

## Universal Corruption Documented (Vv. 9-18)

**VERSE 9 What then** (Τί οὖν; [*interrog.pro.acc.nt.s. tis what? + conj oun therefore*]?)

**Are we better than they** (προεχόμεθα; [*pres.mid.ind.1p. proechomai better off; have an advantage; 1x*]?)

**Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin** (οὐ πάντως· προητιασάμεθα γὰρ Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας πάντας ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν εἶναι [*neg ou + adv. pantos at all + aor.dep.ind.1p. proaitiaomai accuse beforehand; "we have already charged"; 1x + conj gar + adj.acc.m.p. Jews + part te + conj kai + noun acc.m.p. Hellen + adj.acc.m.p. pas + prep hupo under + noun acc.f.s. hamartia sin + pres.act.infin. eimi*]?)

**VERSE 10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE** (καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Οὐκ ἔστιν δίκαιος οὐδὲ εἷς [*conj kathos + pf.pass.ind.3s. grapho + conj hoti + neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + adj.nom.m.s. dikaios righteous + adv oudi not even + adj.nom.m.s. heis one*]?)

**VERSE 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS [DELIGENTLY] FOR GOD** (οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ συνίων, οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ἐκζητῶν τὸν θεόν [*neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. suniemi understand + neg. ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. ekzeteo seek diligently; cp. Acts 15:17; Heb. 11:6; 12:17; 1 Pet. 1:10 & Lk 11:50, 51 + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. theos*]?)

**VERSE 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE** (πάντες ἐξέκλιναν ἅμα ἠχρεώθησαν· οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ποιῶν χρηστότητα, [οὐκ ἔστιν] ἕως ἑνός [*adj.nom.m.p. pas + aor.act.ind.3p. ekkliino turn aside/away; Rom. 16:17; 1 Pet. 3:11 + adv. ama at the same time; together + aor.pass.ind.3p. achreiomai be worthless/useless; 1x + neg ouk +*]

*pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. poieo do + noun acc.f.s chrestotes goodness + neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + conj. eos even + adj.gen.m.s. heis one])."*

**VERSE 13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS"** (τάφος ἀνεωγμένος ὁ λάρυγξ αὐτῶν, ταῖς γλώσσαις αὐτῶν ἐδολιοῦσαν, ἰὸς ἀσπίδων ὑπὸ τὰ χεῖλη αὐτῶν [*noun nom.m.s. tophos tomb + pf.pass.part.nom.m.s. anoigo open + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. larugz throat + pro.gen.m.p. autos + d.a.w/noun instr.f.p. glossa tongue + pro.gen.m.p. autos + impf.act.ind.3p. dolioo deceive + noun nom.m.s. ios poison + noun gen.f.p. aspis snake + prep hupo under + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.s. cheilos lip + pro.gen.m.p. autos*]);

**VERSE 14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS"** (ὧν τὸ στόμα ἀρᾶς καὶ πικρίας γέμει [*pro.gen.m.p. hos + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. stoma mouth + noun gen.f.s. ara cursing + conj kai + noun gen.f.s. pirkia bitterness; Acts 8:33; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15 + pres.act.ind.3s. gemo be full*]);

**VERSE 15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD"** (ὄξεις οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν ἐκχέαι αἷμα [*adj.nom.m.p. ozus swift; sharp + d.a.w/noun nom.m.p. pous foot + pro.gen.m.p. autos + aor.act.infin. ekcheo shed + noun acc.nt.s. haima blood*]),

**VERSE 16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS** (σύντριμμα καὶ ταλαιπωρία ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτῶν, [*noun nom.nt.s. suntrimma destruction, ruin; Ix + conj kai + noun nom.f.s. talaiporia misery; Jam. 5:1 + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.p. odos path + pro.gen.m.p. autos*]),

**VERSE 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN** (καὶ ὁδὸν εἰρήνης οὐκ ἔγνωσαν [*conj kai + noun acc.f.s. odos path + noun gen.f.s. eirene peace + neg ouk + aor.act.ind.3p. ginosko*])."

**VERSE 18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES** (οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος

θεοῦ ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν [*neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + noun nom.m.s. phobos fear + noun gen.m.s. theos + prep. apenanti before, in full view + d.a.w/noun gen.m.p. ophthalmos eye + pro.gen.m.p. autos*])."

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 9-18**

1. The first question (v. 9) "What then?" means "What then follows?"
2. The second question "Are we better than they?" has to do with the supposed superiority of the Jew over the Gentile in the question of sin and condemnation.
3. The response is an emphatic denial ("Not at all" or "By no means").
4. The basis for this is: "for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin."
5. This indictment Paul set forth in 1:18-2:24.
6. What is meant by the expression "under sin" is to be under the dominion of the ISTA and the pervasiveness of sin with all its perversity.
7. Paul selects a representative listing of sinful behavior taken from the OT.
8. He opens this extended series of quotes in v. 10 with a summary rendition of Ps. 14:3 which reads: "They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one." (NAS)
9. Paul quotes verbatim this verse in verse 12.
10. The indictment set for in Psalm 14 is against the entire human race as noted in verse 2: "The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men..."
11. Among humans there is not even one person who is "righteous" that is, + R.
12. The quote in verse 11 is derived from Ps. 14:2 and 53:3.
13. In the sphere of intellectual apprehension there "is none who understands", and in the conative realm (the act of volitional striving) "there is none who diligently seeks for God."
14. Verse 10 is more general while verse 11 is more specific.
15. Compare Jer. 51:17 with mankind's lack of understanding: "All mankind is stupid *and* devoid of knowledge" and is illustrated by the manufacture and worship of molten images.
16. Strictly speaking there is no contradiction between those who are positive at God consciousness (seekers; cp. 2:7 "to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life.").
17. The verb "seek" in verse 11 is a much stronger word (*ekzeteo* search diligently; cp. Acts 15:17; Heb. 11:6; 12:17; 1 Pet. 1:10).
18. Verse 12 is a verbatim quotation from the LXX of Psalm 14:3 and 53:3.
19. The turning aside is clearly the abandonment of the revelation of God via the creation as noted in 1:21 "even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
20. In one way or another both Jews and Gentiles turned aside from the paths of truth and righteousness.
21. "Together they have become useless" is the end result of the turning aside (apostasy).
22. Like salt that has lost its savor or like fruit that is rotten so is the human race left to itself.

23. And in verse 12 “there is none who does good” refers to the goodness that God alone possesses (cf. Lk. 18:19).
24. And lastly, in verse 12, “there is not even one” leaves no loophole for exception.
25. The first two lines of verse 13 are from Psalm 5:9c and the last from Psalm 140:3b.
26. Verse 14 corresponds to Psalm 10:7 and verse 15 is taken from Isa. 59:7.
27. Verse 16 is also from Isa. 59:7.
28. Verse 17 is from Isa. 59:8.
29. In verses 13-17 Paul specifies sins associated with human anatomy specifically the organs of speech and the feet.
30. Sins of the tongue (human speech) are related to the throat, the tongue, the lips, and the mouth in verses 13 & 14.
31. The grossness of speech is likened to an open tomb; the tongue deceives through flattery and lies; and the lips are used for character assassination; and the mouth—cursing/curses and bitterness arising from envy.
32. Murder, the unjustified killing of humans is cited in v. 15.
33. The number murdered throughout human history is incalculable.
34. The feet mentioned because of movement toward victims.
35. Verse 15 is an abbreviated rendering of Isa. 59:7 (“Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed blood...”).
36. Throughout history there has been much unnecessary bloodshed.
37. Verse 16 is also from Isa. 59:7 and is verbatim rendering of the LXX.
38. Verse 16 expands upon the idea of human induced suffering using the hapax σύντριμμα, which means destruction/ruin along with “misery” (ταλαιπωρία), occurring also at Jam. 5:1 where it is used in connection with the apocalyptic misery that will come upon the super rich in the day of the Lord.
39. The rich who have caused so much misery due to their exemption from the economic oppression of the masses are targeted for extinction in the tribulation.
40. This misery includes inflation and depression.
41. Here these two terms reflect the oppressive things humans do to humans (wars, revolutions, genocide, etc.).
42. Verse 17 is from Isa. 59:8 and is an exact rendering with the exception that a different verb and tense are used in the LXX for the word “know.”
43. Peaceful relations between nations and people are not the norm.
44. Today there are those who are inciting racial strife.
45. Feet is symbolic of movement and goes along with path(s) in verses 16 & 17.
46. Verse 18 us a verbatim quotation from Ps. 36:1c.
47. As the throat, the tongue, the lip, the mouth, the feet are used to express evil actions expressed by human anatomy, so the eyes the organ of vision concludes these citations from the OT are used to express the absence of the fear of God.
48. Eyes are used metaphorically of man’s thoughts and considerations.
49. The absence of fear within humans means that their thoughts and actions do not take God into consideration.
50. The result is rampant ungodliness resulting from catering to the lust pattern of the STA.
51. So here we have the widespread evil among humans as God is not at the center of thought and calculation.