

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
ROMANS

----- Lesson 3 -----

The Revelation of the Righteousness of God
The Condemnation of the Jew

Romans 2:1 to 3:20

THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

(1:1-17)

(1) The REVELATION of the Righteousness of God

(1:18 to 8:39)

(A) **Condemnation:** The Need for God's Righteousness

(1:18 to 3:20)

1) The Guilt of the Gentile

(1:18-32)

 2) The Guilt of the Jew

(2:1 to 3:8)

3) The Conclusion: All are Guilty Before God

(3:9-20)

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:1

¹ Therefore thou art inexcusable,
O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:
for wherein thou judgest another,
thou condemnest thyself;
for thou that judgest doest the same
things.

Having shown that the Gentiles are “without excuse,” Paul now speaks to the Jews, proving that they are equally inexcusable before God.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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things.

In general, the Jews saw the Gentiles as lower creatures. They were about to be shown the beam in their own eye, just as Jesus taught:

Matthew 7:3

- ³ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?



Psalm 106:34-42

- 34 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them:
35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.
36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them.
37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,
38 And shed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters,
whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan:
and the land was polluted with blood.
39 Thus were they defiled with their own works,
and went a whoring with their own inventions.
40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people,
insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.
41 And he gave them into the hand of the heathen;
and they that hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies also oppressed them,
and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

Their own sacred scrolls testified
of their continual disobedience!

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:2

² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

No one could say God was wrong for condemning such behavior:



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:3

³ And thinkest thou this,
O man, that judgest them which do such
things, and doest the same,
that thou shalt escape the judgment of
God?

God has never been guilty of using a double-standard. As Peter learned on the rooftop in Joppa, “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34).



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:4-6

- 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
- 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
- 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

The Jews did not appreciate that it was only because of God's goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering that they were given so many chances to repent.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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No one finds repentance except through God's goodness.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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- 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
- 5 **But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath** against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;
- 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

But we only find this grace *after* we have great need for it –

AFTER our hard and stubborn heart has stored up for itself a measure of the punishment that will be handed out on the Day of Judgment.





Man can choose his path,
but he cannot choose the consequence
of his choice.

Romans 2:7-8

7 To them who by patient
continuance in well doing seek for
glory and honour and immortality,

8 But unto them that are contentious,
and do not obey the truth,
but obey unrighteousness,

eternal life:

indignation and wrath,

Romans 2:9-11

⁹ Tribulation and anguish,

¹⁰ But glory, honour, and peace,

upon every soul of man that doeth evil,
of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

to every man that worketh good,
to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

¹¹ For there is no respect of persons with God.



Romans 2:12

¹² For as many as have sinned **without law** shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned **in the law** shall be judged by the law;



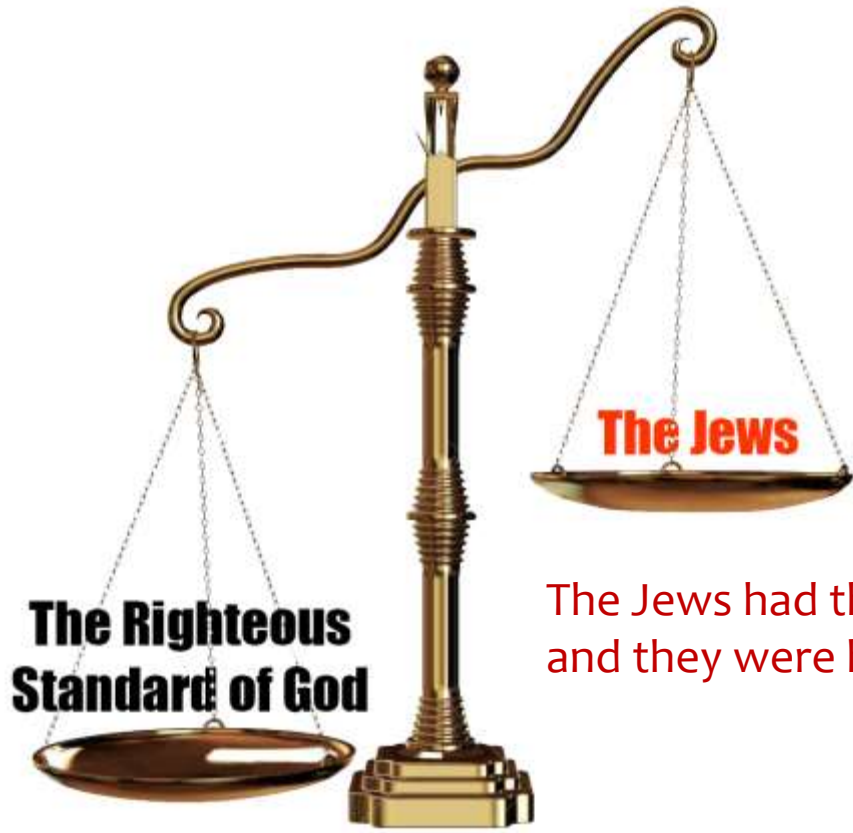
Romans 2:12

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The Gentiles did not have the Law of Moses, but they are still without excuse.

Romans 2:12

¹² For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;



The Jews had the law,
and they were held accountable to it.

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:13-15

- ¹³ (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God,
but the doers of the law shall be justified.
- ¹⁴ For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,
these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:
- ¹⁵ Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,
their conscience also bearing witness,
and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

Verses 13 to 15 are a parenthetical inclusion to explain verse 12.

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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This is why the Jews failed. *Hearing* the law was not enough to free someone from the penalty of sin. *Doing* the law was required – and no man born in sin was capable of keeping the law.

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These verses speak of two different kinds of laws:

1. The law of God written on tablets of stone.
2. The law of conscience written in all men's hearts.

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:
- ¹⁵ **Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,**
their conscience also bearing witness,
and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing
or else excusing one another;)

Despite man's fallen nature, a moral code remains inscribed in the heart of every person. God put his mark on every human being with the voice of their conscience. Even a child knows when it has done something wrong.

THE GOLDEN RULE ACROSS RELIGIONS



"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." - Luke 6:31



"None of you will believe until you love for your brother what you love for yourself." - 40 Hadith, n13



"Do naught unto others what you would not have them do unto you." - Mahabharata 5:15:17



"Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."
- Udanavarga 5:18



"What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour."
- Talmud, Shabbath 31a

This is why almost every religion has its own version of The Golden Rule.

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

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- ¹⁴ For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,
these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:
- ¹⁵ Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,
their conscience also bearing witness,
and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

The Gentiles did not have the Law of Moses, but their own conscience bore witness that it is wrong to lie, to steal, to commit adultery or murder.

The Two Forms of God's Law:

The Law of Moses was only given to the Israelites:

Romans 9:4

... to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ...

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But ALL men have “the law written in their hearts.” They have the witness of their *conscience*.

The Jews had the law of Moses AND the law of conscience.



John 8:7 and 9

- 7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them,
He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.
- 9 And they which heard it, **being convicted by their own conscience**, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last ...



Habitually *ignoring* your conscience can render it useless.



1 Timothy 4:1-2

- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy;
having their conscience seared
with a hot iron;

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:12 and 16

- ¹² For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;
- ¹⁶ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Again, verses 13-15 are parenthetical. This passage is easier to understand if we read directly from verse 12 to verse 16.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:17-20

- ¹⁷ Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,
- ¹⁸ And knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;
- ¹⁹ And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,
- ²⁰ An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

The Jews boasted that they were the *recipients* of the Law – even *teachers* of the Law – but they did not live up to the responsibility of *keeping* the Law.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:21-23

- ²¹ Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?
- ²² Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?
- ²³ Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

Knowing the law should have led them to *keep* the Law.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:24

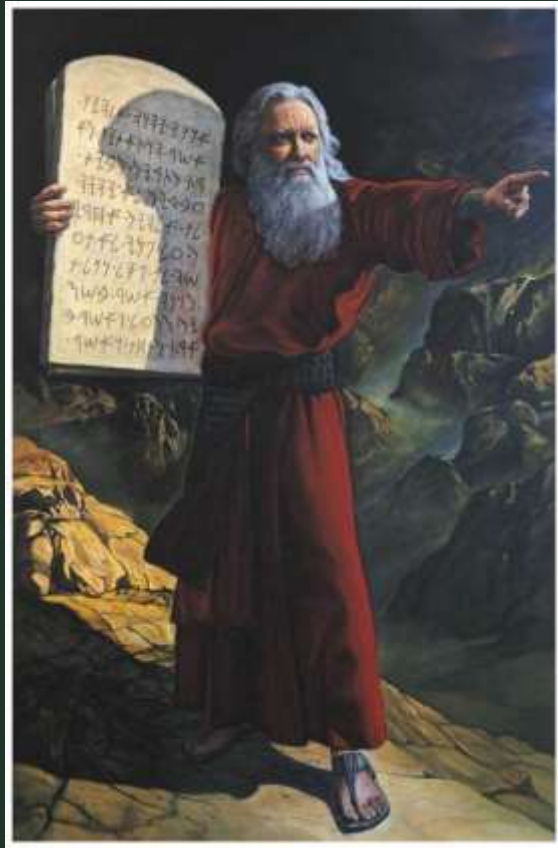
²⁴ For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

When Israel's sins forced God to expel his people from the land he had promised them, they made God look like a liar, and dirtied his name.



Paul is referring to this passage from Ezekiel 36:

- ¹⁶ Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
- ¹⁷ Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed [menstruous] woman.
- ¹⁸ Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols *wherewith* they had polluted it:
- ¹⁹ And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.
- ²⁰ And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, **they profaned my holy name**, when they said to them, These *are* the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.



RECEIVING the Law of Moses did not excuse the Jews from OBEYING that law. In their disobedience, they were no better than the Gentiles who did NOT receive the law.



But what about the unique mark of Jewishness, the circumcision? Did that make the Jews a righteous people?

The mark of circumcision hearkened back to the beginning of Jewish history and God's covenant with Abraham:



Genesis 17:10-11

- ¹⁰ This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.
- ¹¹ And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be **a token of the covenant** betwixt me and you.





To the Jews, nothing better described the wicked and unbridled nature of pagans than to call them “uncircumcised.”

1 Samuel 17:26

²⁶ And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying... who is **this uncircumcised Philistine**, that he should defy the armies of the living God?



No uncircumcised person was allowed to eat the Passover (Ex 12:48) or enter God's sanctuary.

Ezekiel 44:9

⁹ Thus saith the Lord GOD;
No stranger, uncircumcised in heart,
nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter
into my sanctuary, of any stranger that
is among the children of Israel.

Circumcision symbolized the separation of the Jews from the pagan world.

Remember Paul's words to the Gentiles who had come to Christ:

Ephesians 2:11-12

- ¹¹ Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called **Uncircumcision** by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;
- ¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, **being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise,** having no hope, and without God in the world:

The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:25

²⁵ For circumcision verily profiteth,
if thou keep the law:
but if thou be a breaker of the law,
thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

But just as *knowing* the Law did not excuse the Jews from *keeping* the Law, neither was circumcision a substitute for obedience.

Without obedience, said Paul, a Jew might just as well be uncircumcised!



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:26-27

- ²⁶ Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?
- ²⁷ And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

And how shameful it is to the Jews when an uncircumcised Gentile keeps the law better than he!



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:26-27

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- ²⁷ And shall not **uncircumcision which is by nature**, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

When a man who is just as he was when he came into the world obeys the law of his conscience, he makes the Jews – who were marked by God to show their difference – look like imposters in comparison.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:28-29

²⁸ For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

²⁹ But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

True devotion does not come from a cutting. It comes from the heart.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 2:28-29

- ²⁸ For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:
- ²⁹ But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

Paul is not suggesting that the Gentile Christians are the *real* Jews. He is telling the Jews that there is more to being Jewish than being circumcised.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:1-2

- ¹ What advantage then hath the Jew?
or what profit *is there* of circumcision?
- ² Much every way:
chiefly, because that unto them were
committed the oracles of God.

All this leads to the big question
that opens Chapter 3:



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:1-2

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or what profit *is there* of circumcision?
- ² Much every way:
chiefly, because that unto them were
committed the oracles of God.

There was only one people
God bound to himself in covenant:

Deuteronomy 7:6

For thou *art* an holy people unto
the LORD thy God:
the LORD thy God hath chosen
thee to be a special people unto
himself, above all people that
are upon the face of the earth.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:3

3 For what if some did not believe?
shall their unbelief make the faith of God
without effect?

But, like the assembly swept away
by ten fearful spies, not all of the
Jews believed God's promises.

Did their failure to believe nullify
God's covenant with them?



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:4

⁴ God forbid:
yea, let God be true, but every man a liar;
as it is written,
That thou mightest be justified
in thy sayings,
and mightest overcome
when thou art judged.

No, it simply proves that everything
God says about man is true.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:4

⁴ God forbid:
yea, let God be true, but every man a liar;
as it is written,

That thou mightest be justified
in thy sayings,
and mightest overcome
when thou art judged.

This quote is from Psalm 51, David's psalm of repentance:

³ For I acknowledge my transgressions:
and my sin *is* ever before me.
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.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:5

⁵ But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?* (I speak as a man)

Paul now asks questions that a Jewish man would wonder about but not dare say out loud:

Since the Law proves that only God is righteous, is it UNFAIR for God to condemn the unrighteous Jews?



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:6

⁶ God forbid:
for then how shall God judge the world?

No, even if *everyone* breaks the law,
that does not mean the law is wrong.



The Guilt of the Jew (2:1 to 3:8)

Romans 3:7-8

- ⁷ For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?
- ⁸ And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

And (he asks) why should we be called sinners, if our sin magnifies God's glory?

Isn't it GOOD that we sin, since it proves the truth of the gospel?



No! No matter how anyone tries to argue his way out of it,
God's condemnation of the unrighteous Jews is completely justified!

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(1) The REVELATION of the Righteousness of God

(1:18 to 8:39)

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(1:18 to 3:20)

1) The Guilt of the Gentile

(1:18-32)

2) The Guilt of the Jew

(2:1 to 3:8)

 3) The Conclusion: All are Guilty Before God

(3:9-20)

All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:9a

- 9 What then?
are we better *than they*?

Speaking by the Holy Spirit of God, Paul tore apart any arguments for self-justification, proving both Jew and Gentile guilty before God.

One obvious – and for the Jew, utterly devastating – question remains:



All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:9b

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

By now, the answer should be
obvious.



As this section comes to a conclusion, Paul calls upon the Holy Scriptures to pronounce man's universal guilt.

All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:10-12

- ¹⁰ As it is written,
There is **none** righteous,
no, not one:
- ¹¹ There is **none** that understandeth,
there is **none** that seeketh after God.
- ¹² They are **all** gone out of the way,
they are **together** become unprofitable;
there is **none** that doeth good,
no, not one.

Verses 10-12 are quoted from

- Ecclesiastes 7:20
- Psalm 14:1-3
- Psalm 53:1-3



All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:13-18

- ¹³ Their **throat** is an open sepulchre;
with their **tongues** they have used deceit;
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 ways:
- ¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known:
- ¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Verses 13-18 are quoted from

- Psalm 5:9
- Psalm 140:3
- Psalm 10:7
- Isaiah 59:7-8
- Psalm 36:1



All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:19

¹⁹ Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law:
that every mouth may be stopped,
and all the world may become guilty
before God.

The law proved that all men are guilty before God.



All are Guilty Before God (3:9-20)

Romans 3:20

²⁰ Therefore **by the deeds of the law**
there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:
for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

And so what is the final conclusion?



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(1:18 to 8:39)

(A) **Condemnation:** The Need for God's Righteousness

(1:18 to 3:20)

UP NEXT

(B) **Justification:** The Giving of God's Righteousness

(3:21-5:21)

Having proven that “there is none righteous, no, not one,” Paul will next show how God's righteousness is imputed to sinful man through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. What are the two kinds of law described in Romans 2:14-15?
2. What did God tell Abraham was the "token of the covenant betwixt me and you"?
3. According to Romans 2:29, what kind of circumcision does God want?
4. What question begins Chapter 3?
5. In Romans 3:5, what is the question that Paul asks speaking "as a man"?
6. What is the answer to that question, found in Romans 3:6?
7. What question is asked in Romans 3:9?
8. What is the answer to that question, found in the same verse?
9. What phrase is found both in Romans 3:10 and 12?
10. What is the conclusion to this section, found in Romans 3:20?

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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