

## The Book of Romans, Lesson 16, Romans 3:1-4, "The Oracles of God"

- ↳ We have seen in the previous chapter that the judgment of God is coming for all of us: either be judged for our own sin or allow Jesus to be judged in our place, inescapable, impartial, regardless of our profession, it will be based on our possession, this applies to all, Jew or Gentile. This line of reasoning begs an important question that is addressed at the beginning of the third chapter of Romans, **Romans 3:1**. If Gentiles are to be allowed into the kingdom of God the same way that Jews are, if Gentiles are forgiven the same way Jews are, then what advantage was it to be a Jew to begin with?
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### 1. When we analyze the Bible, it is a mistake to do so as we would any other book.

- ✓ It's a mistake to see the Bible as something that was written by the decisions of men. This would be a costly mistake since God is the author and mind behind the entirety of Scripture. In fact, it is a mistake to regard the Bible strictly as a book at all, instead, it is God Himself speaking to us. Jews were judged and/or forgiven the same as the Gentiles, so, what did it profit them to be Jews? They had the great privilege of being entrusted with God's Word, **Romans 3:1-2**.
- ✓ The vast majority of the Bible was written by Jews, with the exception of Luke and Acts. The vast majority of words spoken in the Bible by people were spoken by Jews (exceptions being Job; parts of Ruth; parts of Daniel, and a few other places).
- ✓ Oracle (NASB) has somewhat of a negative connotation. People of that day sought "oracles" from the spirit world so that they could, supposedly, know the future and make informed choices. They obtained these oracles from all kinds of things (not too dissimilar to reading palms, tea leaves, or tarot cards): fish in a tank of water, snakes in a pit, they would leave a coin by the altar of Hermes and plug up their ears and walk away and then unplug them at some point, listen to the first words they heard from random people, and that was supposed to be the oracle of direction for their lives. Another of the more common methods of "receiving an oracle" was supposedly through birds. They had publicly paid officials called "augurs" (bird talkers) who would listen to birds and relay their wisdom to the populace. They would contribute to the proceedings of official documents and people, and it is from that we get the word "inaugurate" ("the birds have spoken"). How could they be so foolish? If we turn away from God and His word, there is no limit to how foolish we can become, **Romans 1:21-25**. So, the oracles of God and those entrusted with them are of critical value in a world gone mad. What a high privilege to be entrusted with the truth: **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:13-14**.

### 2. The Jews had been given God's Word.

- ✓ This was a great privilege, but with great privilege comes great responsibility, and they failed to realize that. To know the word of God and then not do what it says (the subject of the proceeding chapter) was a scary proposition. God does not care how much Bible we know, can quote, or teach; He cares how much Bible we are living. We may have a Bible at arm's reach, but does it indict our lifestyles?

### 3. The Jews were not faithful to God's Word.

- ✓ They were entrusted with it but disobeyed it. Does that mean that it's lost or ruined for the rest of us?, **Romans 3:3**. Ultimately, the protector of God's Word is not human. God Himself is seeing to it that it is communicated to the world He created.

**God will have a world that is perfect, beautiful, devoid of sin and corruption, without disease or death, and where humans commune with God face to face. Nothing will keep God from His purposes for our world, not Adam and Eve, not Israel's disobedience, not Judas, not the Roman Empire, not false prophets, not the antichrist, not anybody or anything will mess up that plan. Nevertheless, this does not negate our responsibilities: 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15; 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:1-3.**

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