

# Sin and Condemnation: The World's need to get right with God

(67)

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[Romans 1:18-3:20](#)

(Continuation from 05/28/17)

## E. The Arguments of the Religionist (Jew) Against a Heart Religion, [Romans 3:1-8](#)

1. What profit is there in being a religionist—in being circumcised or baptized (v.1-2)?
2. Does unbelief void God's promises—make God a liar (v.3-4)?
3. Is God unjust if He takes vengeance (v.5-8)?

## The Objection That Paul Attacked God's People

[Romans 3:2 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>2</sup>“Great in every respect. First of all, that they were **entrusted** with the oracles of God.”

As the poet **William Cowper** wrote,  
They, and they only, amongst all mankind,  
Received the transcript of the Eternal Mind;  
Were trusted with His own engraven laws,  
And constituted guardians of His cause;  
Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,  
And theirs, by birth, the Saviour of us all.

Tragically, however, Jews had focused much attention on their privileges but little on their responsibilities. During one period of their history they misplaced and lost the written record of God's law. Only when a copy of it was found by Hilkiah the high priest during the restoration of the Temple did Judah begin again to honor the Lord's commandments and observe His ceremonies for a brief time under the godly King Josiah (see [2 Chronicles 34:14-33](#)).

[2 Chronicles 34:14-33 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>14</sup>“When they were bringing out the money which had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of the LORD *given* by Moses.

<sup>15</sup>Hilkiah responded and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.

<sup>16</sup>Then Shaphan brought the book to the king and reported further word to the king, saying, "Everything that was entrusted to your servants they are doing.

<sup>17</sup>"They have also emptied out the money which was found in the house of the LORD,

and have delivered it into the hands of the supervisors and the workmen."

<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiah the priest gave me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

<sup>19</sup> When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.

<sup>20</sup> Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying,

<sup>21</sup> "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book which has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD which is poured out on us because our fathers have not observed the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book."

<sup>22</sup> So Hilkiah and *those* whom the king had told went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her regarding this.

<sup>23</sup> She said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to Me,

<sup>24</sup> thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am bringing evil on this place and on its inhabitants, *even* all the curses written in the book which they have read in the presence of the king of Judah.

<sup>25</sup> "Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place and it shall not be quenched."

<sup>26</sup> "But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus you will say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel *regarding* the words which you have heard,

<sup>27</sup> "Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and *because* you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the LORD.

<sup>28</sup> "Behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, so your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place and on its inhabitants."'" And they brought back word to the king.

<sup>29</sup> Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>30</sup> The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites and all the people, from the greatest to the least; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book.

<sup>32</sup> Moreover, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *with him*. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

<sup>33</sup> Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the LORD their God. Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the LORD God of their fathers."

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For many centuries before the time of Paul, beginning during the Babylonian Captivity, the Jews' reverence for her man-made rabbinical traditions and interpretations had come to far outweigh her reverence for God's written Word.

The religious leaders of Jesus' day prided themselves as being experts in the Scriptures. But when the Sadducees tried to maneuver Jesus into a corner by asking a hypothetical question about marriage in heaven, He rebuked them by saying, **"Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures, or the power of God?"** ([Mark 12:24 \(NASB\)](#)).

To a crowd of unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem the Lord declared, **"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me"** ([John 5:39](#)). In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man died and went to hell. From there he cried out to Abraham to send a special messenger to tell his brothers the way of salvation. But Abraham replied, **"They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them"** ([Luke 16:29](#)). In other words, the Old Testament contained all the truth that any Jew (or any Gentile, for that matter) needed to be saved.

Jews who truly believed the Scriptures recognized Jesus as the Son of God, because He is the focus of the Old Testament as well as the New. But most Jews preferred to follow the traditions of the rabbis and elders rather than **"that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give... the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"** ([2 Timothy 3:15 \(NASB\)](#)).

That same attitude has characterized much of Christianity throughout its history. The teachings and standards of a denomination or of an exclusive group or sect have frequently overshadowed, and often completely contradicted, God's own revelation in the Bible.

Belonging to a Christian church is much like it was to be a Jew under the Old Covenant. Outward identity with those who claim to be God's people, even when they are genuine believers, is in itself of no benefit to an unbeliever. But such a person does have a great advantage above other unbelievers if in a church he is exposed to the sound teaching of God's Word. If he does not take advantage of that privilege, however, he makes his guilt and condemnation worse than if he had never heard the gospel. **"For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES."** ([Hebrews 10:26-27](#); cf. [4:2-3](#)).

[Hebrews 4:2-3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>2</sup>**"For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.**

<sup>3</sup>**For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, 'AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST,' although His works were finished from the foundation of the world."**

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## DEEPER STUDY #1

**John 4:22 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup>“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

**Genesis 12:1-4 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup>“Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you;

<sup>2</sup> And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;

<sup>3</sup> And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.’

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.”

**(John 4:22) Israel— God’s Plan— History— Jews:** why did Jesus Christ come to the Jewish nation and come to earth as a Jew? Very simply stated, the Jews were God’s special people. They had been born by a special act of God. It all started long, long ago. God had wanted four things.

1. He wanted a people who would love Him supremely and give Him their first loyalty. (Cp. **Genesis 17:7**; **Isaiah 43:10**.)

**Genesis 17:7 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup>“I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.”

**Isaiah 43:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup>“You are My witnesses,” declares the LORD, ‘And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.’”

2. He wanted a people who would witness to all other nations that He and He alone was the one true and living God. (Cp. **Genesis 12:3**; **Genesis 22:18**; **Acts 13:26, 47**.)

**Genesis 12:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

**Genesis 22:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup>“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

**Acts 13:26 (NASB)**

<sup>26</sup>“Brethren, sons of Abraham’s family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent.”

**Acts 13:47 (NASB)**

<sup>47</sup>“For so the Lord has commanded us, ‘I HAVE PLACED YOU AS A LIGHT FOR THE GENTILES, THAT YOU MAY BRING SALVATION TO THE END OF THE EARTH.’”

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3. He wanted a people through whom He could send the promised Seed, the Savior and Messiah, Jesus Christ, to all men everywhere. (Cp. [Genesis 3:15](#); [Genesis 17:7](#); [Genesis 22:18](#); [Galatians 3:16](#); [John 4:22](#).)

[Genesis 3:15 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>15</sup>“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

[Genesis 17:7 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>7</sup>“I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.”

[Genesis 22:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

[Galatians 3:16 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>16</sup>“Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ.”

[John 4:22 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>22</sup>“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

4. He wanted a people through whom He could send His written Word, the Holy Bible, and preserve it for all generations. ([Romans 9:4-5](#); [1 Peter 2:10-12](#).)

[Romans 9:4-5 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>4</sup>“Who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises,

<sup>5</sup> whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.”

[1 Peter 2:10-12 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>10</sup>“For you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

<sup>12</sup> Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

In searching the earth for such a people, God could find none (cp. [Romans 1:18-32](#)).

[Romans 1:18-32 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

<sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

<sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

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**<sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

**<sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools,**

**<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.**

**<sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.**

**<sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.**

**<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,**

**<sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.**

**<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,**

**<sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,**

**<sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,**

**<sup>31</sup> without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;**

**<sup>32</sup> and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”**