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the Temple Series  
**Circumcision**

by haRold Smith  
a citizen of the Commonwealth  
(Ephesians 2:19)

*"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 YHVH is. And it is in union with him that you have been made full because 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 in Him; and in union with Him, you were also raised up along with Him by YHVH's faithfulness that worked when He raised Yeshua from the dead. You were dead because of your sins, that is, because of your 'foreskin', your old nature. But YHVH made you alive along with the Messiah by forgiving you all your sins. He wiped away the handwriting of ordinances against us. Because of the regulations, it stood as a testimony against us; but He removed it by nailing it to the execution-stake. Stripping the rulers and authorities of their power, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by means of the stake."*  
Colossians 2:8-15



*...the seal of YHVH's covenant*

Context, context, context. To properly understand the words of scripture, we must always consider the context they are presented in, the context of the Hebrew perspective they are presented from and the audience they are presented to. Paul was writing to a particular audience in this letter and his message must be understood within that audience before we can draw out any trans-cultural applications. **Colossians 1:2** ([click on highlighted words to view content](#)) tells us that this letter was addressed to the "saints and faithful brothers in Colossae". Throughout the Original Books (OT), those within the Hebrew family of Israel were addressed as "**saints**" from the Hebrew **kodesh** meaning "apartness, holiness, sacredness, separateness" - the same Hebrew word used to describe the Nature of YHVH. This is not a new word introduced into the Messianic letters, but is a "carry-over" from what was a familiar phrase written before to describe a particular people. The plural Greek word **adelphoi** (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family having the same national ancestor. Paul was writing to followers of the Hebrew Messiah (not **the "Christ"** - that phrase had not yet been formulated) in a Hebrew synagogue in the Roman city of Kolossai in Turkey - the only place in the city where people congregated who worshipped the One True God of Israel, **YaHoVeH**.

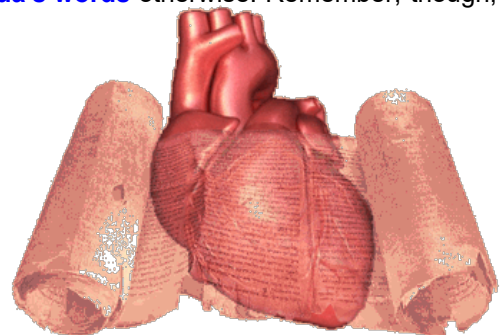


...the most popular false viewpoint

The English term "handwriting of ordinances" from [Colossians 2:14](#) at the top of this article which is also loosely translated as "handwriting of ordinances" by most modern versions but actually comes from two Greek words - [cheirographon](#) which actually means "a note of writing by one's own hand acknowledging the necessity of a repayment; a certificate of debt" and [dogma](#) to denote those Rabbinic ordinances which had been, in fact, the obstacle of separation, the "fence" of dogma found in the previous article, [the Dividing Wall](#). This the only place in scripture where this phrasing appears. What was nailed to the cross is the record of our deeds, the actions committed through our own determination that caused us to become separated (condemned) from the Nature of Light - not what *defines* His Nature. Yeshua took away that documentation of our own doing that said, "You Owe". However, reading this verse in most translations, there is shown to be a significant change in wording and, thus, meaning. Mostly, they say something to the effect of "having canceled the written code with its regulations". According to these translations, it was the Torah that was nailed to the cross, not the debts accumulated due to actions contrary to, our disobedience to, the Words that sets His Nature apart from the world - what makes Him Holy. This includes the record of Rabbinical ordinances that had been accumulated in what is known as the "oral Torah" (the *Talmud*). What Yeshua abolished were those Rabbinic ordinances which, when practiced, set aside the Torah of YHVH by separating ethnic and non-ethnic Hebrews that YHVH always intended to make one in Messiah and, thus, were at odds

with the written Torah that prophesied the unity within the promise of blessing given to Abraham. Reading this verse in most translations, however, there is shown to be a significant change in wording and, thus, meaning. Mostly, they say something to the effect of "having canceled the written code with its regulations". According to these translations, it was the Torah that was nailed to the cross, not the accumulated ordinances of the rabbis which were mostly contrary to, disobedient to, YHVH's Words that sets His Nature apart from the world - what makes Him holy. Instead, these translators would have you to believe it is the instructions, the definitions themselves that were done away with! That is the same as saying the Creator has cancelled Himself, the very Nature of Who He Is, out of existence - which is absolutely absurd (see [the Word](#) for more).

The Hebrew name for "nation" is goy and is generally used to mean a nation other than Israel. The plural usage of the word, *goyim*, were the surrounding nations, or foreigners, who were not Israel. In some instances, the Greek word used for Gentile is Hellen (as in "Hellenistic") and also generally means someone from a nation other than Israel. However, [Amos 9:11-12](#) (quoted in [Acts 15:17](#)) is unique in its clarity that those who join themselves to YHVH's Family remain non-Hebrew by ethnicity and yet are called by YHVH's name - meaning they do not become "Hebrew" but do become part of YHVH's Hebrew Family of Israel by right of adoption. Someone who is adopted not only takes on the name of the family to which they are adopted, but also adheres by the rules, regulations and attributes of that family. [Acts 15:17](#), provides a different word in Greek that is rendered as the English Gentile, ethnos, that essentially has the same meaning as *goyim* - "a tribe, nation, or people group, foreign nations not worshipping the true Elohim of Israel". It is only in the plural that it is used for heathen (Gentiles). The Hebrew apostle James is quoting the passage from Amos to substantiate that the covenant of relationship with YHVH, which has always been in the heart of the Father, occurs apart from circumcision and, thus, salvation is possible apart from circumcision. And recall from [Acts 15:1](#) that this was the very issue being raised at the time - can non-ethnic Hebrews be in covenant apart from circumcision so that they may receive salvation even in an uncircumcised state? The answer, of course, is "yes" - but, does that also mean everything else contained in Torah no longer applies? Christians have been taught that, because circumcision is in Torah, it is equivalent to Torah and have come to that conclusion in spite of Yeshua's words otherwise. Remember, though, that Abraham was accepted in a behavioral relationship covenant with YHVH prior to circumcision. Circumcision is a sign and seal of the pre-existing covenant - not the covenant itself and not the vehicle of salvation. [Genesis 26:5](#) says Abraham kept YHVH's covenant 430 years before those words were given on Mount Sinai and [Romans 4:11-12](#) says he kept it before being circumcised. How was he able to do that? He was able to keep YHVH's Words because he KNEW the Nature of YHVH contained in those Words - He was in a behavioral relationship covenant with YaHoVeH. So, now the question becomes - has that covenant been fulfilled as Yeshua said He would do? If it was, then is there still a need of that particular sign? Or has that seal



...a circumcised heart

been **Elevated** to another level as has the rest of Torah which is now written **within the faithful** on their hearts instead of without on tablets of stone?

*"And the foreigners who join themselves to YHVH, to minister to Him, to love the Name of YHVH, and to be His servants, **everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it** and holds fast My Covenant - these I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer **for all peoples.**" Isaiah 56:6-7*

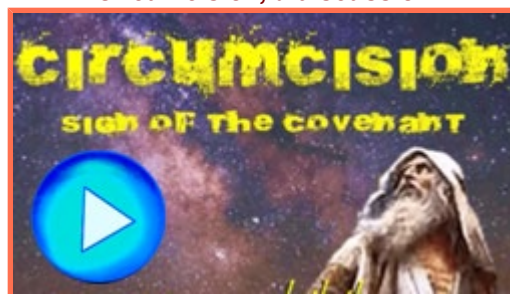
Simply stated, **the dividing wall** that was abolished by Messiah was none other than those *rabbinic ordinances* which had identified non-ethnic believers of YHVH as "unclean" and enforced a separation between ethnic and non-ethnic Hebrews **in opposition** to the written Torah. In fact, the *Tanakh* (OT) gives very clear instructions against erecting barriers to separate Israel from the nations. The foreigner who desired to worship the *Elohim* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by keeping His Words was to be welcomed into the Hebraic community and treated with the same respect as was given the native born (**Exodus 22:21, 23:9, Leviticus 19:33-34, 25:35, Deuteronomy 26:12**). They were to be given full participation in matters of Torah and Torah-life (Sabbath, **Exodus 23:12**, cp. **Isaiah 56:3**; Gleanings, **Leviticus 19:10**; Justice, **Exodus 12:49, Leviticus 24:22**; Festivals, **Deuteronomy 16:11, 14**; Worship and Prayer in the Temple, **1Kings 8:41-43**, cp. **2Chronicles 6:32-33**). And the prophets pronounce judgment upon any who would neglect their responsibilities to the "foreigner" on the same grounds as neglect of orphans and widows (**Psalms 94:6, Isaiah 56:3, Jeremiah 22:3, Zechariah 7:10**).

To join with YHVH's Family means to be in a behavioral relationship covenant with the Father of the Family by keeping **His Words** - beginning with **the Sabbath**. Because of His obedient Life to the Words of the Father found in Torah, what was *bestowed upon* Yeshua was **the Name** of the Father that is above every name. Holding the **status of firstborn** gave Yeshua legal claim to the Name that was **inherited**. As the firstborn Son, Yeshua was able to claim the inheritance of the Family in the **Name of the Father** because He had **become echad** with the Father. **Isaiah 63:19** says that *those not in covenant with YHVH are not called by His Name*. So we see that this idea of being called by someone's name refers to those in a relationship covenant. Yeshua's obedient Life culminating in His Resurrection fulfilled **YHVH's promise** of the reunification of being *echad* with His Family - for all ethnicities. The evidence of that reunification is provided by yet a third witness - the *indwelling* of YHVH's Spirit within first, **His Family**, and subsequently, upon all **righteous Gentiles** who join themselves to YHVH by keeping His Words - **from without to within**.

*"You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, YHVH, your Elohim am a jealous Elohim, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who despise Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me **and keep my commandments.**" Exodus 20:4-6*

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#### **Circumcision, a discussion**



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at [harold@hethathasanear.com](mailto:harold@hethathasanear.com). While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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