

Searching the Scriptures

“Search the Scriptures...They are which testify of Me.” John 5:39

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Commentary on Romans

Chapter 2

This particular Chapter actually addresses two different subjects. Verses 1 thru 11 of Chapter 2, are occupied with Judgment, but when we get to verses 12 through 29 it departs: from judgment, primarily to the Gentiles, and then, takes up the new subject, of the Jew verses the Gentile. A keen eye is necessary, in many cases, to distinguish where one chapter ends and another begins. Whenever we see the words wherefore or therefore, we must be diligent in our observation of what was before us previous to these words. More often than not, they are a continuation of what has been stated before. Just because we see a change in Chapter does not mean that we are entering into a new subject. Such is the case in what we have before us. Chapter 2 verse one, is obviously a continuation of Chapter 1. Please note that verse 32 of Chapter 1 is still addressing the judgment of those unrighteous and ungodly persons, described from verse 18 of this same chapter and continues, through its fulfillment, into chapter 2 verses 1 through 11.

Let us examine more closely, before we get into Chapter 2. Chapter 1 verse 32 states: *“Who (referring to those being addressed from Chapter 1:verse 18) knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.* Then begins verse 1 of Chapter 2: *“Therefore”* (notice the word therefore, indicates a continuation of what has been said previously) *“thou are inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things”*. What God, through the Holy Spirit, is saying here in plain English is: “You are inexcusable, whoever you are that would judge another; for when you judge another you condemn yourself, for you who judge, do the same thing”. Verse : 2; *“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things”*. What we are to glean from this, is that God judges according to “truth”, and not any type of prejudice. Verse 3—11: *“And thinkest thou this O man, that judgest them which do such things and doest the same, that thou shall escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: Who will render to everyman according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and*

immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: But glory, honor and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God”.

That this was truly a revelation and written by the Holy Spirit, is unquestionable, due to the phrase, “*O man*”, this is a theocratic utterance. Paul would not have worded his comments in this fashion. Paul did not elevate himself above his peers. He claims that he was chief of sinners. (1st Tim 1:15) Remember, it is the Holy Spirit’s role to guard the Word and inspire the writing of the Scriptures.

It is necessary at this juncture, in regard to judgment; to relate a parable of Jesus unto his disciples, found in Matthew Chapter 18: 23—35: “*Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But, forasmuch (because) he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest (what you owe me). And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O, thou wicked servant. I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst (asked it of me). Should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses”.*

The message is very clear. Do not judge another, for by how you judge, shall you also be judged. Judge not, condemn not. It can not be much simpler. And God tells us that He shall judge by “Truth”. Romans 2: 2. “For there is no respect of persons with God”. Vs. 2: 11.

We shall now take up Romans 2: 12—29. What we have here, is God and His admonishment toward the Jew. Much of the former verses were addressed primarily to the Gentile. Recall that it was to the Jew, through Moses, that God delivered the Decalogue (The Law). This law, which was mandated by God, was not only the Ten Commandments, but also the method of worship, the sacrifices, the Holy Days, the rituals required; etc. The Jews readily obeyed the rituals, but lost sight of the Commandments themselves. They paid respect to the Scribes and Pharisees, and their theology, but did

not honor God's other laws. They paid lip-service, but did not fulfill the deed, and desired effect of what the intent of the Scriptures demanded. This is what Paul is addressing in the verses which follow.

Romans 2: 12-16, *“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, (Gentiles); and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the Law, (Jew’s). For, not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ according to my gospel”.* What Paul is saying, is that when men do that which is right, whether it be Jew or Gentile, it is accounted unto them as righteousness, with or without the law.

Vs. 17—29: *“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and rest in the law, and make your boast of God. And know his will, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and are confident that you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which have the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. You therefore which teach another, teach you not thyself? That you who teach a man should not steal, do you steal? You that say a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You that abhor idols, do you commit sacrilege? You that make yourself a boast of the law, through breaking the law do you dishonor God? For, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, through you, as it is written. For circumcision will surely profit, if you keep the law: but if you be a breaker of the law, your circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision (Gentiles) keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision do you transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Keep in mind in this discourse, that Paul was addressing the Church of Rome, which was made up of both Jew and Gentile. For the sake of harmony, he could not admonish one against the other. His dialogue therefore required him to address the spiritual condition of both, not one against the other. He needed the thread in a special way, walking the tight-rope, as to not create a gulf between the two. By condemning both, and leading them toward a better understanding of the Spirit of God and the theme of this Book, which was the “Righteousness of God”, Paul straddled the fence as it were, and condemned each according to their need. He then goes on, as we shall see, to the final verdict of the fact that the whole world is guilty before God. And only the justification of faith, in Jesus Christ, shall men be saved, because it is the faith in Christ that the law is fully honored. Remember, Christ Himself, proclaimed that He came to fulfill the Law. Matt: 5: 17; *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the*

prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Thus we view the doctrine of Paul’s Epistle to this Roman church. The barriers of any contention, on either side, must be destroyed, in order to consolidate and homogenize the spirit, of Faith, in the Gospel of Salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!