

Paul's statement at the end of [Romans 2](#) had laid down with irresistible force for the conscience that **God will have reality rather than form**. Let the Jew then beware.

Romans 2:25 (NASB)

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.

Romans 2:29 (NASB)

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.

This gives opportunity to objections which are met in the earlier part of [Romans 3](#).

¹ Then what advantage has the Jew?

Or what is the benefit of circumcision?

There are 2 questions here.

1. What advantage does being a Jew give them?
2. What is the benefit of circumcision?

The Jews are saying “Paul’s argument was too severe?”

- He has shown that the mere possession of the law does not exempt the Jew from judgment, but that God requires its fulfillment.
- He has shown that circumcision in the flesh, seal though it was of the covenant and pledge of its promises, is only of value if it represents inward heart circumcision.
- He has reduced the Jew to a position of entire equality with the Gentile.

In dealing with the sin nature and the heart of man we find:

**Jeremiah 17:9 (NASB) ⁹ *“The heart is more deceitful than all else
And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”***

There is always the tendency to blame God;

**Genesis 3:11-12 (NASB) ¹¹ *And He said, “Who told you that you
were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded
you not to eat?”***

**¹² *The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she
gave me from the tree, and I ate.”***

Paul anticipates the same thing happening here.

Did the Jews have an advantage even if Paul reduced them to the status of Gentiles?

Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

God had made him the depository of His oracles; **the possession of God's written word.**

Paul enumerates the various high honors of Israel:

Philippians 3:3-7 (NASB). If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

⁵circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

Inestimable, eternal advantage! despite their unfaithfulness.

Romans Verse-by-Verse. Newell

It put them into the unique position of being the only nation to whom the will of God was made known — to whom His counsel and ways were made manifest in former times. As a result He reminds them in

[Amos 3:2](#)- *“You only have I known of all the families of the earth.”*

[Deuteronomy 4:7, 8](#), *“For what nation is there so great who has God so near to them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law?”*

[Ephesians 2:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹² *“remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”*

Can Jewish behavior (unbelief) change God's immutability?

- It is insisted, that if God's character as righteous judge of the world is to be maintained—as it must be—these admissions do not exempt the Jew from that liability to judgment which has just been demonstrated.
- It is admitted that Jewish unbelief may even act as a break to God's faithfulness, setting it in more glorious support. But God never changes, He is always faithful to His word.
- Jewish faith~~less~~ness could not annul God's faithfulness in carrying out those oracles (whether of promise, prophecy, or judgment).

³ What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

Paul will meet those objections which would arise based in the **Jewish mind on two things:**

1. The peculiar position of privilege given by God to Israel as Jehovah's separate people; and on
2. The righteous character of God Himself as conceived of by the Jew in his privileged position.

These objections are not true and they are daring—next to blasphemy: but they must be answered.

Just because one has a spiritual advantage, does it translate into a benefit?

Alford well says:

“Because they have broken faith on their part, shall God break faith also on His?”

The Jew had the advantage of circumstances, environment, and training.

If he ignored all this, of course, he had only himself to blame for robbing himself of his soul's only hope.

There is no doubt that some did not believe:

³ What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

³ *What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?*

"what then?" Where do we stand now?

"Did not believe" is the verb *pisteuō*, "to exercise faith, believe," with Alpha privative prefixed which negates the word.

(Vincent) "**Make without effect**" is *katergazomai*, with the negative.

Vincent says, "It is rather *to make inefficient* rather than *to make without effect.*"

"The faith of God," could be better rendered "faithfulness of God."

⁴ *May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written,*

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

"God forbid" is *mē genoito*, literally, "may it not come to pass."

No way, it's not gonna happen.

Now to us, this insistence of God upon moral reality before Him of all, including the Jews themselves, "seems simplicity itself; but it was not so simple to those whom it seemed to strip of all their special and Divinely bestowed privileges." Newell

No one will be allowed to plead special privilege or light as exempting him from judgment, that he will spiritually (of course not actually) escape the general sentence of verse 19, where "*all the world*" is brought under the judgment of God.

⁴ May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar.

Man's reception or rejection of the truth has **no** bearing whatever upon the truth itself: it remains in its solemn, solitary grandeur, unalterable, invincible, and irrevocable; while man's most violent opposition is merely his self-destruction against an immovable rock. God is true, and it matters not that man opposes His truth — that man is false.

The “faith~~less~~ness” here of the Jew is not his failure to believe God’s oracles. What is here before us, is the Jew’s attitude toward the great primary privilege and responsibility of that nation as the depositary of the Divine oracles.

Newell

If a man thinks he escapes in spirit from God's pronouncement of "guilty," he will never truly rely upon the shed blood of the Guilt-Bearer, Christ!

Newell

Psalm 51:4 (NASB)

⁴ Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

Paul uses David's most humble confession and acknowledgment of righteousness to God, after David's own great sin had shown David himself faithless to the royal covenant Jehovah had committed to him.

Confession is the secret of blessing for the sinner; and the willingness to own his ruined estate God operates in the heart by the revelation of His own grace. Our sins justify His words.