

Start lesson 23 for 8/19/19

Romans 3:10-18.

Certainly, the Jews had been given God's word, but it witnessed against them, and added to their accountability. The word they had been given proved that all are sinners, and at this point, the Jews were not superior to the Gentiles.

Throughout the first 3 chapters of Romans, Paul is proving from scripture that because of Adam's sin, all men are on the same level before God. Blood line, station in life, natural skills, education level, nor any other distinction among men sets one above another before God. He is building toward the fact that only Christ sets one apart from the rest of mankind.

Though Paul is dealing particularly with the Jew of his day, his message of redemption reaches into the four corners of the earth, and covers all men of all time.

Israel was proud that the law-word and the ordinances of God has been given to them through men of their own nation. They were proud that the prophets had been of the seed of Jacob.

Matthew 23:29 *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, 30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.*

Christ finishes his rebuke of the proud Jews by prophesying of their coming destruction by Rome, Mat 24.

They were proud of their heritage; they were proud that they had been given God's law-word. However, Paul uses the very scriptures that cause them pride as a witness against them. He uses the very person they hold in great reverence to witnesses against them. Paul **uses David, as well as their own prophets, to reduce the proud Jews** to the level of all men.

Paul used chapters Romans chps 1 & 2 to prove that, like the pagan Gentiles, the Jews are without excuse. He quotes David to prove his point:

Psalms 14:1-3 ¶ «To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.» *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. 2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. 3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Psalms 14:1-3 is one of the few passages that is repeated word for word, with only a few words

rearranged. It is found again in:

Psalms 53:1-3 ¶ «To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A Psalm of David.» *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good. 2 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. 3 Every one of them is gone back: **they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.***

Then with **Romans 3:10-18** we see that the Thrice-Holy God gives all men the same message three times.

Paul holds up the mirror of the Old Testament Scripture to the proud Jews to show them the God's truth that ***there is none righteous...***

James 1:22-25 *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

The same mirror is held up to us, and it shows us that no one is righteous; no one understands; no one seeks after God. All men are altogether filthy, and no one does good as defined by God's word.

Ps 51:3, *They are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one.*

Passages like this given us what is called TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

What do we mean by total depravity? Every area of man fell in Adam, so no man has the natural capacity to choose God nor to do good works that please God.

We have already discussed Ephesians 2:1-7 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Revelation 20:5, 6, and Colossians 2:13, 14 so we will not go into them again.

All men are dead in their sins, and no man can will himself to live any more than Lazarus could will himself to live in John 11:39. When Jesus told them to take away the stone, his sister, Martha, said, *Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.*

The same must be said about all men before conversion, 10 *There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

A dead man has no desire nor ability to raise himself from the dead.

God, in his unmerited grace and mercy, implants the needed love, desire and faith to come to him.

Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

There is YouTube video of debate between Dr. Brown, a Messianic Jew, and Rabbi Shmuley. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3VE2QV73G8>

Toward the end, Rabbi Shmuley boasts about how good of a Jew he is, and dares Dr. Brown to say that he is not going to heaven. Dr. Brown does not take the dare.

Paul includes every person as he speaks to the Jews who boasted in the law, boasted in their knowledge of the law and in their good works. He proves from the law and the prophets that all good works and fine motives are useless without Christ. A dead man cannot do good, and only the Spirit of God can bring life to the dead.

Romans 3:9 *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

To whom is Paul speaking when he said, *are we better than they?*

As we read the New Testament, we normally separate it from its historical context:

We are given a glimpse of the historical attitude of the Israelites, or Jews' toward the Gentiles in Mark 7:24-30.

Mark 7:24-30 *And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid. 25 For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: 26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. 27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs. 28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. 29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. 30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.*

John 1:11 *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

Throughout the law of Moses, those outside of Israel were considered unclean. In Christ's day non-Israelites, Gentiles, were regarded as being on the level of the lowest animal, dogs.

We see throughout the New Testament that the Jews were high and lifted up because they supposed themselves to be in the blood line of Abraham.

John 8:33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

The Jews at Rome were exalted in their own eyes above the Gentiles. In Romans 3, Paul is proving from their Hebrew scriptures that they are no better than the Gentiles. (Actually, he quotes from the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Hebrew.)

Starting in v. 10 through 18, he unites the proud Jews to whom he is writing with the Gentiles whom the Jews considered no better than dogs.

The official attitude of the Apostolic church toward the Gentiles did not change until Acts 11.

The Gentiles were considered by the Jews to be the lowest sort of animal. This attitude did not change among the Apostles until the sheet was let down from heaven in Acts 10, with the call for Peter to go to Cornelius, a Gentile. Then in Acts 11, the Apostles at Jerusalem required that Peter explain to them why he would go to the Gentiles.

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

So, the key Apostolic attitude changed, but it certainly was not a universal change. That is, the universal attitude of the newly converted Israelites, or Jews toward the Gentile converts remained the same as it had been over the past many centuries. These New Testament books were written within the Israelite culture, and the authors had to deal with the historic attitude toward the non-Israelite "dogs."

It certainly was not an easy transition, and did not fully take place until the old Israelite culture was totally destroyed in 70 AD.

Both Paul and James deal with the superior attitude of the Jewish Christians over the Gentile Christians, as does Peter in 1 Peter 1.

Romans 3:9-18, **none, their and they...** To whom is Paul referring? Both Jews and Gentiles.

V. 9, Paul asks, Are we Israelites better than the non-Israelites?

Paul telling the proud Jewish Christians that they are no better than the Gentiles. He paints the true picture of the fallen nature of all men without exception.

Vv. 10-18

There is no God say the ungodly. Or *there is no fear of God*. If there is a God, there is no God of vengeance God to fear, so let us eat, drink, and be merry in anything that pleases us.

We see here that the natural bend of fallen man is very self-centered. The natural man will do all he can to advance himself, even to the point of destroying others. What better way to do it than with the mouth?

We will skip ahead to Romans 3:18, and then come back to v. 13 and work our way through v. 18. **What is the basic problem** of the natural man that permits him to destroy others who might get in his way?

No fear of God. We saw this in Ps 14:1-3, 53:1-3

All of Paul's quotes are the words of God to his people, Israel. None were directed to the pagan nations surrounding Israel. Though Paul is speaking specifically to the Jews in order to destroy their self-importance or self-esteem and to convince them of their wickedness, his words apply equally to all men of all time.

We have already seen that Paul quotes two passages, Psalms 14 and Psalms 53 in Romans 3:10-12.

Romans 3:13-18.

Paul paints a picture of the human depravity of those of v. 11, *there is none that seeketh after God*.

Their depravity manifests itself in words, vv. 13, 14, and those words translate into action, vv. 15-17.

And he ends with the reason why the wicked do what they do, v. 18.

Paul uses Psalms 36 to describe human depravity. David probably wrote this Psalm as he was being persecuted by Saul. Paul is addressing a Jewish church in Rome.

Neither David nor Paul were addressing the surrounding nations; they were speaking about those who claimed to be God's chosen people. Obviously, v. 18 and Psalms 36 expand to include all sinners everywhere.

Psalms 36:1 *«To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD.» The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. 2 For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. 3 The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. 4 He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil. 5 ¶ Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. 6 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. 7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. 8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. 9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. 10 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.*

Here is the outline of this Psalm:

Whole Psalm. **First Part.** A character of a wicked man #Ps 36:1. 1. He calls evil good #Ps 36:2. 2. He continues in it. 3. He is an hypocrite #Ps 36:3. 4. He is obstinate. 5. He is studious in wickedness #Ps 36:4. **Second part.** God's patience and mercy #Ps 36:5-6. 1. To all, even all creatures. 2. But particularly to his people, which he admires. Upon which the faithful (1) trust, (2) are satisfied #Ps 36:7-8. **The Third part.** He prays that this effect may light, 1. On God's people #Ps 36:10. 2. On himself #Ps 36:11. 3. His acclimation upon it #Ps 36:12. William Nicholson (Bishop), 1662. (Spurgeon, Treasury of David.)