

# Romans 3:14-16 Commentary

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## ROMANS ROAD to RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 1:18-3:20	Romans 3:21-5:21	Romans 6:1-8:39	Romans 9:1-11:36	Romans 12:1-16:27
SIN	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION	SOVEREIGNTY	SERVICE
NEED FOR SALVATION	WAY OF SALVATION	LIFE OF SALVATION	SCOPE OF SALVATION	SERVICE OF SALVATION
God's Holiness In Condemning Sin	God's Grace In Justifying Sinners	God's Power In Sanctifying Believers	God's Sovereignty In Saving Jew and Gentile	God's Glory The Object of Service
Deadliness of Sin	Design of Grace	Demonstration of Salvation		
		Power Given	Promises Fulfilled	Paths Pursued

Righteousness Needed	Righteousness Credited	Righteousness Demonstrated	Righteousness Restored to Israel	Righteousness Applied
God's Righteousness IN LAW	God's Righteousness IMPUTED	God's Righteousness OBEYED	God's Righteousness IN ELECTION	God's Righteousness DISPLAYED
Slaves to Sin	Slaves to God			Slaves Serving God
Doctrine				Duty
Life by Faith				Service by Faith
Modified from Irving L. Jensen's excellent work " <a href="#">Jensen's Survey of the NT</a> "				

**Romans 3:14** "[WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS](#) " ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** on to stoma aras kai pikrias gemei (3SPA1)

**Amplified:** Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness'. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** whose mouth is full of imprecations and bitterness;

**Young's Literal:** Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

- Psalms 10:7; 59:12; 109:17,18; James 3:10
- Romans 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PROFANE SPEECH

**WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING:** on to stoma aras kai pikrias gemei (3SPA1)

Here is a list of the Old Testament passages which Paul quotes from

- Romans 3:10-12 from Psalm 14:1-3 and Psalm 53:1-3
- Romans 3:13 from Psalm 5:9 and Psalm 140:3
- Romans 3:14 from Psalm 10:7
- Romans 3:15-17 from Isaiah 59:7-8 and see Isaiah 48:22
- Romans 3:18 from Psalm 36:1
- [Psalms 10:7](#) His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression, under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.
- Septuagint (LXX) of Ps 10:7 = ou aras to stoma autou gemei (3SPA1) kai pikrias kai dolou, hipo ten glossan autou kopos kai ponos.

**Mouth** ([4750](#)) (**stoma**) refers to the bodily organ for eating and speaking.

**Full of** ([1073](#)) (**gemo**) means to be stuffed or filled full. To be full of something. The present tense pictures their being filled with cursing as a continuous process.

**Cursing** ([685](#)) (**ara**) (only here in the NT) originally it meant a wish, a petition, a prayer, but from the time of Homer it came to mean a prayer or invocation for harm or injury to come upon one, an imprecation (invocation of evil upon another), a curse which the deity was to execute. Eventually **ara** came to mean a malediction, the evil invoked, the mischief itself, the realized curse. In Greek mythology **Ara** was personified as the goddess of destruction and revenge. Cursing refers to wanting the worst for someone and publicly expressing that desire in caustic, derisive language. It represents open, public expression of emotional hostility against one's enemy.

**Full of cursing** pictures constant cursing, as if ready to be spilled at the least provocation.

**Preacher's Bible Commentary** notes that...

The "curse" in New Testament times was not so much a "swear word" as we would think of it. It meant the use

of words which of themselves held the power to bring about the desired effect of their malediction. Springing from a bitter root, this practice was prevalent enough to strike fear in the hearts of all, even to the point of death in some. ([Briscoe, D. S., & Ogilvie, L. J. The Preacher's Commentary Series, New Testament. 2003: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Newell** says

"To prove this, you need only take your stand upon any street, and strike upon the mouth a passerby. As well strike a hornets' nest! How men do curse others! Bitterness is ever ready! What fearful folly for a race speaking thus to imagine that by "being baptized, " and "joining the church" they are ready to "go to heaven, " and be in the holy company on high, with the meek and lowly Son of God and the holy angels, -and all this without a thought of being forgiven, washed, born again!" ([Romans 3: Devotional and Expositional](#))

**Spurgeon** comments on **Psalm 10:7** writing that

"Out of his own mouth he will be condemned. There is not only a little evil there, but his mouth is full of it. There is **cursing** which he spits against both God and men, deceit with which he entraps the unwary, and fraud by which, even in his common dealings, he robs his neighbors. Beware of such a man. Under his tongue. Deep in his throat are the unborn words which shall come forth as mischief and iniquity." (Treasury of David).

The Apostle **James** says that "The tongue is set on fire of hell." (James 3:6+)

**Ray Stedman** comments that "**Cursing** is blaming God; that is profanity. **Bitterness** is reproaching God because of the way he has run your life. This is what we hear all the time, even from Christians. We hear complaints about your circumstances, where God has placed you, and what he is doing with your life -- cursing and bitterness." (Read the full text of the sermon [Total Wipeout](#))

**AND BITTERNESS: kai pikrias:**

**Bitterness** ([4088](#)) (**pikría** from **pikrós** from **pik-** = to cut, prick) originally meant pointed or sharp, e.g., of arrows then more generally of what is "sharp" or "penetrating" to the senses, and so literally a bitter, pungent taste or smell and then figuratively what is "painful" to the feelings (animosity, anger, harshness). All the NT uses are figurative.

The Septuagint also contains both uses of **pikria**. There are the bitter waters (Exodus 15:23), the bitterness of the soul that results from external circumstances (Job 3:20; 7:11; 9:18, et al.), and man's attitudes of bitterness (Jeremiah 2:21; 15:17, passim). Significantly, bitterness in man is a trait that will incur judgment from God (cf. Deuteronomy 29:18; 32:32; Isaiah 38:15).

**Pikria** was used literally to describe plants that produced inedible or poisonous fruit. Greeks defined this word as long-standing resentment, as the spirit which refuses to be reconciled. So many of us have a way of nursing our wrath to keep it warm, of brooding over the insults and the injuries which we have received.

In the NT **pikria** is used in a metaphorical sense to describe animosity, resentfulness, harshness or an openly-expressed emotional hostility against an enemy. **Pikria** defines a settled hostility that poisons the whole inner man. Somebody does something we do not like, so we harbor ill will against him. Bitterness leads to wrath, which is the explosion on the outside of the feelings on the inside.

**Pikria** is found 4 times in the NAS - Acts 8:23; Rom. 3:14; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15

**Pikria** is used 27 times in the Septuagint (LXX)

Exod 15:23; Deut 29:18; 32:32; Job 3:20; 7:11; 9:18; 10:1; 21:25; Ps 10:7; 14:3; Isa 28:21, 28; 37:29; Jer 2:21; 15:17; Lam 3:15, 19; Ezek 28:24; Amos 6:12)

In the first use of **pikria** in the OT Moses records...

And when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were **bitter** (**pikria**); therefore it was named Marah. (Ex 15:23)

**Bitterness** reflects a smoldering resentment, a brooding grudge-filled attitude, an unwillingness to forgive or a harsh feeling. Bitterness is the opposite of sweetness and kindness (cf. husbands toward wives in Colossians 3:19 - see note). It harbors resentment and keeps score of wrongs (cf 1Cor 13:5)

**Pikria** or **bitterness** is It is the spirit of irritability that keeps a person in perpetual animosity, making him sour and venomous. Bitterness applies to the bitterness of spirit to which men give vent by bitter words.

**Barclay** adds that

"the Greeks defined (**pikría**) as long-standing resentment, as the spirit which refuses to be reconciled. So many of us have a way of nursing our wrath to keep it warm, of brooding over the insults and the injuries which we have received. Every Christian might well pray that God would teach him how to forget." ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series, Rev. ed. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press](#))

**Eadie** says that **pikria** is...

A figurative term denoting that fretted and irritable state of mind that keeps a man in perpetual animosity, that inclines him to harsh and uncharitable opinions of men and things, that makes him sour, crabby and repulsive in his general demeanor, that brings a scowl over his face & infuses venom into the words of his tongue.

**Newell** adds that their "**Bitterness** is ever ready! What fearful folly for a race speaking thus to imagine that by "being baptized, " and "joining the church" they are ready to "go to heaven, " and be in the holy company on high, with the meek and lowly Son of God and the holy angels, -and all this without a thought of being forgiven, washed, born again!" ([Romans 3: Devotional and Exposition](#))

**Wiersbe** has this practical comment on "**bitterness**" to which even believers can fall prey (although here in Ro 3:14, the reference is of course referring to an unsaved individual): "An unforgiving spirit is the devil's playground and before long it becomes the Christian's battleground. If somebody hurts us, either deliberately or unintentionally, and we do not forgive him, then we begin to develop bitterness within, which hardens the heart. We should be tenderhearted and kind, but instead we are hardhearted and bitter. Actually, we are not hurting the person who hurt us; we are only hurting ourselves. Bitterness in the heart makes us treat others the way Satan treats them, when we should treat others the way God has treated us. In His gracious kindness, God has forgiven us, and we should forgive others. We do not forgive for our sake (though we do get a blessing from it) or even for their sake, but for Jesus' sake. Learning how to forgive and forget is one of the secrets of a happy Christian life." ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

In Acts **Peter** confronts Simon the sorcerer declaring

"I see that you (Simon) are in the gall of **bitterness** and in the bondage of iniquity" (Acts 8:23).

**Comment:** Note in Acts 8:13 "Simon himself believed" but his subsequent actions and Peter's assessment make it clear that this was not belief unto salvation but was intellectual and/or a belief only in the signs and wonders

**Gall** (**chole** gives us our medical term cholecystitis for gallbladder disease) is a bitter ingredient or bile and with **pikría** (bitterness), it conveys an extremely bitter, harsh, and distasteful condition, vividly picturing the reality of one in the bondage of iniquity. This verse then describes a spiritual poisoning—a heart of great wickedness—in Simon the sorcerer. The sin of **bitterness**, like all sin, is a harsh taskmaster, Solomon recording that a man's

"own iniquities will capture the wicked and he will be held with the cords of his sin." (Proverbs 5:22-notes)

(**Comment:** Sin's built-in consequences are inescapable)

Writing to the Ephesian saints **Paul** exhorted them to

Let all **bitterness** (**pikria**) and wrath and anger and clamor and slander **be put away** (aorist imperative - Don't Delay! Do this now!) from you, along with all malice." (Eph 4:31-note)

In the final use of **pikría** in the NT, the writer of Hebrews exhorts his readers to

See to it (continually be on the lookout so) that no one comes short (to come too late, to be left out = if an unbeliever dies before trusting in Christ, he will be lost forever) of the grace of God; that no root of **bitterness** (in context this is the attitude of apostates within the church who are corruptive influences) springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled" (Heb 12:15-note)

**MacArthur** writes that in this context "The root of **bitterness** refers to a person who is superficially identified with God's people, and who falls back into paganism. But he is no ordinary apostate. He is arrogant and defiant concerning the things of God. He thumbs his nose at the Lord. God's response to such boastful unbelief is harsh and final. "The Lord shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the Lord and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven" (Dt 29:20)." ([MacArthur, John: Hebrews. Moody Press](#))

David described cursing, bitter persons as those who "have sharpened their tongue like a sword ... aimed bitter speech as their arrow, to shoot from concealment at the blameless; suddenly they shoot him, and do not fear" (Ps 64:3-4).

Every age of mankind, our own certainly included, has been characterized by people who use their tongues as vicious weapons. Their attacks not only are against those they know well enough to hate but sometimes, as David seems to intimate, even against

strangers, simply for the perverse pleasure of venting their anger and hatred.

## Torrey's Topic Profane Swearing

Is desecration of God's name and forbidden -Ex 20:7; Mt 5:34, 35, 36; 23:21,22; Jas 5:12

### THE WICKED

- Addicted to -Psalms 10:7; Romans 3:14
- Love -Psalms 109:17
- Clothe themselves with -Psalms 109:18
- Guilt of -Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11
- Woe denounced against -Matthew 23:16
- Nations visited for -Jeremiah 23:10; Hosea 4:1-3
- Punishment for -Leviticus 24:16,23; Psalms 59:12; 109:17,18

### Exemplified

- Son of Israelitish woman -Leviticus 24:11
- Gehazi -2Kings 5:20
- Peter -Matthew 26:74

Romans 3:15 THEIR [FEET](#) ARE [SWIFT](#) TO [SHED BLOOD](#) ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** oxeis oi podes auton ekcheai (AAN) haima

**Amplified:** Their feet are swift to shed blood. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** "They are quick to commit murder. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** 'Their feet are swift to shed blood; ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** their feet are swift to pour out blood.

**Young's Literal:** Swift are their feet to shed blood.

- Pr 1:16; 6:18
- Romans 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## MURDERERS

**THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD:** oxeis oi podes auton ekcheai (AAN) haima

In **Romans 3:15-17** Paul is quoting from (Isa 59:7-8)

**7** Their feet run to evil,  
And they hasten to shed innocent blood;  
Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity;  
Devastation and destruction are in their highways.  
**8** They do not know the way of peace,  
And there is no justice in their tracks;  
They have made their paths crooked;  
Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

Whereas the preceding indictment was directed at men's sinfulness as shown primarily by their words, in the next three verses Paul focuses his charges primarily against the conduct or actions of unredeemed men.

These three verses are almost like a condensed history of the world.

"For further details, read your daily papers!"

Every page of history attests the truth of this awful charge.

**Their feet** (4228)(**pous** = the part of the body used to stand and walk) Scripture frequently uses the path of one's feet as a picture for one's approach to life.

"The **feet**, as the emblem of walking, symbolize the whole conduct." (Godet)

**Swift** (3691) (**oxus**) had two basic meanings. **Oxus** refers to a keen edge for cutting, and thus meaning sharp, all of the NT uses with this meaning being in the book of the Revelation In secular Greek **oxus** had several nuances depending on the context -- **Of feeling**, sharp, keen, **Of the sight**, to be keenest of sight, to notice a thing sharply, to be quick of hearing. When referring to things that affect the sight oxus meant dazzling, bright, **Of sound**, sharp, shrill, piercing. **Of musical tones**, sharp, high, **Of taste**, sharp, pungent, acid, **Metaphorically of the mind**, sharp, keen: quick to anger, hasty, passionate, sharp, quick, clever.

As used in the present verse, **oxus** pertains to that which is rapid in motion. Quick, meaning a very short period of time. Swift, nimble, probably since the idea of sharpness also implies eagerness. People apart from God are prone to violence. At the slightest provocation they commit murder.

**Oxus** is used once in Romans and 6 times in Rev 1:16-note; Re 2:12-note; Re 14:14-note; Re 14:17-note; Re 14:18- note

**Oxus** is used 11 times in the Septuagint (LXX) (Job 16:10; 41:30; Ps 14:3; 57:4; Pr 22:29; 27:4; Isa 5:28; 49:2; Ezek 5:1; Amos 2:15; Hab 1:8)

**Shed** (1632) (**ekcheo** from **ek** = out + **chéo** = pour) means literally to pour out causing something (in this case blood) to be emitted in quantity.

**Blood** (129) (**haima**) defines blood as the basis of life. Shedding of blood equates with committing murder.

**Solomon** writes that...

"If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us ambush the innocent without cause, let us swallow them alive like Sheol, even whole, as those who go down to the pit.. My son, do not walk in the way with them. Keep your feet from their path for their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed blood." (Pr 1:11-12,15-16+)

**Swift** denotes the readiness and eagerness of men to murder others, which in turn shows the dreadful malice and hatred that is in them.

**Robert Haldane** - The most savage animals do not destroy so many of their own species to appease their hunger, as man destroys of his fellows; to satiate his ambition, his revenge, or [greed]. ([Romans 3 Commentary](#)).

How **swift are men to shed blood**?

**MacArthur** writes that "Even in the United States, with its Christian heritage, since the turn of the twentieth century twice as many of its citizens have been slain in private acts of murder than have been killed in all the wars of its entire history. According to researcher Arnold Barnett of the MIT, a child born today in any one of the fifty largest cities in the United States has the chance of one in fifty of being murdered. Dr. Barnett estimated that a baby born in the 1980s is more likely to be murdered than an American soldier in World War II was of being killed in combat." ([MacArthur, J: Romans 1-8. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Wayne Barber** reminds us that "the vengeance of lost man is incredible. We have seen it in many places, even in the heart of a little child when some other child takes his toy and he looks at him and says, "I hate you. I hate you. You took my toy. I wish you were dead." Where did that come from? Was he taught that in school? Was he taught that at home? No. It came from the fact that he was born depraved as a result of Adam's sin. The vengeance of even a child shows us that man does not have any good in him whatsoever. If you ever think differently, you have missed the point of why the gospel is such good news." (Barber, Wayne. Notes on Romans)

**Kent Hughes** explains that "Man's depravity is seen in his rush to violence. Will Durant wrote in his Lessons From History: "In the last 3,421 years of recorded history only 268 have seen no war." During World War II it was estimated that it took \$225,000 to kill

one enemy soldier. I wonder how much is being spent by the major nations today. Man loves violence!" ([Hughes, R. K. Romans: Righteousness from heaven. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books](#))

**Ray Stedman** -Someone has suggested that this would be a very remarkable verse to write above the doors of the United Nations building in New York: "Their feet are swift to shed blood, in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they do not know." Isn't it true? Here are the nations gathered together -- gathered to seek peace -- but the outcome of it is constant friction, and trouble, and disturbance, and heartache, and bloodshed, and misery, and they do not know the way of peace. (Read full text of sermon [Romans 3:9-26: Peale or Paul?](#))

## Torrey's Topic

### Murder

- Forbidden by Mosaic law -Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17
- Why forbidden by God -Genesis 9:6
- The law made to restrain -1Ti 1:9

#### DESCRIBED AS KILLING

- With premeditation -Exodus 21:14
- From hatred -Numbers 35:20,21; Deuteronomy 19:11
- By lying in wait -Numbers 35:20; Deuteronomy 19:11
- By an instrument of iron -Numbers 35:16
- By the blow of a stone -Numbers 35:17
- By a hand weapon of wood -Numbers 35:18
- Killing a thief in the day, counted as -Exodus 22:3
- Early introduction of -Genesis 4:8
- Represented as a sin crying to heaven -Ge 4:10; He 12:24; Re 6:10
- The Jews often guilty of -Isaiah 1:21

#### PERSONS GUILTY OF

- Fearful and cowardly -Genesis 4:14
- Wanderers and vagabonds -Genesis 4:14
- Flee from God's presence -Genesis 4:16
- Not protected in refuge cities -Deuteronomy 19:11,12
- Had no protection from altars -Exodus 21:14
- Not to be pitied or spared -Deuteronomy 19:13
- Often committed by night -Nehemiah 6:10; Job 24:14
- Imputed to the nearest city when the murderer was unknown -Dt 21:1-3
- Mode of clearing those suspected of -Dt 21:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; Mt 27:24
- To be proved by two witnesses at least -Numbers 35:30; Dt 19:11,15

#### PUNISHMENT FOR

- The curse of God -Genesis 4:11
- Death -Genesis 9:5,6; Exodus 21:12; Numbers 35:16
- Not to be commuted -Numbers 35:32
- Inflicted by the nearest of kin -Numbers 35:19,21
- Forbidden -Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17; Romans 13:9
- Explained by Christ -Matthew 5:21,22
- Hatred is -1John 3:15
- Is a work for the flesh -Galatians 5:21
- Comes from the heart -Matthew 15:19

#### DEFILES THE

- Hands -Isaiah 59:3
- Person and garments -Lamentations 4:13,14
- Land -Numbers 35:33; Psalms 106:38
- Not concealed from God -Isaiah 26:21; Jeremiah 2:34
- Cries for vengeance -Genesis 4:10

## **GOD**

- Abominates -Proverbs 6:16,17
- Makes inquisition for -Psalms 9:12
- Will avenge -Deuteronomy 32:43; 1 Kings 21:19; Hosea 1:4
- Requires blood for -Genesis 9:5; Numbers 35:33; 1 Kings 2:32
- Rejects the prayers of those guilty of -Isaiah 1:15; 59:2,3
- Curses those guilty of -Genesis 4:11
- The law made to restrain -1 Timothy 1:9

## **SAINTS**

- Specially warned against -1 Peter 4:15
- Deprecate the guilt of -Psalms 51:14
- Should warn others against -Genesis 37:22; Jeremiah 26:15
- Connected with idolatry -Ezekiel 22:3,4; 2Kings 3:27

## **THE WICKED**

- Filled with -Romans 1:29
- Devise -Genesis 27:41; 37:18
- Intent on -Jeremiah 22:17
- Lie in wait to commit -Psalms 10:8-10
- Swift to commit -Proverbs 1:16; Romans 3:15
- Perpetrate -Job 24:14; Ezekiel 22:3
- Have hands full of -Isaiah 1:15
- Encourage others to commit -1 Kings 21:8-10; Proverbs 1:11
- Characteristic of the devil -John 8:44
- Punishment of -Genesis 4:12-15; 9:6; Nu 35:30; 2Ki 9:36,37; Jer 19:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
- Punishment of, not commuted under the Law -Numbers 35:31
- Of saints, specially avenged -Deuteronomy 32:43; Matthew 23:35; Rev 18:20,24
- Excludes from heaven -Galatians 5:21; Revelation 22:15

## **Exemplified**

- Cain -Genesis 4:8
- Esau -Genesis 27:41
- Joseph's brethren -Genesis 37:20
- Pharaoh -Exodus 1:22
- Abimelech -Judges 9:5
- Men of Shechem -Judges 9:24
- Amalekite -2 Samuel 1:16
- Rechab -2 Samuel 4:5, 6, 7
- David -2 Samuel 12:9
- Absalom -2 Samuel 13:29
- Joab -1 Kings 2:31,32
- Baasha -1 Kings 15:27
- Zimri 1 Kings 16:10
- Jezebel -1 Kings 21:10
- Elders of Jezreel -1 Kings 21:13
- Ahab -1 Kings 21:19



- Hazael -2 Kings 8:12,15
- Adrammelech, &c -2 Kings 19:37
- Manasseh -2 Kings 21:16
- Ishmael -Jeremiah 41:7
- Princes of Israel -Ezekiel 11:6
- People of Gilead -Hosea 6:8
- The Herods -Matthew 2:16; 14:10; Acts 12:2
- Herodias and her daughter -Matthew 14:8, 9, 10, 11
- Chief priests -Matthew 27:1
- Judas -Matthew 27:4
- Barabbas -Mark 15:7
- Jews -Acts 7:52; 1 Thessalonians 2:15

## Romans 3:16 **DESTRUCTION** AND **MISERY** ARE IN THEIR **PATHS** (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** suntrimma kai talaiporia en tais hodois auton

**Amplified:** Destruction [as it dashes them to pieces] and misery mark their ways ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** Wherever they go, destruction and misery follow them. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** destruction and misery are in their ways; ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** Destruction and misery are in their paths.

**Young's Literal:** Ruin and misery are in their ways.

- Romans 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DESTROYERS

### DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS: suntrimma kai talaiporia en tais hodois auton:

The brevity of this statement belies its profundity. The truth is that man damages and destroys everything he touches, leaving a trail of pain and suffering in his wake! Mark it down. Wherever man goes, sin soon follows. Death and destruction follow his steps as night follows day.

**Destruction** ([4938](#)) (**suntrimma** from **suntribo** = break into pieces, crush completely) (only here in NT) literally describes that which is broken into pieces and shattered, resulting in total devastation. It was used to describe a fracture or broken limb (see LXX below).

Figuratively as used here in Romans 3 (the only NT use), **suntrimma** means destruction, decimation, calamity, ruin or that which is laid waste. A vivid word picture of what fallen man does to all he touches, whether it be "animal, vegetable or mineral"!

**Suntrimma** is used only once in the NT but 35 times in the Septuagint (LXX) most describing that which is broken, shattered or fractured.

Lev 21:19 = broken hand and foot; Lev 24:20 = fracture for fracture; Job 9:17; Ps 14:3; 60:2; 147:3; Pr 20:30; 23:29; Isa 15:5; 22:4; 28:12; 30:14, 26; 51:19; 59:7; 60:18; Jer 3:22; 6:14; 8:21; 10:19; 14:17; 17:18; 30:12; 48:3, 5; Lam 2:11; 3:48; 4:10; Amos 9:9

**Misery** ([5004](#)) (**talaiporia** from **talaiporos** [Ro 7:24-note, Re 3:17-note] = afflicted, wretched, miserable, distressed condition in turn from **tálas** = suffering, wretched) is the general term that denotes the resulting harm that is always in the wake of man's acts of destruction against his fellow man. His destructiveness inevitably leaves a trail of pain and despair. **Talaiporia** describes overwhelming hardship, trouble, suffering, calamity, misery or distress.

**Talaiporia** also describes the emotional condition that arises from inner or outer torment. In the present verse **misery** follows in the wake of man's destructive acts against his fellow man.

**Talaiporia** is found 29 times in the Septuagint (LXX)

Job 30:3; Ps 12:5; 14:3; 32:4; 40:2; 69:20; 88:18; 140:10; Isa 47:11; 59:7; 60:18; Jer 4:20; 6:7, 26; 15:8; 20:8; 51:35, 56; Ezek 45:9; Hos 9:6; Joel 1:15; Amos 3:10; 5:9; Mic 2:4; Hab 1:3; 2:17

The only other NT use of **talaiporia** is by James who writes...

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your **misereries** which are coming upon you. (James 5:1)

**Path (3598)(hodos)** when used literally describes any place along which one travels and moves from one place to another, and thus a way, a road, or a highway

**Destruction and misery** as **Newell** says is the "epitome (embodiment or summary of) of human history. It is said that the ancient Troy of which Homer sang was built upon the ruins of an earlier Troy, -and that seven other Troys, each constructed upon the ruins of a former, have been found! ...Those who so loudly proclaim that the human race is "improving, "" progressing, " are blind deceivers, -blind to history, blind to present day facts, blind to the rising tide of human violence. "As it was in the days of Noah, " our Lord said, "so shall be the coming of the Son of Man." In those days of Noah the earth became "full of violence" (Ge 6:11)." ([Romans 3: Verse by Verse](#))

**Denney** - Wherever they go, you can trace them by the ruin and distress they leave behind.

**Wayne Barber** - Look back over human history and what do you have? You have the ruins of cities that have been destroyed by somebody else...Homer sang a song about the city of Troy, "The city of Troy is built on the ruins of an earlier city." Since the time Homer sang that song they have found seven more cities underneath the ruins. Now you say, "I haven't killed anybody. I haven't shot anybody. I am a pretty decent person." No...you have covered it over. It is like putting honey over the top of it, but underneath it is the same vengefulness. One of these days, the Lord Jesus is going to take the church out of this world and this world will for the first time see the hate that has been here, the depravity of man's heart, wickedness like never before. Thank God we are not destined for His wrath. Thank God we have received the Lamb. (The full measure of man's destructiveness) is going to be seen one day. The only thing that is restraining it right now is the presence of the Holy Spirit in this world. (Barber, Wayne. Notes on Romans)

Mankind's tendency to destructiveness inevitably leaves a trail of deeply afflicted, dejected, and distressed men and women.

As **Godet** puts it man

**oppresses** (suntrimma) his brother, and fills his life with **misery** (talaipōría), so that the way marked out by such a course is watered with the tears of others...this overflow of depravity and suffering arises from a void: the absence of that feeling which should have filled the heart, the fear of God (v18). (Godet, F. Commentary on Romans).

**Ray Stedman** - Wherever man goes, ruin follows. Do we need any documentation of that today? Why do cities always develop ghettos and slums? Why do our beautiful mountains and streams become polluted? It is because of the heart of man. (Read the full text of the sermon [Total Wipeout](#))

**Robert Haldane** - Men labor to destroy and to ruin one another; proceeding in their perverse ways, they cause destruction and misery. ([Romans 3 Commentary](#)).

**Albert Barnes** - The tendency of their conduct is to destroy the virtue, happiness, and peace of all with whom they come in contact. ([Romans 3 Commentary](#))