

WHAT ADVANTAGE THEN HATH THE JEW?
Romans 3:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Paul has declared law hearing only, to be without spiritual power.
 - 1) Romans 2:13
 - 2) "faith without works is dead" James

 - B. The act of circumcision, without inward obedience to God's laws, is of no effect
 - 1) Romans 2:25
 - 2) Outward rituals do not cleanse

 - C. Being a Jew is a matter of the heart
 - 1) vs. 28 - "For he is not a Jew....."
 - 2) vs. 29 - "But he is a Jew....."

 - D. These statements would provoke an obvious question from the Jews.
 - 1) What use are these things?
 - 2) Why be a Jew?
- I. Paul Anticipates Their Questions vs. 1
- A. "What advantage then hath the Jew?"
 - 1) "advantage" = perissos = "that which encircles a thing", "that which is in excess", "over and above"
 - 2) Jew, the chosen ones for God's service

 - B. "or what profit is there of circumcision?"
 - 1) "profit" = opheleia = "benefit", "furthering", "helping", in our language, perks for management
 - 2) "circumcision" = outward ritual
- II. Paul Answers the Question vs. 2
- A. "Much every way:"
 - 1) "much" = polus = "many, of number"
 - 2) "many from every perspective"

 - B. "chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God"
 - 1) "chiefly" = proton = "first", "in the first place"
 - 2) "committed" = pisteuomia = "to entrust to", "to confide anything to anyone"
 - 3) "oracles" = logion = "something uttered", "utterance", "declaration", "saying" The Old Testament writings.

III. The Problem of the Unbelieving Jew vs. 3

- A. If, as Paul has stated, there are some Jews who are not saved, what does this do to the promises that God had made to Israel? If God does treat the Jew and Gentile the same when they sin then how can God keep his word? They were thinking that if one Jew is saved then all Jews are saved. How could a single Jew be lost? The covenants, Abrahamic and Mosaic are to all Jews, therefore all Jews are saved.
- B. "For what if some did not believe?"
- 1) "believe" = apistia = "to disbelieve or refuse to believe", "to not have faith"
 - 2) "For what if some were without faith?"
 - 3) Some Jews did not have individual, personal faith that saves.
- C. "shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"
- 1) "unbelief" = apistia = "unbelief"
 - 2) "faith" = "faithfulness"
 - 3) "effect" = katargeo = "to render inactive", "to leave unemployed or idle", "make useless"

IV. Paul's Answer to this Question vs. 4

- A. "God forbid: let God be true, but every man a liar"
- 1) me = "not" + genoito = "may it be"
 - 2) "true" = alethes = "God is true"
 - 3) "liar" = pseustes = "false", "deceiver"
 - 4) "Let it never happen!" "God is the truth even if every man on earth is proven to be a liar"
- B. "as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings,"
- 1) "written" = grapho = "to grave or cut in"
Psalm 51:4 - "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."
 - 2) Nathan has just expressly condemned David for his crime against (1) Uriah, (2) Bathsheba, and (3) God. David does not argue with Him. He sees clearly that God is just in dealing with him.
 - 3) God will be regarded as just in His dealing with David. God's sayings will be proven true. His judgment will be vindicated.

C. Paul's answer: David was a Jew. He was circumcised. David sinned against God and God punished him as He would any sinner. This did not alter the promises of God to Israel.

D. ".....and mightest overcome when thou art judged"
1) "overcome" = nikao = "to be victorious"
2) "judged" = "when you are judging"
3) "and win the verdict when you (God) are on trial"
see Barnes, page 81

VI. Do We Do God's Will When We Sin? vs. 5-9

A. "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?"
1) "unrighteousness" = adikia = "wrong", "sin"
2) "commend" = sunistemi = "to place or set together", "to introduce to one's acquaintance and favorable notice", "to represent as worthy"
3) If our sins make God's righteousness of greater degree, what might we think?

B. ".....is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)"
1) "unrighteous" = adikia = "what ought not to be"
2) "vengeance" = orge = "wrath", "anger"
3) "I'm using human reasoning"

C. God does not tempt us to sin
1) James 1:13-16
2) "God made me this way. I cannot help myself. He has used my sins to glorify Himself"
3) Does God receive glory in obedience?

VII. Paul's Answer vs. 6, 7, 8

A. "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" vs. 6
1) "Let it never happen!"
2) "on what basis then will God be able to judge the world?"

B. The world is sinful. Men do wrong.
1) If God's judgment of sin brings Him glory, then how can he punish the sinner?
2) The Jews knew God would judge the world. They assumed this meant the Gentiles only.

C. "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory: why yet am I also judged as a sinner" vs.7
1) "abounded" = perisseuo = "to be over and above", "to be more than enough"
2) "lie" = pseusma = "a being false", "falsehood"

- 3) "glory" = doxa
- 4) "judged" = krino
- 5) "sinner" = amartolos = "erring from the divine law",
"missing the mark"
- 6) "But, you say, if a falsehood of mine has brought great
honour to God by bringing out his truthfulness" Gspd.
- 7) "I on my side do not deserve to be condemned as a sinner"
Knox. God's glory and truth will be highlighted by His
keeping His word to punish that which is false. His
truth will be made known by the fulfillment of His pro-
mises to His people. The same will occur when his pro-
mises are fulfilled against sin. Why would God not honor
the sinner?

Why yet am I, &c. How can that act be regarded as evil, which tends to promote the glory of God? The fault in the reasoning of the objector is this, that he takes for granted that the direct tendency of his conduct is to promote God's glory, whereas it is just the reverse; and it is by God's reversing that tendency, or overruling it, that he obtains his glory. The tendency of murder is not to honour the law, or to promote the security of society, but just the reverse. Still, his execution shall avert the direct tendency of his crime, and do honour to the law and the judge, and promote the peace and security of the community by restraining others.

Barnes, page 83

- D. "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some say we affirm that we say) vs. 8
- 1) "slanderously" = blasphemeo = "to blaspheme", "to speak evil of", "to defame"
 - 2) "affirm" = phemi = "to say", "to explain"
- E. "Let us do evil, that good may come?" "whose damnation is just"
- 1) The charge brought against those who preach the grace of God.
 - 2) The condemnation of people who make such an accusation is correct.

8. And not rather. This is the answer of the apostle. He meets the objection by showing its tendency if carried out, and if it were made a principle of conduct. The meaning is, "If the glory of God is to be promoted by sin, and if a man is not therefore to be condemned, or held guilty for it' if this fact absolves man from crime, why not carry the doctrine out, and make it a principle of conduct, and DO ALL THE EVIL WE CAN, in order to promote his glory." This was the fair consequence of the objection. And yet this was a result so shocking and monstrous, that all that was necessary in order to answer the objection was merely to state this consequence. Every man's moral feelings would revolt at the doctrine; every man would know that it could not be true; and every man, therefore, could see that the objection was not valid.

Barnes, page 83

VI. Is The Jew Better Than The Gentile? vs. 9

- A. "What then? are we better than they?"
- 1) What follows then?
 - 2) "better" = proechomai = "to hold before one's self", "to have before or in preference to others", "in running, to have the start", "have the advantage"

B. "No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;"

- 1) Not at all!
- 2) "proved" = proaitiaomai = "to accuse beforehand", "we before accused"
- 3) We have already shown that both Jews and Gentiles are sinners.

C. The Gentile is a sinner. The Jew is a sinner. There is none righteous, no not one.

- 1) What then, can man do?
- 2) Romans 1:16
- 3) Snokey Robinson, the soul musician, writes in his upcoming autobiography he was addicted to cocaine for 16 months after the 1985 break-up of his marriage and the death of his father, saying recently in Atlantic City, New Jersey, "The Lord had me go through this to let young people know, and everybody know, what it could do to you and that there is a way out."

Arkansas Democrat, 02/15/89

As it is written. Ps. li. 4. To confirm the sentiment which he had just advance, and to show that it accorded with the spirit of religion as expressed in the Jewish writings, the apostle appeals to the language of David, uttered in a state of deep penitence for past transgressions. Of all quotations ever made, this is one of the most beautiful and most happy. David was overwhelmed with grief; he saw his crime to be awful; he feared the displeasure of God, and trembled before him. Yet he held it as a fixed, indisputable principle that GOD WAS RIGHT. This he never once thought of calling in question. He had sinned against God, God only; and he did not once think of calling in question the fact that God was just altogether in reproving him for his sin, and in pronouncing against him the sentence of condemnation. That thou mightest be justified. That thou mightest be regarded as just or right, or, that it may appear that God is not unjust. This does not mean that David had sinned against God for the purpose of justifying him, but that he now clearly saw that his sin had been so directly against him, and so aggravated, that God was right in his sentence of condemnation. In thy sayings. In what thou hast spoken; that is, in thy sentence of condemnation; in thy words in relation to this offence. It may help us to understand this, to remember that the psalm was written immediately after Nathan, at the command of God, had gone to reprove David for his crime (see the title of the psalm). God, by the mouth of Nathan, had expressly condemned David for his crime. To this expression of condemnation David doubtless refers by the expression "in thy sayings;" see II Sam. xii. 7-13. And mightest overcome. In the Hebrew, "mightest be pure," or mightest be esteemed pure, or just. The word which the LXX. and the apostle have used, "mightest overcome," is sometimes used with reference to litigations or trials in a court of justice. He that was accused and acquitted, or who was adjudged to be innocent, might be said to overcome, or to gain the cause. The expression is thus used here. As if there were a trial between David and God, God would overcome; that is, would be esteemed pure and righteous in his sentence condemning the crime of David. When thou art judged. The Hebrew is when thou judgest; that is, in thy judgment pronounced on this crime. The Greek may also be in the middle voice as well as the passive, and may correspond, therefore, in meaning precisely with the Hebrew. So the Arabic renders it. The Syriac renders it, "when they [i.e. men] shall judge thee." The meaning, as expressed by David, is, that God is to be esteemed right and just in condemning men for their sins, and that a true penitent, i.e. a man placed in the best circumstances to form a proper estimate of God, will see this, though it should condemn himself. The meaning of the expression, in the connection in which Paul uses it, is, that it is to be held as a fixed, unwavering principle, that God is right and true, whatever consequences it may involve, whatever doctrine it may overthrow, or whatever man it may prove to be a liar.

VII. What Advantage Then Hath the Church Member?

[Can a person be saved and not a member of the church?]

- A. Church membership does not save
 - 1) Some members do not believe
 - 2) Judas did not believe

- B. Baptism does not purify the heart
 - 1) A lost person may be baptized
 - 2) Judas was baptized

- C. The Lord's Supper does not gain God's favor
 - 1) Lost people can observe it
 - 2) Judas probably did

- D. Why be a church member?
 - 1) It is the natural thing to do, if one is saved
 - 2) It is His body on earth
 - 3) It is the place of service
 - 4) Christ dwells in it
 - 5) It is the instrument God had chosen to do His work on earth
 - 6) It has the scriptures committed to its trust and care
 - 7) From it the Bride will be chosen

- E. What about members who sin?
 - 1) Does this nullify the promise of Jesus?
 - 2) "The gates of hell shall not prevail"
 - 3) "I am with you always, even unto the end of the age"

- F. Why, then exclude members?
 - 1) The same reason those who broke the law under the Old Covenant
 - 2) To rid spiritual society of their leaven, to set them out of the body
 - 3) We do not put people to death. And thank God for that.

- G. We are imperfect in what we do
 - 1) The Israelites were subject to error
 - 2) They responded to their fallibility by refusing to stone to death any with exception of the most obvious and heinous.

"Let God be true, and every man a liar."