition he was in when God called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the congregations. Was someone already circumcised when he was called? Then he should not try to remove the marks of his circumcision. Was someone uncircumcised when he was called? He shouldn’t undergo b'rit–milah. Being circumcised means nothing, and being uncircumcised means nothing; what does mean something is keeping God’s mitzvot. Each person should remain in the condition he was in when he was called.” (1 Corinthians 7:17 -20)*

Therefore, as Sha'ul concludes there is no difference between Jew and Gentile among those who have been called by God. They are the “one new man” not Christians and not legalistic observers of Torah. Rather they are set-apart (made Holy) by their constant trusting in Yeshua. They are the ones who are truly circumcised in the heart. There is no need for a circumcision in the flesh, because it is the Ruach HaKodesh dwelling within them that circumcises them in a way that sets them apart to be Temples of the living God.

Therefore, let Sha'ul have the last words on this matter as he says:-

*In conclusion, my brothers: rejoice in union with the Master..... For it is we who are the Circumcised, we who worship by the Spirit of God and make our boast in the Messiah Yeshua! We do not put confidence in human qualifications. (Philippians 3:1(a) and 3)*

*I say this so that no one will fool you with plausible but specious arguments. For although I am away from you physically, I am with you in spirit, rejoicing as I see the disciplined and resolute firmness of your trust in the Messiah. Therefore, just as you received the Messiah Yeshua as Master, keep living your life united with him. Remain deeply rooted in him; continue being built up in him and confirmed in your trust, the way you were taught, so that you overflow in thanksgiving. Watch out, so that no one will take you captive by means of philosophy and empty deceit, following human tradition which accords with the elemental spirits of the world but does not accord with the Messiah. For in him, bodily, lives the fullness of all that God is. And it is in union with him that you have been made full—he is the head of every rule and authority. Also it was in union with him that you were circumcised with a circumcision not done by human hands, but accomplished by stripping away the old nature's control over the body. In this circumcision done by the Messiah, you were buried along with him by being immersed; and in union with him, you were also raised up along with him by God's faithfulness that worked when he raised Yeshua from the dead – **Amein!** (Colossians 2:4-12)*

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## PART THREE

### *The New Covenant*

In Part One, it is apparent from the words of Tanakh, that YHVH has never altered his commandment regarding the circumcision of Isra'el. Circumcision remains the unchanging seal of his covenant with Avraham and a constant reminder to each generation that they will possess the Land of Promise as an eternal inheritance when Yeshua returns as king.

By contrast Part Two shows us through the words of the B'rit Hadashah that the Gentiles who have been called by YHVH to be part of the one new man, are not required to be circumcised. Instead the only obligation upon them is to observe the Noachide Laws as defined in Acts 15:19-20.

Then, in 1 Corinthians 7:17-20 Sha'ul states that a Jewish man who comes to know Yeshua as his Messiah is not to try to remove the marks of circumcision, because being circumcised or uncircumcised means nothing in the one new man. Instead each person is to remain in the condition he was in when called by YHVH.

However, Sha'ul does say in verse 19b - "what does matter is the keeping God's mitzvot." But, in the Tanakh those keeping the Mitzvot are commanded to be circumcised and keeping of the mitzvot is obligatory on all Isra'el from the time of Moshe forward? So, Sha'ul appears to be contradicting himself with these words. However, if we believe that Sha'ul wrote under the inspiration of the Ruach HaKodesh, then as part of Scripture he cannot contradict himself. So, there must be a message in his words that is not immediately apparent. Having said that, it is perhaps time to recap on Sha'ul's various statements about circumcision:-

- All males in Isra'el must be circumcised when they are eight days old,
- And those of Isra'el who come to know Yeshua are to remain circumcised,
- But, the Gentiles that are called by God are not required to undergo circumcision,
- As, for the called out ones being circumcised or uncircumcised means nothing,
- Yet the one new man (Jew and Gentile) together are to keep God's mitzvot.

Is this contradictory or what? Where does the answer lie?

Maybe the answer lies in the words of the prophet Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) where he spoke about a New Covenant that YHVH would bring upon his people Isra'el, where it says:-

*"The days are coming, "says YHVH, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my*

*covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them,” says YHVH. “For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra’el after those days, ”says YHVH: “I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, ‘Know YHVH’; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more.” (Yirmeyahu 31:31-33)*

This implies that the new covenant replaces the old. But, what was the old covenant that was being referred to in these verses? Was it the one made between El Shaddai (God Almighty) and Avraham, for the Land of Promise, the one sealed by circumcision? Or was it the covenant of Torah made with Isra’el at Mt. Sinai, when YHVH brought them out of Egypt? Clearly Yirmeyahu is talking about the latter. It was the covenant at Sinai that established them as a nation of priests to be a light to the Goyim. But, as it says in verse 31 – “*for their part, they violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them, says YHVH.*” As we saw in part One, Isra’el progressively rejected the covenant and as a direct result of their continued rebellion were finally removed from the Land of Promise in 70 CE.

So, does that mean then that YHVH changed his mind about the future of Isra’el? Does it mean that the covenant he made with Avraham for the Land of Promise would also be set aside? NO! What was being set aside was the priestly system established by the covenant made at Sinai.

The priests were drawn from the tribe of Levi and separated from the other twelve tribes. They were effectively a thirteenth tribe, set apart from the rest of Isra’el by YHVH himself, as we read in B’midbar Chapter One:-

*Moshe, Aharon and the twelve leaders of Isra’el, each from a clan, counted the people of Isra’el by their clans, those twenty years old and over, eligible for military service in Isra’el; and the grand total came to 603,550. But those who were L’vi’im, according to the clan of their fathers, were not counted in this census; because ADONAI had told Moshe, “Do not include the clan of Levi when you take the census of the people of Isra’el. Instead, give the L’vi’im charge over the tabernacle of the testimony, its equipment and everything else connected with it. They are to carry the tabernacle and all its equipment, serve in it and set up their camp around it. (B’midbar 1:44-50)*

Having set apart the whole tribe of Levi, YHVH then separated out from within Levi, the family of Aharon to be the cohanim (priests), to intercede on behalf of the twelve tribes and the remainder of the of Levites. No one took part in the priestly duties other than Aharon and his direct descendants, as we see in B’midbar Chapter 18.

*ADONAI said to Aharon, “You, your sons and your father’s family line will be responsible for anything that goes wrong in the sanctuary. You and your sons with you will be responsible for anything wrong in your service as cohanim. But you are to bring your kinsmen, the tribe of Levi, along with yourselves, to work together with you and help you—you and your sons with you—when you are there before the tent of meeting. They are to be at your disposal and perform all kinds of tasks related to the tent; only they are not to come near*

*the holy furnishings or the altar, so that neither they nor you will die. They will work together with you in your duties related to the tent of meeting, whatever the service in the tent may be; but an unauthorized person is not to come near you. You will take charge of all the holy things and the altar, so that there will no longer be anger against the people of Isra'el. I myself have taken your kinsmen the L'vi'im from among the people of Isra'el; they have been given as a gift to ADONAI for you, so that you can perform the service in the tent of meeting. You and your sons with you will exercise your prerogatives and duties as cohanim in regard to everything having to do with the altar and within the curtain. I entrust the service required of cohanim to you; the unauthorized person who tries to perform it is to be put to death.” (B'midbar 18:1-7)*

Hence, both Aharon's family along with rest of the rest of the tribe of Levi were set apart or made Holy and received no inheritance in the Land of Promise, as verses 20 and 24 indicate:-

*ADONAI said to Aharon, “You are not to have any inheritance or portion in their land; I am your portion and inheritance among the people of Isra'el..... because I have given to the L'vi'im as their inheritance the tenths of the produce which the people of Isra'el set aside as a gift for ADONAI. This is why I have said to them that they are to have no inheritance among the people of Isra'el.*

So, we can see from these verses that the tribe of Levi, having been set apart, no longer took part in the covenant made with Avraham for the Land of Promise, instead as the thirteenth tribe, their inheritance was confined to one-tenth of the produce from the other twelve tribes.

As Yirmeyahu says in 31:33, *“For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days, says YHVH - “I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.”*

The key features in this verse are that, rather than Torah being written on tablets of stone it will be written on hearts. But, when and how will it be written upon hearts? In verse 31 the promise of the new covenant is made with two people groups – the house Isra'el and the house of Y'hudah. But, in verse 33 YHVH says it will be for the *“house of Isra'el”* – which implies that it will be done only when the two groups or houses are reunited as one undivided nation. So, the giving of the new covenant can only take effect after Yeshua returns. As it is only then that the two houses will be finally brought back together as one undivided kingdom, as we saw in Part One. What Yechezk'el 37:15-28 said, will be confirmation of what was spoken by Moshe in D'varim, even before Isra'el entered the Land the first time:-

*YHVH your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors. Then YHVH your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love YHVH your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live. (D'varim 30:5-6)*

If the reunited house of Isra'el will receive the new covenant in their hearts after the return of Yeshua, where does that leave the one new man, spoken about by Sha'ul? When and how do they receive the new covenant?

These are questions that have beset both Judaism and Christianity for nearly two thousand years and neither religion has adequately explained the significance of the New Covenant.

However, following the same line of reasoning as Yirmeyahu Chapter 31, the writer of the Book of Hebrews in Chapters 8 and 9 recounts the words of Yirmeyahu and expands on the relationship between the old and new covenants. In 8:13 to 9:28 he says:-

*By using the term, "new" he (YHVH) has made the first covenant "old"; and something being made old, something in the process of aging, is on its way to vanishing altogether.*

*Now the first covenant had both regulations for worship and a Holy Place here on earth. A tent was set up, the outer one, which was called the Holy Place; in it were the menorah, the table and the Bread of the Presence. Behind the second parokhet was a tent called the Holiest Place, which had the golden altar for burning incense and the Ark of the Covenant, entirely covered with gold. In the Ark were the gold jar containing the man, Aharon's rod that sprouted and the stone Tablets of the Covenant; and above it were the k'ruvim representing the Sh'khinah, casting their shadow on the lid of the Ark – but now is not the time to discuss these things in detail. With things so arranged, the cohanim go into the outer tent all the time to discharge their duties; but only the cohen hagadol enters the inner one; and he goes in only once a year, and he must always bring blood, which he offers both for himself and for the sins committed in ignorance by the people.*

*By this arrangement, the Ruach HaKodesh showed that so long as the first Tent had standing, the way into the Holiest Place was still closed. This symbolizes the present age and indicates that the conscience of the person performing the service cannot be brought to the goal by the gifts and sacrifices he offers. For they involve only food and drink and various ceremonial washings – regulations concerning the outward life, imposed until the time for God to reshape the whole structure. But when the Messiah appeared as cohen Gadol of the good things that are happening already, then, through the greater and more perfect Tent which is not man-made (that is, it is not of this created world), he entered the Holiest Place once and for all. And he entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus setting people free forever. For if sprinkling ceremonially unclean persons with the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer restores their outward purity; then how much more the blood of the Messiah, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living God!*

*It is because of this death that he is mediator of a new covenant (or will). Because a death has occurred which sets people free from the transgressions*

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*committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance. For where there is a will, there must necessarily be produced evidence of its maker's death, since a will goes into effect only upon death; it never has force while its maker is still alive. This is why the first covenant too was inaugurated with blood. After Moshe had proclaimed every command of the Torah to all the people, he took the blood of the calves with some water and used scarlet wool and hyssop to sprinkle both the scroll itself and all the people; and he said, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has ordained for you." Likewise, he sprinkled with the blood both the Tent and all the things used in its ceremonies. In fact, according to the Torah, almost everything is purified with blood; indeed, without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

*Now this is how the copies of the heavenly things had to be purified, but the heavenly things themselves require better sacrifices than these. For the Messiah has entered a Holiest Place which is not man-made and merely a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, in order to appear now on our behalf in the very presence of God. Further, he did not enter heaven to offer himself over and over again, like the cohen hagadol who enters the Holiest Place year after year with blood that is not his own; for then he would have had to suffer death many times – from the founding of the universe on. But as it is, he has appeared once at the end of the ages in order to do away with sin through the sacrifice of himself. Just as human beings have to die once, but after this comes judgment, so also the Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to deliver those who are eagerly waiting for him.*

Here we have in summary the contrast between the old and new covenants. Both are sealed by the shedding of blood. The sacrifices of the first or old covenant being performed by earthly priests from the line of Aharon, while the new covenant was fulfilled once by the sacrificial death of Yeshua. So, we see here that the new covenant was established at the time of and because of Yeshua's death. But, this change of covenants has, to-date, only been established within those who have been called by YHVH to be brothers of Yeshua, and part of the Body of Messiah or "the one new man". The rest of Isra'el must wait until after his return.

In conclusion:-

- We have established that the Avrahamic Covenant, which was sealed by circumcision is just as important for Isra'el in the twenty-first century as it was when it was made with Avraham nearly four thousand years ago.
  - We also have scriptural evidence that YHVH will never reverse the promise he made as part of that covenant. Therefore, once the house of Isra'el is reunited under the kingship of Yeshua HaMashiach, Isra'el will gain the Land of Promise as completion of the covenant.
  - We can also rest assured that the New Covenant, which promises circumcision of the heart, will as spoken by the prophet Yirmeyahu and established through the death and resurrection of Yeshua, will reach it's fulfilment upon the house of
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Isra'el when they reunite in the Land of Promise and acknowledge Yeshua as their king and Cohen Hagadol.

- That leaves the Jews and Gentiles who together have been called by YHVH to be Talmidim of Yeshua. These ones are being set apart some for Cohanim and some for L'vi'im as part of a thirteenth tribe of Isra'el. Hence, as they do not inherit the Land of Promise, they do not need to be circumcised in the flesh like their brothers, instead they receive a circumcision of their heart now, because they trust in Yeshua and live in accordance with his Torah.

Hence, the One New Man, has for the past two thousand years remained something of a mystery, over which both Rabbinical Judaism and Christendom have stumbled. As Sha'ul said this body of believers has no need to be circumcised because they are already living in the New Covenant, by trusting and faithfully waiting for the return of Yeshua.

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