

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

"Jewish Advantage"

Romans 3:1-8

9-16-84

INTRODUCTION

1. This book of Romans accents righteousness by grace through faith in Christ (1:16, 17). Both Jews and Gentiles are sinners who need God's grace.
2. With the sinfulness of sin (Chapt. 1), God has outlined His principles of judgment (Chapt. 2). It appears that by what has been pretended, a supposed Jewish objector raises several questions (3:1-8).
3. Does Paul's teaching (really that of the Holy Spirit!) obliterate national distinctions in view of ethical concerns (2:17-29)? Note the four objections and answers provided:-

1. OBJECTION - QUESTION #1 v. 1.

Two questions are posed: a. Advantage of Jew? Profit of circumcision? The former is answered here (vv. 2-8) and also later (Chaps 9-11); the latter is explained in chapter 4.

Answer #1 v. 2.

"Much everyway" is a brief and unmistakable reply. It must be remembered that this was written when the Christian church was being planted everywhere in the Roman Empire and when distinctions disappeared (Gal. 3:28). Yet, the Jew nationally has "much" left in his favor. God did not sow Judaism and reap Christianity. That would blot out Judaism. Their national advantage is the oracle of God, that is, promises which concern an earthly kingdom with Israel as the head and where her national distinction will not be lost as it is in the church. Here is fantastic dispensational teaching. Judaism is no mere relic or a dead past, but still has advantages which will one day be made clear (cf. Jer.

31:31-37).

2. OBJECTION - QUESTION #2 v. 3.

The "for" considers the assertion that the Jew has "much" advantage. Some of the Jews were lacking in faith. The objection raised is: does their lack of faith destroy the validity of the oracles? Moreover, does all this make of no effect the faithfulness of God Who gave the oracles? In essence: the mere possession of the Scriptures was nothing in the face of Jewish unbelief.

Answer #2 v. 4.

"God forbid" is a characteristic phrase of Paul meaning "perish the thought." If every man in the

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nation Israel (not just "some" as v. 3) disbelieved, the oracles would retain their power and authority unimpaired and would yet find their complete fulfilment. God's truth remains true as expressed in Ps. 51:4. Man's faithlessness does not destroy God's faithfulness. Rather, it makes God's more prominent and glorifies God all the more. Note: God calls unbelief lying because it virtually pronounces unworthy of trust that which is the truth of God. Therefore, when God makes good His promises to the nation, unbelievers will be seen to be liars, God will be justified in all His O.T. sayings and will "overcome" when He is judged for He was misjudged. Remember: it is repentant Israel which will find "advantage" and they are promised repentance (Zech. 12:10, Acts 5:31; Rom. 11:26).

3. OBJECTION - QUESTION #3 v. 5.

A difficulty arises based on v. 4. In essence it is this: Paul's teaching is charged with giving an excuse for sinning. God's promises will appear more gracious on account of the nation's previous unbelief. Since Jewish obstinacy has turned out to His glory, why should God punish the Jews for that which has been a favor to Him? Surely, if God uses sin to glorify Himself, He ought not to punish the sinner. This is indeed an acute problem (cf. Rom. 6:1), but one which underpins the Pauline doctrine of justification apart from works.

\* Answer #3 v. 6.

Here is the reply in one blow: "Then how will God judge the world?" The world's unrighteousness makes God's love toward it conspicuous. Therefore, if God can't judge the Jew, He can't judge the Gentile either--so all judgment is at an end. This is the ad hominem argument.

4. OBJECTION - QUESTION #4 v. 7.

This verse does not advance the thought. Rather it individualizes the previous statement about the world. Each man in the world might come before God with the claim that His glory had been advanced by the man's lie and on this claim exemption from judgement. This quietly intimates that not a single sinner will escape the judgment.

Answer #4 v. 8.

Here is the logical absurd conclusion. Some affirmed that Paul taught that the more evil, the more praise to His Name. The answer is that the sin itself, if left alone, would never accomplish the end. Sin can never be a necessity for man or for God.

18th 4:11  
Acts 7:38  
Neh 5:12

Rom 3:2 - I am the oracles of God.

Multitude set up for Jews