

Romans 2:1-16

Introduction

Old Testament prophet, Amos, did not just condemn the sins of the Gentile nations (**Amos 1:3-13**), he also turned his attention to the sins of Israel (**Amos 2:4-8**). Likewise, Paul condemns the practices and the wickedness of the Gentiles, but he also addresses Jewish sinfulness.

Summary

In Romans 2:1-16, Paul explains that God shows no favoritism to the Jews but instead grants His favor and mercy only to those who are in Christ.

1. Divine Indictment vv. 1-5

In the light of Paul's condemnation of the sinful conduct of the Gentiles (**Rom 1:32**), he then says **Rom. 2:1** Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

Paul does not want the Jews to think they are exempt because they were in covenant with God. Yes, the Jews know the truth of God's law and therefore condemn the Gentiles for these sins. Nevertheless, they practice the very same things. Paul, fully aware of this hypocrisy, levels judgment against his fellow countrymen: (**Rom 2:2-3**). Many Israelites thought they could take advantage of God's mercy, so Paul confronts their presumption head-on (**Rom 2:4**).

Sadly, many professing Christians hold similar false ideas.

So often unrepentant sinners think they can tarry and dally in sin given that God is patient, but Paul informs his readers that they are actually stockpiling judgment (**2:5**). We cannot and should not disconnect God's revealed wrath from His righteousness. God is perfect in all of His ways, even in His dispensation of wrath and judgment.

2. Jewish Heritage vv. 6-13

Whether someone is in covenant with the Lord or is an alien to the promises, God judges a person according to his works (**Rom 2:6-8**).

The law is very simple: obedience yields eternal life, and disobedience produces condemnation and hell.

Regardless of person's status, there will be "tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek (**Rom 2:9-10**).

Paul's point is simple: "There is no partiality with God" (**Rom 2:11**).

Paul addresses Israel's favored status under the Old Covenant (**Rom. 2:12**).

The sinful Gentiles will be judged as those who did not have the law as revealed to Israel, but they will be judged according to the knowledge of God's law that they do possess by virtue of their creation; the law of God written on their hearts.

Unrepentant Israelites will be judged according to the special revelation of the law.

3. Known Law of God vv. 14-16

Paul goes on to explain how God holds Gentiles accountable on the day of judgment (**Rom. 2:14-16**).

By virtue of humanity's creation in God's image, people inherently know the law.

All people know of God's law because he has written it on every human heart.

Regardless of that with which a person might get away, whether he is conscience-stricken or not, at the final judgment God will reckon according to people's works and will reveal the secret, sinful thoughts of all men.

He will judge all men by Christ, whether they possess the law of God as revealed in His Word or written on the heart.

Those Gentiles who refuse to turn to God in obedience will fall under God's just judgment according to this naturally revealed standard.

The same just judgment against unbelief and disobedience will fall on Israel, but God will hold them to a higher degree of accountability.

God's righteous judgment is a work of God on which all Christians should meditate.

Consideration of God's justice help believers with the response of praise and thanksgiving because God has delivered us from his righteous judgment through His mercy in the gospel of Christ.

Just as God's judgment against unbelief covers Jew and Gentile, so too the mercy He has given in and through Christ.

Only in Christ do we find deliverance from the demands of the law and the curse for breaking it.

This passage of Scripture should give us confidence that God is a just judge.

No one can claim ignorance about rebellion against God.

In the light of human sinfulness and rebellion, we need to know how God's law functions: If you obey, you will live, but if you disobey, God will curse you.

Given the demand for perfection regarding the requirements of the law, all men, women, boys and girls fall short and are in desperate need of someone to fulfill the law's demands on their behalf.

Christ is the great substitute for sinners.