

### ROMANS 3:1-2 | THE JEWISH ADVANTAGE

- Verse 1 –
  - If, in the future (at the judgment of the nations), the Gentiles will be judged based on their morality without the law (Rom. 2:14-15), then what advantage is there to being a Jew and being under the Law?
  - **circumcision** - As further evidence that the English word *Gentile*, meaning "non Jew," is an anachronism (see note on Rom. 1:13), note that the Bible uses *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* to designate the two groups.
- Verse 2 –
  - **chiefly** - The word *πρῶτος* [protos] means "first" or "primarily." Here and in 1 Tim. 1:15 it is translated *chief* or *chiefly*, but even in those places taking the idea of *first*.
  - **unto them...** - Compare Deut. 4:7-8. The non-Jewish world owes a debt of gratitude to the Jewish people for their diligence in receiving, respecting, and preserving the **oracles of God**. In fact, all 66 of the books of the Bible were written by Jews (yes, Luke was a Jew, not a Gentile).
  - **committed** - Literally: they were "faithed with," tying in with "the faith of God" in v. 3.

### ROMANS 3:3-4 | THE FAITH OF GOD

- Verse 3
  - **what if...** - Remember that Paul is teaching the Jewish believers at Rome the "Foundations for Christian Living." To do so, he has to build the foundation for this Age of Grace in which God is dealing with "neither Jew nor Greek," and the Jewish nation is temporarily set aside. Here, he begins to lay that foundation.
  - **the faith of God** –
    - The **faith of God** is the faith God placed in the Jewish people when He **committed** (entrusted or "faithed") His **oracles** in them.
    - Is His faith misplaced? Has God failed? This is what Paul is about to answer.
    - Incidentally, this is the argument an argument that the Calvinists use to argue for limited atonement. *Jesus could not have died for everyone because everyone is not saved, and thus the work of Jesus was without effect.*
  - **without effect** - The Greek *καταργέω* [katargeo] is a double prefix (kat + a) to *ergeo* (productive energy) *ultimately without effective energy (ergeo)*.
- Verse 4 –
  - **let God be true** - More literally, "let God be true and every man false."
    - The word *ψεύστης* [pseustes] is the root of our English *pseudo* words, such as pseudonym.
    - That is, even if *every Jew* was unfaithful, this doesn't affect the righteousness of God, who entrusted to them the **oracles of God**.
    - Therefore, since this is an imperative, it could be worded as, "do not make a doctrine that makes God out to be some kind of liar or failure if His work and will is not fully accomplished."
      - Place the blame where it belongs: in man." (The reformed doctrine of Limited Atonement is built on a "God cannot fail" foundation, and thus not in alignment with this passage).
  - **that thou mightiest be justified...** This is a quote from the confessional Psalm 51. The point is "God is right, even when man is wrong."

## ROMANS 3:5-8 | A FALSE ASSUMPTION

- Verse 5 –
  - **commend - commend** is συνίστημι [synhístami] is "to stand beside," as if one introduces the other.
  - **is God unrighteous...?** - Paul is building his case to explain to Jewish believers why God is judging the nation of Israel, and why (as he will later show), Israel is being set aside in a temporary blindness. His logic is this: if it is sin that introduced man to God's holiness, then God should be thankful for the sin.
  - **I speak as a man** - Paul uses this phrase on several occasions, always when he is using flawed logic to prove a point.
- Verse 6 - This answers the final question of v. 5. Paul builds on the Jewish worldview that God will **judge the world** when He establishes His Kingdom. If sin actually enhances God's glory, then God would be unjustified to **judge the world**.
- Verse 7 - This rhetorical question is built on the thoughts in v. 5.
  - In v. 5, the argument is that **our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God**.
  - Therefore, shouldn't God be thankful? Isn't God **unrighteous** to take **vengeance** on the one who introduced **the righteousness of God**?
  - And, in v. 7, it is **my lie** [falsehood] that led to **his glory**, so **why yet am I also judged** since I contributed to God's glory?
  - In short, *if God's judgment enhances God's glory, then my sin enhances God's glory, and I should sin more.*
- Verse 8 –
  - **and not rather** - That is, instead of being **judged as a sinner** (v. 7), if that assumption is true, why **not rather** say, **Let us do evil...**
  - **slanderosly reported** - Those who preach pure grace will always be slandered and misunderstood. They are portrayed as *antinomian*, or *cheap grace*, or holding to a *crossless Gospel*, etc.
  - **whose damnation is just** - This phrase is in contrast to the previous flawed logic, saying, "sin=a display of God's righteousness=God's glory, therefore no judgment should be given" while all the while the sinners **damnation is just**.

## ROMANS 3:9-18 | NONE RIGHTEOUS

- Verse 9 –
  - **are we better** - That is, *are we Jews, whose advantage is great better?*
  - **all under sin** - Literally, *previously accused*. The word does not carry the idea of logical proof.
- Verses 10-18 are quotes from the Psalms and Isaiah.