

# Romans Chapter 2:17-29; Circumcision of the Heart.



**THE DOCTRINE OF SIN. 1:18-3:20;**

**BECAUSE OF SIN THERE IS A  
UNIVERSAL NEED OF SALVATION.**

**GENTILE STATE OF SIN –1:18-32;**

**JEWISH STATE OF SIN – 2:1-3:8;**

## **CONCLUSION**

**“none righteous no not one.” 3:10;**

**“every mouth may be stopped and  
the whole world held accountable.” 3:19;**

**“all have sinned and  
fallen short of the glory of God.” 3:23;**

# THE JEWS NEED SALVATION –2:1-29;

God judges according to **truth**. 2:1-5;

God judges according to **deeds**. 2:6-10;

God judges without **respect of person**.

2:11-15;

God judges according to **Paul's Gospel**. 2:16;

God judges according to **light**. 2:17-25;

God judges according to the **heart**. 2:26-29;

**Rom 2:17;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

The word "**Jew**" properly denoted the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. (**2Kings 16:6; 25:25;**)

“However, at that time King Rezin of Syria recovered the city of Elath for Syria; he drove out the Jews and sent Syrians to live there, as they do to this day.”

“But seven months later, Ishmael, who was a member of the royal line, went to Mizpah with ten men and killed Gedaliah and his court, both the Jews and the Babylonians.” **2 King 25:25;**

**Rom 2:17;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

Judah was the more prominent tribe. The name was adapted to include any Hebrew of any tribe. Jeremiah, who lived at the time of the Babylonian captivity, used the term several times.  
(Jer 32:12; 34:9; 38:19; 40:11, 12; 41:3; 44:1; 52:28, 30;)

In the book of Esther, the word Jew is found fifty times (more than in any other book). Hebrews were proud to be called Jews.  
(see Luke 3:8; John 8:33, 39; 9:28;)

**Rom 2:17-22;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

## **How will God prove Jews guilty?**

No **MAN-MADE** verdicts (v2;)

No **VAGUE** charges (v6;)

No **FACE-SAVING**

No Alibis or **SECRETS** (v16;)

**Proving JEWISH** guilt. (2:17-3:1-2;)

They are **guilty** because **their worship is all show and not from the heart** (2:29;)

**Rom 2:17-22;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

“Yes, you know what he wants; you know right from wrong and favour the right because you have been taught his laws from earliest youth.”

“You are so sure of the way to God that you could point it out to a blind man. You think of yourselves as beacon lights, directing men who are lost in darkness to God.”

“You think that you can guide the simple and teach even children the affairs of God, for you really know his laws, which are full of all knowledge and truth.

you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

**Rom 2:17;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

The Jew gloried in that Law. (verse 23; compare 9:4;)  
They thought they had eternal life  
by relying upon Moses' Law. (Joh. 5:39;)  
They set their hope on Moses. (John 5:45;)

Although some Jews served for money,  
the ones Paul addressed had been bragging  
about their relationship with God.

They may have boasted that because God was in the  
midst of His people no harm would come to them.  
(Mic 3:11;) They may have boasted  
that they would be saved by the Law.



**Rom 2:17;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

**The JEWS** were full of **arrogance** and pride.

**SPECIFIC EXHORTATION TO THE JEW!**

**THE CLAIMS OF PRIVILEGE:-**

**NAME – v17;**

**LAW - v17;**

**KNOWLEDGE – v18;**

**LEADERSHIP – v19;**

**EDUCATOR – v20;**

**MATURITY –v20;**

**Rom 2:17;** “You Jews think all is well between yourselves and God because he gave his laws to you; you brag that you are his special friends.”

**Rom 2:21-24; GOD’S COUNTER CLAIMS their RELATIONSHIP brought RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**WHERE IS THE PRACTICE? - v21;**

**WHERE WAS THE PURITY? – v22;**

**WHERE WAS THE HONOUR? – v23-24;**

**OUTWARD MARKS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT PROOF OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

**2:25-29; Outward conformity to law must be accompanied by inward purity.**

**Rom 2:19-20;** “and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.”

**Paul continues to address an arrogant Jew.**

**He does not ridicule him or use sarcasm.**

**He simply states the Jew's strong points. Of course, without Christ, he would fail in every point.**

**The Jew was convinced he had the embodiment of the truth. In the synagogues, he had heard discussed the finer points of the Law and the oral traditions by learned men.**

**These discussions would later be summed up in books called the Talmud. The encyclopedic Talmud contains the Mishnah (oral tradition). It also contains the Gemera (commentary on the Mishnah).**

**Rom 2:19-20;** “and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.”

**The Jew considered the Gentiles to be blind.** Jesus, however, referred to ruling Jews as **"blind leaders of the blind."** (Mt 15:14; compare 2Cor 3:14; 4:4;)

**Many prophecies referred to the light of Christ and His gospel.** (see Ps 36:9; 37:6; Isa 35:5; 58:8; 60:1-3; 62:1-2; Acts 26:18; 2Cor 4:4-6;)

**This Jew must have thought the prophecies of the light referred only to Jews.**

**The Jews thought the idolatrous Gentiles were foolish.** (Rom 1:22-23; compare Jer 10:14-15; 51:17-18; Acts 17:29-30;)

**Rom 2:19-20;** “and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.”

## **The Jew had OT truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures**

**(Rom 1:2;) He recognized a form or pattern in the Law. He also had the knowledge of God's power and deity.**

**Many Gentiles also had a respect for the one God.**

**Knowledge of God was available to all through an understanding of "invisible things."**

**(Rom 1:20; compare 2:14-15;)**

**The Law was the truth for the Jew to obey just as the gospel is truth for us to obey (2Pet 1:12;)**  
**Would the Jew obey it?**

**Paul is now ready to get personal. He will ask his Jewish friend about obedience to some of the Ten Commandments.**

**Rom 2:21;** “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?  
You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

The **scribes and Pharisees** were **teaching others**  
and **binding on them** heavy and grievous **burdens**.  
(Matt 23:3-4;) **Jesus said** of them,  
**"They say, and do not do."** (Matt 23:3; Luke 11:46).

**One who teaches others should first  
apply the teaching to himself. (Ro 2:13;)**

He is a poor preacher that cannot preach better  
than he can practice, but **he is a poorer preacher**  
**if he does not try hard to live up to his preaching.**

**Rom 2:21;** “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?  
You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

**Adam Clarke gave an example from true life.**

**Rabbi Abun proposed a parable concerning a master who taught his disciples not to pervert justice, and yet did it himself; not to show respect of persons, and yet did it himself; not to receive bribes, and yet received them himself; not to take usury, and yet took it himself.**

**The disciple replied:- Rabbi, you teach me not to take usury, and yet you take it thyself!  
Can that be lawful to you which is forbidden to me?**

**Rom 2:21;** “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?  
You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

## **“You who Preach.”**

If a Jew taught the Law at all, he had to teach the basics. For example, one of the Ten Commandments was, **“You shall not steal.”** (Ex 20:15; Deut 5:19; Lev 19:11; Matt 19:18; Rom 13:9;)

The command against **stealing** forbade kidnapping or stealing a person. (Ex 21:16;) It forbade robbing or oppressing a neighbour and even withholding wages. (Lev 19:13;)

**Jesus said they made the temple a den of thieves.**  
**(Matt 21:13; John 2:16;)**



**Rom 2:21;** “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?  
You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

The "**Gentile**" **sin** of **stealing** was practiced by some of the Jewish high priests. **Josephus said:-**

“And such was the impudence and boldness that had seized on the high priests, that they had the hardiness to send their servants into the threshing-floors, **to take away those tithes that were due the priests**, insomuch that it fell out that the poorest sort of the priests died for want.”

Some Jews were known to tolerate and consent to the immoral practices of others. **Asaph wrote:-**

**When you saw a thief, you consented with him, and have been a partaker with adulterers. (Ps 50:18;)**

**Rom 2:21;** “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

**Jews are indicted as sinners:-**  
They were supposed to learn from their own teaching.

What you condemn in them also is condemned in you.

Your evil behaviour is blasphemous.

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

Adultery was not unknown among the Jews.  
For example, **Eli's sons:-**

Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. (1Sam 2:22;)

The sin of adultery was widely practiced by Jews prior to the Babylonian captivity.

(Jer 5:7; 9:2; 13:27; 23:10, 14; 29:23; compare Deut 12:31; Hos 4:2; 7:4; Mal 2:14; Mal 3:5;)

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

During Jesus' personal ministry, the Jews were **"an evil and adulterous generation."** (Mt 12:39; 16:4; Mk 8:38). The **praying Pharisee** implied that **"the rest of men"** were adulterers. (Luke 18:11;)

They **committed adultery in secret**, by overt scheme (John 8:3-11) as well as by unscriptural divorce and remarriage (Mt 5:32; 19:9; Mk 10:11-12; Luke 16:18;)

The Talmud **charges the crime of adultery** upon **three most illustrious Rabbins.**  
**Even** their **rabbins**, when they came to a place, would exclaim, **Who will be my wife for a day?**

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

It has been observed that after returning from captivity the Jews now longer worshipped idols.

**Paul acknowledges that the Jew whom he questions hated idolatry. (see verse 9;)**

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

Now we understand that one should not commit adultery if he wants to teach against adultery, but **how is robbing temples equivalent to worshipping idols?**



**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

In explaining **Exodus 22:28; Josephus wrote:-**  
“Let no one blaspheme those gods which other cities esteem such; nor may any one steal what belongs to strange temples, nor take away the gifts that are dedicated to any god.”

In Ephesus, the **town clerk** exonerated **Gaius and Aristarchus** by saying they were "**neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess.**"  
(Acts 19:37;)

Apparently, these two crimes were commonly known. Paul hints that his hypothetical Jew may have been guilty of robbing temples.

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

How could Jews be guilty of robbing temples?  
Perhaps by **literally plundering idol temples.**

They would have sinned  
by keeping any idolatrous materials around.  
(Deut 12:2-3; compare Ex 23:13; Jos 23:7;)

Another way to **"commit sacrilege"** or **"rob shrines"**  
is to literally rob a temple. Jewish kings  
and others often took treasures  
from their own temple in order to bribe enemies.

**"Her priests have done violence to My Law  
And have profaned My holy things." (Ezek 22:26;)**



**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

**Idols’ temples were repositories of the gifts people gave in worship to their false Gods.**

The idea is that anything that belonged to a false god, or a demon, as Paul calls them elsewhere, was something that was considered **unholy.**

It was to be **devoted to destruction** by those who destroyed the temple and the idol, **as Israel did when they conquered the land of Canaan.**

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”



**This is Artemis (Greek)  
or Diana (Latin),  
the Goddess of Ephesus.  
Her temple stored  
the gifts presented  
to her in worship.**



**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

Therefore the person who stole the gold or other treasures from an idols temple **for his own use** instead of devoting them to God or destroying them was **just as guilty of profiting from idolatry** as the priests of the idol were.

It was the idolatrous worship that had brought the wealth to the person who robbed idols' temples.

Money taken from a false god had to be given to the True God.

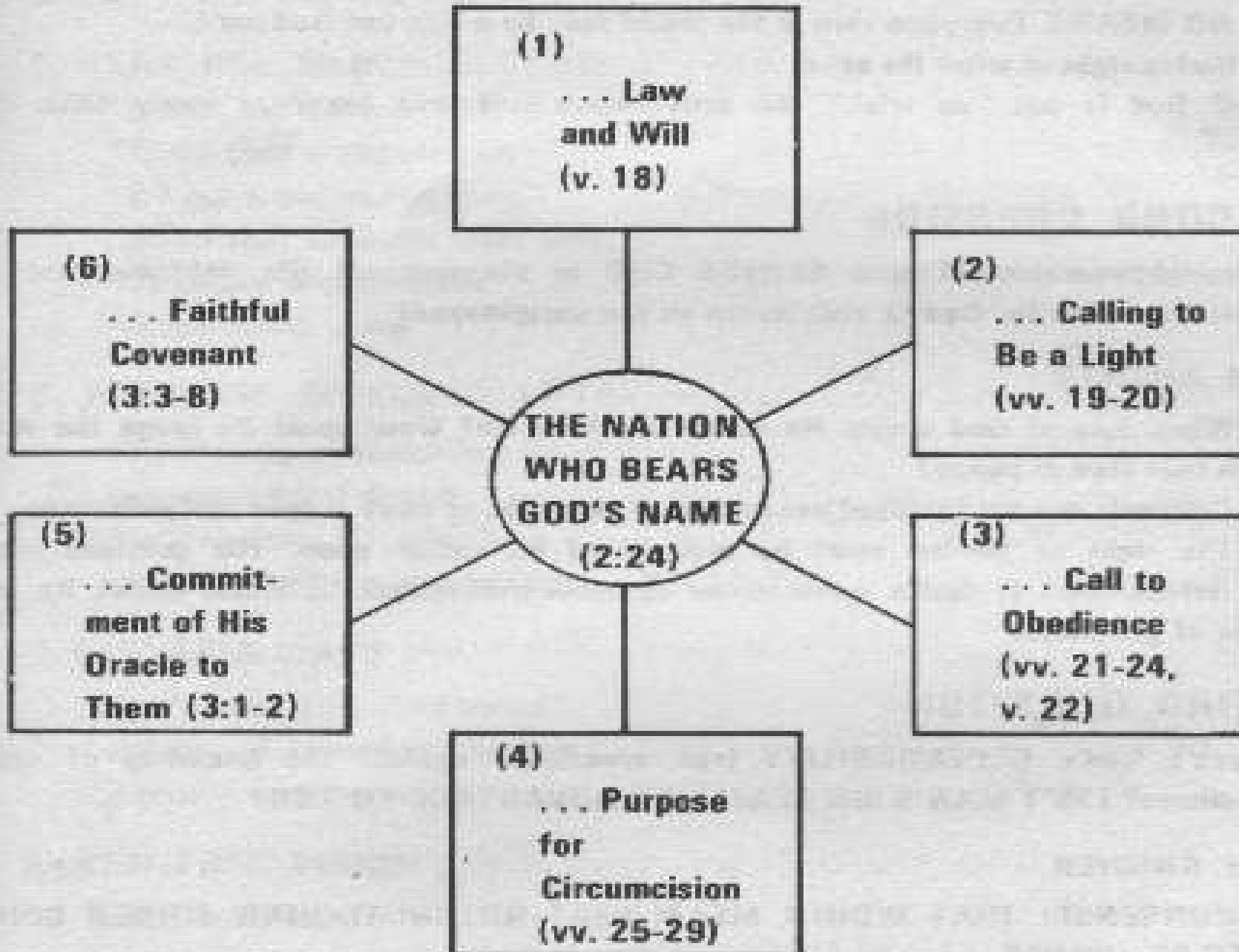
**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

**What Paul is getting at is: If you are going to teach or preach against a particular sin, make sure you are not guilty of the very sin you condemn.**

**We need to watch out for relationships between something we might be doing and the sin we are condemning.**

**If we want to Talk the Talk we need to be prepared to Walk the Talk.**

# JEWES HAD THE LAW BUT DID NOT OBEY!



**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

**MURDER:-** During Paul's lifetime, the high priest Jonathan had a close friend named Doras.

Felix bribed him to kill Jonathan. He murdered him in the temple by the hand of robbers with concealed daggers.

**Josephus commented:-** “They slew certain of their own enemies, and were subservient to other men for money; and slew others, not only in remote parts of the city, but in the temple itself; for they had the boldness to murder men there, without thinking of the impiety of which they were guilty.”

**Rom 2:22;** “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?  
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

This seems to me to have been the reason why God, out of his hatred of these men's wickedness, rejected our city;

“and as for the temple, he no longer esteemed it sufficiently pure to inhabit therein, but brought the Romans upon us, and threw a fire upon the city to purge it; and brought upon us, our wives, and children, slavery, as desirous to make us wiser by our calamities.”

**Rom 2:23;** “You are so proud of knowing God's laws, but you dishonour him by breaking them. This is written: `They say evil things about the name of God among the people of the world because of you.”

The hypothetical Jew had the Law of Moses. He knew accurately that it was given only to Jews. (Deut 5:1-3;)  
He regarded it with a special reverence.  
No doubt, he thought just reading it correctly would keep him out of hell.

The hypothetical Jew may not have thought about it before but by disobedience to any part of the Law he dishonoured the God who gave it.

When religious people break the Law of Christ, they dishonour Him who gave it.

Christians who were **"once enlightened"** and then fell away dishonoured Christ Himself.

If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. (Heb 6:6;)



**Rom 2:23;** “You are so proud of knowing God's laws, but you dishonour him by breaking them. This is written: `They say evil things about the name of God among the people of the world because of you.”

The sins and transgressions of the Jews **provided ammunition for Gentiles to speak evil** of God's people and, indirectly, of God Himself.

The fact that Gentiles spoke against God because of the sins of Jews showed how base and contemptible some of the Jews really were.

**Paul implies Jews in general brought dishonour to God.** Jewish false prophets were shamed among the Gentiles.

They should have also been ashamed before God.

When their predictions failed, **God said:-**

"That My people are taken away for nothing? Those who rule over them make them wail," says the LORD, **"And My name is blasphemed continually every day."** (Isa 52:5).

**Rom 2:23;** “You are so proud of knowing God's laws, but you dishonour him by breaking them. This is written: `They say evil things about the name of God among the people of the world because of you.”

**39** “Therefore behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you and forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and will cast you out of My presence.”

**40** “And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.” (Jer 23:39-40; compare 1Cor 5:1;)

**Several verses indicate the name of God is blasphemed because of the sins of His people both in the Mosaic and the church ages.**

**Rom 2:24;** “You are so proud of knowing God's laws, but you dishonour him by breaking them. **This is written: `They say evil things about the name of God among the people of the world because of you.’**”

## **GOD'S NAME BLASPHEMED. (OT) (Rom 2:24;)**

**1. My name is blasphemed continually every day  
(Isa 52:5;)**

**2. When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name- when they said of them, "These are the people of the LORD, and yet they have gone out of His land.“ (Ezek 36:20;)**

**3. And I will sanctify My great name, which Has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. (Eze 36:23;)**

**Rom 2:23;** “You are so proud of knowing God's laws, but you dishonour him by breaking them. **This is written: `They say evil things about the name of God among the people of the world because of you.’**”

## **WAY OF TRUTH BLASPHEMED (NT) (Rom 2:24;)**

**1. Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed (1Tim 6:1;)**

**2. To be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. (Tit 2:5;)**

**3. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be Blasphemed. (2Pet 2:2;)**

**Rom 2:25;** “True, being circumcised is important, if you always follow law. However, if you don't obey law, it is as if you had never been circumcised.”

Circumcision was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham. (Gen 17:12;) The Jews valued it as the mark that identified them as God's people. Some of the physically circumcised Jews were uncircumcised. That is, they had figurative foreskins on their hearts. (Jer 4:4;)

For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart. (Jer 9:26;)

They were "circumcised in their uncircumcision" (Jer 9:25 ASV). The Lord charged Edom, Egypt, Judah and the children of Ammon and Moab with the same duplicity.

Were physically circumcised Jews better spiritually than sincere, but uncircumcised, Gentiles?

**Rom 2:25;** “True, being circumcised is important, if you always follow law. However, if you don't obey law, it is as if you had never been circumcised.”

**Paul will explain more advantages of being a Jew in Romans 3:1-2;  
He covers the subject of circumcision in Romans 4:11-12;**

**In the present verse, Paul points here that circumcision was advantageous to the Jew **only if he kept the Law.** Many Jews did not agree. They over-rated the benefits of physical circumcision.**

**Rom 2:25;** “True, being circumcised is important, if you always follow law. However, if you don't obey law, it is as if you had never been circumcised.”

## **BLESSED DOERS (A) (Rom 2:25;)**

1. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,'
2. shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will** of My Father in heaven. (Mt 7:21;)
2. For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother. (Mt 12:50;)
3. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. (John 13:17;)

**Rom 2:25;** “True, being circumcised is important, if you always follow law. However, if you don't obey law, it is as if you had never been circumcised.”

## **BLESSED DOERS. (B) (Rom 2:25;)**

**1. But the doers of the Law will be justified. (Ro 2:13)**

**2. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (Jas 1:22;)**

**3. He who does the will of God abides forever.  
(1John 2:17;)**

**4. Blessed are those who do His commandments.  
(Rev 22:14;)**



**Rom 2:25;** “True, being circumcised is important, if you always follow law. However, if you don't obey law, it is as if you had never been circumcised.”

**A doer of the Law is one who practices the righteousness of the Law. (Rom 2:26;).  
That is, he fulfills it (verse 27; compare verse 13;)**

**Circumcision, along with keeping the Law,  
gave the Jew a distinct advantage.**

**However, without obedience and sincerity of heart,  
circumcision was an empty and useless thing.  
It was no better than uncircumcision.**

**Rom 2:26;** “So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?”

**Being Jews does not justify your sins,  
Just as being Gentiles does not  
negate their good conduct.**

Paul says that **circumcision** was a **sign of the covenant** that identified a person as one who promised to keep all the Laws of God.

Unless he did keep the commandments contained in the law he was under, then his **circumcision was meaningless.**

**For the Jew, this was the Law of Moses.**

**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

**The Jews thought of circumcision as the sign that made them different from those horrible Gentile sinners.**

**Well it wasn't circumcision alone, it was what circumcision represented, IF they lived up to what it represented, which was getting rid of the flesh as their master and **accepting God as their master instead.****

**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don’t obey the law.”

**Paul contrasts Circumcision and Baptism.**

**Col 2:11-13;**

**“In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ,”**

**“having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.”**

**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

**Paul Circumcision and Baptism. Col 2:11-13;**



**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature [literally, “flesh”], God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.” **Col 2:13;**

**Jew, Levite, Israel, etc.**

**The Jews were God's chosen people, a holy nation, His personal possession.**

**These people, like the tabernacle and many other special things that belonged to the Law of Moses were types or prophetic pictures of things that were to come.**

**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

**The Church is the antitype** or fulfillment of many of these things, **including Israel and the Levites.**

**The Church is Now the Israel of God!**

**Anyone who by faith has been baptized into Christ, having been thus spiritually circumcised, is spiritually a Jew and Israelite, a Levite, and in Christ belongs to the tribe of Judah.**

**He is part of the 144,000 of Revelation chapters 7 and 14, and may enter the Judah Gate into the Heavenly City. Rom 2:29; Galatians 6:15-16; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:4-6; Revelation 21:12;**

**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

## **GOD'S TOLERANCE. (Rom 2:27;)**

- 1. Adulterers to be put to death; yet David was forgiven. (see Deut 22:22; 2Sam 12:13;)**
- 2. Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah and were not destroyed. (see Jonah 3:4, 10;)**
- 3. More tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment. (Matt 11:22;)**
- 4. More tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment. (Matt 10:15; 11:24;)**
- 5. He who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. (Luke 12:48;)**



**Rom 2:27;** “The man who is not physically circumcised, but who obeys the law, will condemn you. You are circumcised and you have the law written down, but you don't obey the law.”

**The Jews possessed the inspired written OT Law.**

They had it but they transgressed it.

**The Gentiles did not have it.** According to Romans 1, they were sinners too. (compare Eph 2:12;)

**The acid test of God's approval had to do with His Law and obedience thereto.**

**Rom 2:28;** “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh..”

**Jesus said,** "If you were Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham." (John 8:39;)

In the present verse, **Paul is tugging at the heartstrings of his readers.** He suggests that God is not pleased with mere external religion.

In another place, he wrote, **"For they are not all Israel who are of Israel."** (Rom 9:6;)

The Holy Spirit does not recognize fleshly circumcision as a valid indicator of God's favour unless accompanied by the circumcision of the heart. (see Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; Col 2:11;)

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds.

**A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.**

**So also taught in the Law:-  
Deut 10:16; 30:6; 6:5-6; Jer 4:4;**

**To put it mildly, this is a major shift in thinking... where God was heading all along...the true spiritual meaning behind everything about Israel and the Law.**

**The inward man...  
An inward law...  
An inward circumcision of the heart...**

**So then: anyone can be a “Jew”...whoever internalizes God's will and circumcises his own heart.**

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God.

**A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical.**

**No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit,**

**So taught in the Law:-**

**Deut 10:16; 30:6; 6:5-6;  
Jer 4:4;**

**Deut 10:16; - Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked.**

**Deut 30:6-7;- Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, that you may live.**

**Dt 6:5-6; - And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;**

**Jer 4:4; - Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem...**

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds. Whoever has that kind of change in his life will get his praise from God, even if not from you.”

**Gal 6:15-16;** Neither **circumcision nor uncircumcision** means anything; **what counts is a new creation.** Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God.



**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds. Whoever has that kind of change in his life will get his praise from God, even if not from you.”

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ. (Col 2:11; compare John 8:39; Rom 9:6;)

Paul said **Christians "are the circumcision"** (Phil 3:3;). True baptism differs in several ways from circumcision but it is connected with circumcision of the heart. (see notes on Col 2:11-12;)

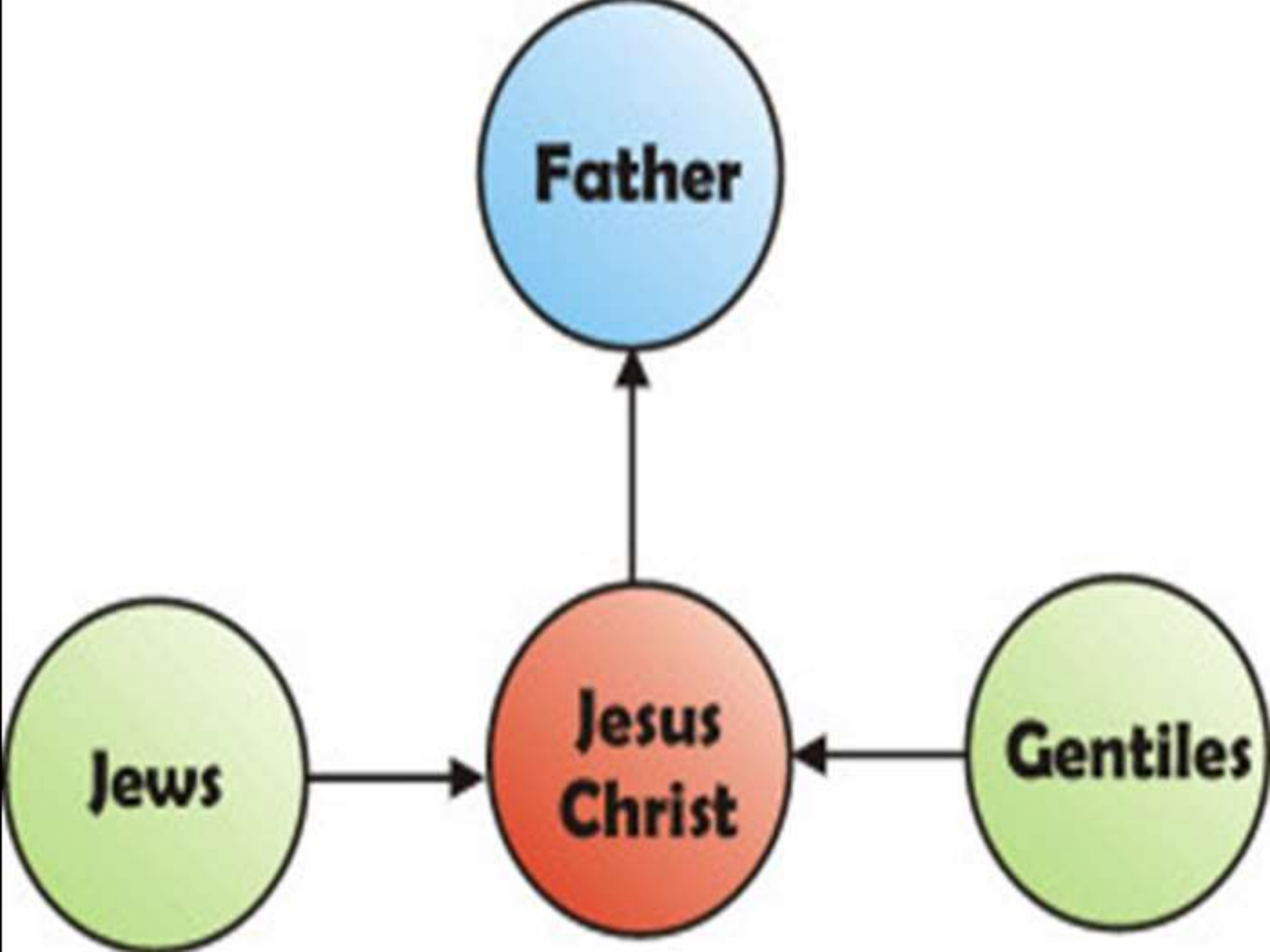
**Circumcision in the spirit describes the heart of a forgiven and dedicated Christian.** When Paul said, "**We should serve in newness of the spirit**, and not in oldness of the letter." (Ro 7:6), he alluded to **the new life of the Christian** after baptism. (Rom 6:4; see note on 2Cor 3:6;)

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds.

**Eph 2:11-22;**

**“Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men,)”**

**“remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.”**





**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.**

**“For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.**

**His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.**

**He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”**



**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds.

**“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.”**

**“In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.” Eph 2:19-22;**

**MANY MEMBERS - ONE BODY!**



**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds. Whoever has that kind of change in his life will get his praise from God, even if not from you.

**Rom 2:29;** “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.” New Ame Standard.

“not in letter of the Law.” The oldness of the letter was the outward observance of the law of Moses. **Paul did not teach that the letter was unimportant.**

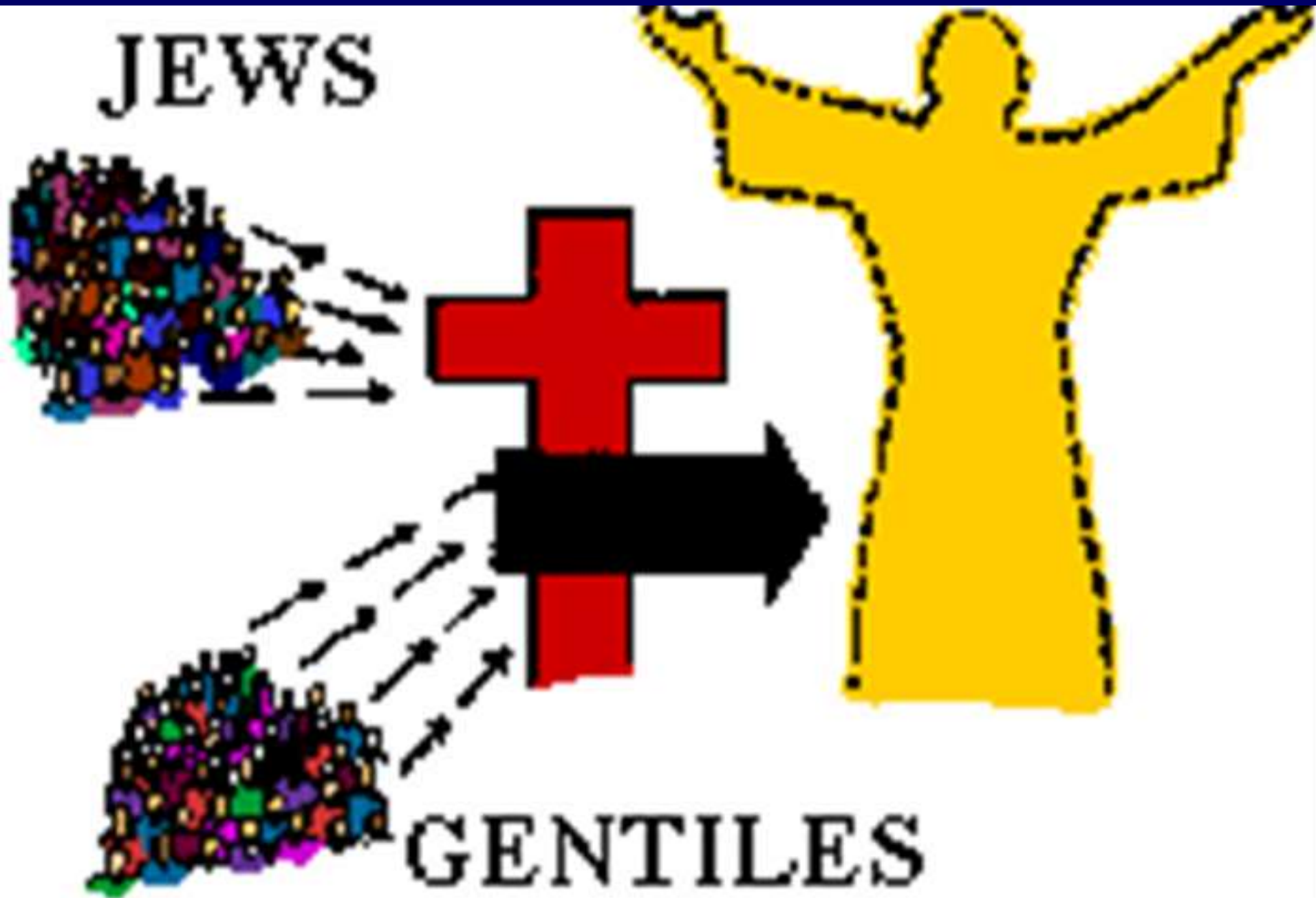
Neither did Christ. (see Mt 23:23;). Paul does not even hint that people are not to be concerned about obeying the correct form of the doctrine of Christ. (Rom 6:17; compare 2John 9;)

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds.

**Eph 3:4-6;** “In reading this, then, **you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,** which was not made known to men in other generations as it **has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.”**

**This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.**

# JEWS & GENTILES - ONE BODY!



**Rom 2:1;** “Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.”

**1 Peter 2:9-10;** “**But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**”

“**Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**”



# Rev 21:11-12; The Heavenly City.



**Rom 2:1;** “Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.”

**Rev 21:11-12;** (Describing the Heavenly City.)

“It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.”

You will notice that the twelve gates are the only entrances to God’s Holy Heavenly City. But they have inscribed upon them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

There was **no Gentile gate or tunnel under the wall.**

Nor was there a ladder lying nearby that a Gentile could use to scale the high wall and get into the city another way.

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds.

**So, how will a saved Gentile get into the city?  
I think you know the answer.**

**I, as a spiritual Israelite, am going through  
the Judah Gate. I'm in Jesus, Lion of Judah.**

**Rom 2:29;** “No, a real Jew is anyone whose heart is right with God. For God is not looking for those who cut their bodies in actual body circumcision, but he is looking for those with changed hearts and minds. Whoever has that kind of change in his life will get his praise from God, even if not from you.

**“Whose praise is not from men. Christians look not to men but to God for commendation and approval.**

**How can you who believe, who receive honour from one another, and yet do not seek the honour that comes from the only God?**  
**(John 5:44; compare 12:26; 1Cor 4:5; 2Cor 10:18;)**

# The Stumbling Block! Rom 2:17-29;

# **HYPOCRISY**

**Saints today can be as guilty with “Christian”  
as the Hebrews were with “Jew.” Rom 2:17-23;  
To avoid this, vigilance is required. 2 Cor 13:5**

**The gospel can be hindered  
due to our improper conduct. Gal 2:11-13;  
Jesus pronounced a woe on such. Matt 18:3-7;**

**Like “circumcision,” “baptism”  
changes the inside, not the outside. 28-29;**

**CONCLUSION:-** God is not and never has been partial. There has never been a national salvation. God saves individuals on the basis of perfection in law keeping.

But if a person hasn't kept the law perfectly, God has another way of saving him or her.

This is by grace through faith in the sacrifice of His Son Whose blood made the atonement for forgiveness of sins.

We accept God's terms of salvation through Jesus when we believe, repent, confess, and are baptized in water to access the blood for the forgiveness of sins.

**Buried with Christ in Baptism to allow  
Jesus blood to cleanse us from our sins.**



**Gentiles were under the covenant of Noah all the time the Jews were under the Law of Moses.**

**Gentiles had the same sacrificial system that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job and all other people had in the Patriarchal Age.**

**That Age continued for the Gentiles until the gospel went out to all nations.**

**Now when anyone hears the gospel, they have a choice, accept and obey it or be condemned by their sins.**



**Now buried with Christ in Baptism we allow  
Jesus blood to cleanse us from our sins.**



**God Does not “Play Favourites”  
By Ellis Jones.**

**God does not play favourites,  
We're all alike to Him.  
All have an equal value,  
For God created them.**



**Jew or Gentile, bond or free,  
Black or white – the same.  
He makes no distinctions  
When we wear Jesus' name.**





**One at a time, He saves us-  
An individual thing.  
It's not by race or colour,  
If we serve Christ our King.**

**God never saved a nation  
For eternity,  
Nor yet refused a person  
For his ethnicity.**



**So, God cannot be partial  
And Judge man righteously.  
We stand on level footing  
Before Him, you and me.**



# **Romans Chapter 2:17-29; Circumcision of the Heart.**

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**Next in the series:-  
Romans Chapter 3:1-  
Universal need of the Gospel.**