

Circumcise Your Heart!

Purpose: to encourage the listeners to ask God to point out and help overcome anything that would hinder us from receiving what He has promised.

In his last address to the children of Israel, Moses reminded them of their previous sins and of the fact that God had been merciful, even though they were rebellious. He let them know that it was not because of their own righteousness that they would defeat their enemies, because they had been stiff-necked. Now that they were about to go into the land that was promised to them, Moses encourages them to circumcise their heart:

Deu 10:12 - "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deu 10:13 - and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?

Deu 10:14 - Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, *also* the earth with all that *is* in it.

Deu 10:15 - The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as *it is* this day.

Deu 10:16 - Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Deu 10:17 - For the LORD your God *is* God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe.

Deu 10:18 - He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.

Deu 10:19 - Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Deu 10:20 - You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.

Deu 10:21 - He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen.

Deu 10:22 - Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

What is meant by "circumcision of the heart?"

What is circumcision? The cutting away of the flesh; a physical act which symbolised the removal of the sins of the flesh. To circumcise the flesh is to remove that which is physical. Uncircumcision represented something or someone that was unclean, unfit for use, ungodly, unholy etc. An uncircumcised person was a heathen!

Examples:

Moses used the term "uncircumcised" to say that he was not a good speaker.

Exo 6:12 - And Moses spoke before the LORD, saying, "The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I *am* of uncircumcised lips?"

For the first three years the fruit of the promised land was unfit to present to God and was called “uncircumcised”.

Lev 19:23 - 'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten.

Samson’s parents did not want their son to have a wife from the ungodly Philistines, who were “uncircumcised”.

Jdg 14:-3 - Then his father and mother said to him, "*Is there* no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."

David considered the Philistines as a godless people, and Goliath as “uncircumcised”.

1Sa 17:26- Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who *is* this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

The martyr, Stephen, spoke of the religious leaders as “uncircumcised” in heart and ears.

Act 7:51 - "*You* stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you.

To circumcise the heart is to remove that which is displeasing to God. It implies the cutting off of sins and a pure life. Not the cutting away of the flesh, but the purification of the soul.

Jer 4:4 - Circumcise yourselves to the LORD,
And take away the foreskins of your hearts,
You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
Lest My fury come forth like fire,
And burn so that no one can quench *it*,
Because of the evil of your doings."

This can only be done by the power of the Holy Spirit:

Deu 30:6 - And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Rom 2:26 - Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

Rom 2:27 - And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, *even with your written code* and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of the law?

Rom 2:28 - For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh;

Rom 2:29 - but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

Col 2:9 - For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

Col 2:10 - and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

Col 2:11 - In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

Col 2:12 - buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Col 2:13 - And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

Col 2:14 - having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

So, what is God saying to us? What can we learn from their example?

- Just before the children of Israel entered the promised land, Moses reminded them that they had been stubborn, but God was merciful to them.
- Some of them never entered into what God had planned for them.
- We have been stubborn, but God has also been merciful to us!
- We do not want to miss that which God has planned for us!
- Moses encouraged them to remove anything that was displeasing to God, but not just for an outward show, but from the heart.
- We should also ask God to point out and help us overcome anything that would hinder us from receiving what He has promised.

Note: if you go into battle with a weakness, the enemy will exploit that weakness and will hurt you. This may include:

- Attitude
- Selfishness
- Control
- Past hurts
- Stubbornness

Hebrews 12:1,2:

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.