

Eleutheros Newsletter

February 2026

Thoughts on Romans

3:9 *What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.*

The Apostle makes it clear earlier in this epistle that the church in Rome was made up of people from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds: *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (1:7)*. We know this because the word “grace” (χάρις) is the first century word to extend kindness to Gentiles and “peace” (εἰρήνη, equivalent to the Hebrew *shalom*) is the word to extend kindness to Jews.

In this chapter Paul discusses the spiritual condition of Jews and Gentiles. *What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God (3:1-2)*.

The Jewish people have a religious history like no other group. Consider the Biblical accounts of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, David, and the prophets! Here the Apostle mentions *the oracles of God*=the Law first given to Moses at Mount Sinai about 3,500 years ago.

The Jews have a great tradition but God, in responding to a prayer from Moses, declared that the Jews, are a *stiff-necked people (Exodus 32:9)*. This was true in the 15th century BC and remained true in Paul's day. In fact, it is true today as well!

Simply having a great example and history does not save anyone. We are saved by grace through faith, whether Jew or Gentile ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)).

The Apostle makes it clear that the Jews were not better than the Gentiles by saying, *No, in no wise*.

In the next part of the verse Paul points out that the Gentiles are just as guilty as the Jews: *they are all under sin*.

This is not a message that is pleasant to present to anyone, Jew or Gentile, but it is the first point of the Gospel.

Perhaps the words of this great hymn will explain why this message about man's sinfulness should be made clear to those who are strangers to God's grace.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,

Now scornfully surrounded with thorns Thine only crown:

*How pale Thou art with anguish, with sore abuse and scorn,
How does that visage languish, which once was bright as morn!*

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners' gain.

Mine, mine was the transgression, but Thine the deadly pain.

Lo, here I fall, my Savior; 'Tis I deserve Thy place.

Look on me with favor, Assist me by Thy grace.

Paul Gerhardt

We will continue these thoughts on Romans in next month's newsletter.