



THE APOSTOLIC FAITH CHURCH

February 10, 2019 Winter Quarter Volume 38 Lesson 11
Valentine's Day

CIRCUMCISE YOUR HEART

SCRIPTURAL LESSON: *Deuteronomy 10:12-22*

GOSPEL TRUTH:

The Lord desires more from His people than an external conformity to a set of rules. He trusts that His very own will possess a heart to love, know and follow Him. God's priority for every believer has always been, and will continue to be, a spiritual circumcision of the heart

GOLDEN SCRIPTURE:

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings (Jeremiah 4:4).

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH CHURCH DOCTRINES:

1. Jeremiah called the people to repent and reform. Circumcision is an obligation to keep God's commandments and to stay centered in His will (*Jeremiah 4:4*).
2. The ultimate fulfillment of God's promise to "regather his people" will happen when Israel circumcises their heart, and recognize Jesus as their Messiah (*Deuteronomy 30:1-10*).
3. John the Baptist warned the Scribes and Pharisees against trusting in their Jewish heritage (merits of being a part of Abraham's seed) and as an alternative, encouraged repentance. Physical circumcision is not as beneficial as spiritual circumcision (*Proverbs 13:4*).

BACKGROUND SETTING:

In the aftermath of their failures on Mount Sinai, the Lord encouraged spiritual restoration and recovery for His people. Getting right with God after a time of significant rebellion must always begin and center on the *Word*, thus initiating the Lord's reestablishment of new tablets, a revived priesthood, as well as a call to move forward and possess the land. God's acts of intercession clearly outlined His ability to pour out mercy and save His people from inevitable destruction (*Deuteronomy 10:1-11*).

As an expression of their gratitude, and in recognition of their duty towards God, the Lord's followers intently grasped what was expected and required of them (*Deuteronomy 10:12-13*). With great privilege comes great responsibility! The Lord considered His people as His great possession, and demanded a high standard of obedience from His chosen ones (*Deuteronomy 10:14-15*). In order for them to fulfill God's expectations, the children of Israel were called to circumcise the foreskin of their hearts. This involved an inner transformation that would inspire their hearts to be inclined after the spirit, and not after the flesh (*Deuteronomy 10:16*).

LESSON SUMMARY:

In *Romans* the second chapter, Paul composes a solid distinction between the impact of physical circumcision and spiritual circumcision. He contends that the circumcision of the Jews is a superficial act intended to distinguish a man who is separated unto God. When the heart is sinful, physical circumcision is of no spiritual benefit. Paul directs his attention to the condition of the heart. Using circumcision as a metaphor, only the Holy Spirit can purify a heart and set us apart unto God. Although it was a symbol of Israel's covenant with the Lord, physical circumcision cannot make a person right with God. Instead it takes a change in a person's heart, or as Paul described it, a transformation known as the "circumcision of the heart."

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