

Romans 2:17 - 3:20

There were 2 fortresses of the Jew's confidence:

1. vv 17-24

The Law

2. vv 25-29

Circumcision

17 But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, 18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? 24 For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.

This was a nation that had been under divine judgment for 700 years

v17 They gloried in being the recipients of the divine Law

v18 ..and could differentiate between right and wrong

vv19-20 ...and they could be a blessing to others

v20 ...having a complete knowledge of truth

vv21-23 4 hard Prosecutorial Questions

← the questions are answered "YOU ARE GUILTY" (Is. 52:5) spoken prophetically of Israel

and now circumcision the external sign must be joined to internal obedience

hypothetically,

where there is the reality of obedience

there is no need of the sign..

25 For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 And he who is physically

the absence of the substance - obedience cancels the sign of circumcision

and the obedient Gentile would stand as

superior over the disobedient yet circumcised Jew

uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a

stand as superior as Ruth to Israel in the time of the Judges

transgressor of the Law? ²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Conclusion:

the outward sign is not the final authoritative sign of being a Jew

What must be present is inward obedience... a circumcision of the heart and the spirit (Acts 7:51)

1. So is there really an advantage to being a Jew? any advantage to being of the circumcision?

3:1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What then? If some

Six questions are asked

Yes! A Jew is in possession of the scriptures..

But Paul says if the whole world be found guilty God still will be found true He need not save ANYONE

did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? ⁴ May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written,

2. as if God cannot condemn a Jew because he would be unfaithful to his covenant with Israel

"THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED."

a quotation from David concerning God's justification in His judgment of him after His infidelity

⁵ But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not

3. Is it wrong for God to be glorified in judging my sin?

unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.) ⁶ May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world? But if

Paul qualifies his question as posing the devil's advocate.

4. If God cannot as He cannot judge anyone

through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? ⁷ And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say),

4. "How can I be found guilty for glorifying God's justice?"

5. The reduction ad absurdum "We should sin more to give God's justice more glory"

"Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.

Any one who uses this logic is self condemned

6) So is the Jew able to escape judgment because he is a Jew?

9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have

already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under

Paul introduces a theological term — "under sin" Helpless under their guilt

sin¹⁰ as it is written,

Paul brings in a surprise witness... - God - His testimony to David about Israel.

"THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; The Estate of man: Guilty

11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, The Extent of sin: Total mental

THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; Emotional

12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; volitional and moral

THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,

The Effect of sin Man is helpless He does not have the ability to repent apart from divine grace

THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE

The Expression of sin Violence

WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,"

"THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";

15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,"

16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,

17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN." Summary

18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

The Establishing of Sin No fear of God

19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those

who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed

The conclusion: Sin's Indictment

and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because

by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight;

A soteriological bombshell... the law cannot save It can only reveal sin and indict the sinner

for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

The law has Punitive ability