

Abraham and His Son Ishmael Were Both Circumcised on That Same Day 17: 23-27

DIG: How does Abraham eventually respond? Why? How much faith would it take to voluntarily be circumcised at ninety-nine years old? Do you think that all those in his household were circumcised voluntarily because of their belief in Abraham and their faith in ADONAI, or do you think that he coerced them? How old was Ishmael when he was circumcised?

REFLECT: When you know what the will of the LORD is in your life, how do you respond? Do you respond immediately? Or do you question and drag your feet? How do you obtain the favor of God?

Biblical faith is seen in action . . . in obedience. Abraham was immediately obedient to God's command (17:11), because on that very day he took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or slaves bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him (17:23).

Avraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised. This is true leadership. Abraham did not tell those in his household to be circumcised without he himself doing so. When leaders turn around, they have people following them and Abraham was a leader. And his son Ishmael was thirteen (17:24-25). The mention of his age at this point in the narrative is important later on.

Even though Ishmael was not to be the son of promise, Abraham rightly desired to have him obey God's blood covenant; therefore, he and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that same day (17:26). Because Ishmael is the father of all Muslims, they remain faithful even today to this covenant of circumcision. In their prayers at least five times a day the Muslims include the praise of Abraham and his descendants with the praise of Muhammad and his descendants. The fact that Ishmael and all those in his household were circumcised is evidence that Abraham is to be the father of many nations.

One can only imagine the questions asked of **Abraham** that day, maybe he even encountered some resistance, but **every male in Avraham's household, including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him (17:27)**. By this time, everyone knew that **Abraham** had favor with **ADONAI**, and if this is what **God** asked of them, they, along with **Avraham**, would obey.²⁹⁴

God's will for us, as it was for **Abraham**, is loyal obedience. And as the little child said of the angels in heaven who do **God's** will there, "They obeyed without asking any questions." This, and this alone, is the power of daily living.²⁹⁵