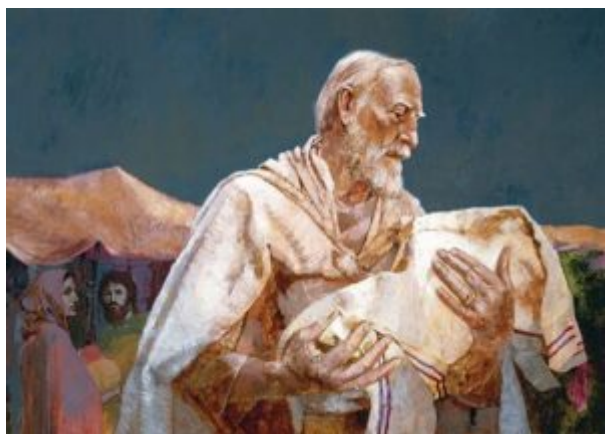


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Abraham and His Son Ishmael Were Both Circumcised on That Same Day 17: 23-27

Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that same day 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

Haftarah Lech I'Cha: Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 40:27-41:16
(see my commentary on **Deuteronomy Af - Parashah**)

Isra'el wallows in worm-like despair, cursed with few numbers, fear of her enemies, and exile. Nevertheless, **YHVH** tells **her**, "**Have no fear**" (**Isaiah 41:14**). Abram defeated the Gentile kings with very few numbers (**Genesis 14:1-16**), but his seed had not been obedient to the Covenant, and the sons of **Isra'el** were weak. But then, **God** anointed **Cyrus**, **king of the Persian** super-power, to work on **Isra'el's** behalf (**Isaiah 41:2-3, 45:1-2**). The other nations faced **Cyrus** with bigger and stronger **idols**, but their efforts were hollow (**Isaiah 41:5-7** and **11-12**). **YHVH** has not cast away **His covenant people**, nor the seed of **His friend Abraham** (**Isaiah 41:8-9; Second Chronicles 20:7; James 2:23; John 15:15**). **ADONAI** will strengthen **Isra'el** as a **threshing-sledge**. **Isra'el** grinds up **her** enemies and scatters them like **chaff** to the wind (**Isaiah 41:14-15**). Finally, with **her** strength renewed, **Isra'el** will rejoice in **the LORD**.

**B'rit Chadashah suggested readings for Parashah Lech l'Cha:
Acts 7:1-8; Romans 3:19-5:5; Galatians 3:15-18, 5:1-6;
Colossians 2:11-15; Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 7:1-19, 11:8-12**

Saving faith trusts in God as the One who gives life to the dead and calls nonexistent things into existence (Romans 4:17b). God the Father brought Yeshua back to life (Romans 4:24b-25, 6:4, 8:11; Acts 3:15, 4:10; Galatians 1:1; Colossians 2:12; First Corinthians 6:14; Second Corinthians 4:14). God the Father also gave life to the deadness of Abraham's seed and Sarah's loins for the purpose of reproduction (Romans 4:17, which quotes Genesis 17:5). The circle of life is evident. Isaac fathered a line that gives life to Yeshua, and Yeshua offers His life as the human substitute for the ram that Abraham offered for Isaac. Saving faith trusts solely in the life-giving power of God the Father to provide for us. ADONAI provides for our sins and justifies us by linking Messiah's death to His resurrection. True faith requires us to walk in those beliefs.