**22. thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou  
rob temples?**] The contrast here must be  
maintained ; which it will not be if we  
understand the question to apply to robbing the temple of God of offerings destined for Him (Jos. Ant. xviii. 3. 4). And  
the mention of *abhorring idols* leads into  
the kind of robbery which is meant. “ Thou  
who abhorrest idols, dost thou rob their  
temples?” That it was necessary to vindicate the Jews from such a charge, appears from Acts xix. 37: and Josephus  
gives as a law, not to rob strange temples,  
nor take any offering dedicated by name  
to any god.

**23.**] ‘This question comprehends the previous ones.

**24.**] ‘For what is written in the prophets Isaiah and  
Ezekiel (see reff.), is no less true now of  
you:’ ‘the fact is so, as it is written.’

**25–29.**] Inasmuch us CIRCUMCISION was the especial sign of the covenant, and as such, a distinction on which  
the Jewish mind dwelt with peculiar satisfaction: the Apostle sets forth, *that circumcision without the keeping of the law is of no avail, and that true circumcision  
and true Judaism are matters of the  
heart, not of the flesh only*. “‘But,’ says  
the replier, ‘circumcision is a great fact.’  
‘I confess it,’ rejoins the Apostle, ‘but  
WHEN? When a man has that which is  
inward in the heart’ And see here the  
Apostle’s wisdom, how fittingly he has  
introduced his argument about it. He  
did not begin with it at once, since it was  
held in great estimation: but when he has  
shewn that they were offenders in a still  
greater matter, and were guilty of blasphemy towards God, then at length, having  
secured his readers’ condemnation of them,  
and having lowered them from their preeminence, he introduces his argument  
about circumcision, confident that no one  
ever will be found as its unlimited apologist.” Chrysostom.

**25. is become uncircumcision**] i.e. *counts for nothing*:  
the Jewish transgressor is no better off  
than the Gentile transgressor.

**26.the uncircumcision**] i.e. those who are in  
the state of uncircumcision.

**the ordinances**] Plainly the *moral* requirements, not the ceremonial : for one of the very first of the latter was, *to be circumcised*. The case is an *impossible one*:  
nor does the Apostle put it as possible,  
only as shewing manifestly, that circumcision, the sign of the covenant of the  
Law, was *subordinate to the keeping of  
the Law* itself.

**shall not, &c.**] i.e. “In such a case would not he be counted  
as a circumcised person ?”

**27.**] I prefer to regard this verse not as a continuation of the question, but as a separate  
emphatic assertion, and as leading the way  
to the next verse.

**the uncircumcision which is by nature**] i.e. ‘he, who