

Romans 3:1-8

Romans 3:1-8 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? (2) Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. (3) For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? (4) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged." (5) But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.) (6) Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world? (7) For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? (8) And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?; as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

Questions On The Text

Were there any advantages in being a Jew?

Verse 1-2: Having demonstrated in chapter 2 that Jews are guilty before God because they have broken the law of God, Paul anticipates the question that maybe there was no advantage in being a Jew.

To this he replies that the Jews most definitely received a major advantage. Their primary advantage was in receiving the oracles of God. The Greek word for "oracles" means words. The words of God, at the very least, pointed them in the right direction and made them fully aware of God's requirements, thus giving them a great advantage.

Does the unbelief of people nullify God's faithfulness?

Verses 3-4: This may sound like a strange question, but in the context, it really is quite logical. Having proved that the Jews are not justified with God just because they have the law and are circumcised, it follows that Jewish disobedience was the result of unbelief. Israel had a long history of rebellion against God.

If unbelieving Jews are not truly Jews, and if their unbelief nullifies their covenant, does that mean that God is unfaithful to His covenant? To this, Paul replies an unequivocal "No!" God is always true to His word. God is still committed to His covenant and His people, despite the unbelief of some.

Is it possible for God to lie?

Verse 4: Absolutely not! God is incapable of lying. As it says in Numbers 23:19, "God is not a man, that He should lie." Even though every man may lie, God Himself cannot, because He is truth. See 1 John 5:6.

Is it fair for God to judge human sinfulness?

Verses 5-8: Given the fact that human unrighteousness is such a contrast with God's righteousness that His righteousness can be clearly seen, is it fair for God to judge it? To which Paul replies that God is always just. Without that quality of justice, God would be unable to judge the world.

Nor is it reasonable to conclude that, since God is uniquely capable of producing good out of evil, we should sin all the more. Evidently, this accusation had been made that this was exactly what Paul was teaching.

Further Questions For Discussion:

In what way was it an advantage for the Jews to have the words of God?

Is it therefore an advantage for Christians to have God's Word? In what ways?

If God can produce good out of evil, is it therefore reasonable to do more evil so that more good can come? What are your reasons for your answer?

Paul did in fact say that God was capable of bringing good out of evil (see Romans 8:28). What does this mean, and how have you seen it outworked in your own life?