

Romans 2:9-16

⁹There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil,
first for the Jew, then for the Greek;

¹⁰but glory, honour, and peace for everyone who does good,
first for the Jew, then for the Greek.

¹¹Because God does not show favouritism.

¹²All who sin apart from the law
will also perish apart from the law,
and all who sin under the law
will be judged by the law.

¹³Because it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God,
but it is the doers of the law who will be declared righteous.

¹⁴ Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law,
do by nature what the law requires, they have the Law in themselves,
even though they do not have the law.

¹⁵So they show that the work of the law is written on their hearts,
their consciences also bearing witness,
and their thoughts either accusing or defending them

¹⁶on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Christ Jesus,
as proclaimed by my Gospel.

Romans 2:9-16

1

God judges by reality, not fantasy. Romans 2:9-16

God's judgment is individual. 9-10

More knowledge is more responsibility. 9-10 "first to the Jew, then the Gentile"

Some knowledge is some responsibility. 11 "God does not show favouritism"

God's judgment is impartial. 11

All sin has consequences. 12 "apart from the Law... by the Law"

All righteousness is imputed. 13 "doers... declared righteous"

God's judgment is inescapable. 12-16

Everyone has God's Law. 15 "the Law is written on their hearts"

Everyone needs the Gospel. 16 "God will judge... as proclaimed by my Gospel"

2

On what basis are the judged judged? Romans 2:9-16

God's judgement is according to our deeds. 2:5-11, esp. 6 "according to his deeds"

Deeds, not feelings. 5 "hard and unrepentant heart"

Deeds, not consequences. 7 "He will give", 8 "there will be"

God's judgement is according to the Gospel. 2:12-16, esp. 16 "according to my Gospel"

Gospel, not Law. 12-13 "the Law"

Gospel, not conscience. 15 "their hearts, their consciences"

3

Will I get a fair hearing? Romans 2:9-16

God's first judgment. 2:9-11

Information leads to accountability. 9-10 "first to the Jew"

Everyone will be held accountable. 11 "God does not show favouritism"

God's fair judgment. 2:12-13

All are judged by the light we have. 12 "apart from the Law... by the Law"

Salvation is only by what God does. 13 "doers... declared righteous"

God's final judgment. 2:14-16

Judgement is determined by what is in us. 15 "the Law is written on their hearts"

Rewards are granted by the Gospel. 16 "God will judge... proclaimed by my Gospel"

4

Can you handle the Truth? Romans 2:9-16

The reward of justice. 2:9-11

My reward is based on my knowledge. 9-10 "first to the Jew, then the Gentile"

My reward is based on my choices. 11 "God does not show favouritism"

The righteousness of justice. 2:12-13

My righteousness is eliminated by my sin. 12 "apart from the Law... by the Law"

My righteousness is only by God's declaration. 13 "doers... declared righteous"

The responsibility of justice. 2:14-16

My responsibility is written within me. 15 "the Law is written on their hearts"

My responsibility is to obey the Gospel. 16 "as proclaimed by my Gospel"

What about the poor native who never heard? Romans 2:9-16

Question 1. What happens to the innocent person?

The innocent person is already saved by their own righteousness.

No one is innocent or righteous. Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:8

Question 2. What happens to the ignorant person?

Millions have lived and died without hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

No one is ignorant of God. Romans 1:18-21

Question 3. What happens to the imperfect person?

The eternal security of unborn/new-born/intellectually impaired, 2 Samuel 12:18-23

The eternal security of children, 1 Kings 14:1-4a, 12-13.

Question 4. What happens to the immature person?

We know the fate of the unsaved.

We must tell of Jesus to the unsaved. Ezekiel 3:18, Ezekiel 33:8, Romans 10:14-15

Other possible titles

No excuses

There are always consequences

Sinners gonna suffer

Thank God for the judgement

Cross-references

for every human being who does evil, 9

All who sin apart from the law... all who sin under the law, 12

All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. Psalm 14:3

Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins. Ecclesiastes 7:20

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; Romans 3:10

There is no distinction, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3:23

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people, because all sinned. Romans 5:12

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8

the law is written on their hearts, 15

¹⁸The wrath of God is being revealed from Heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness. ¹⁹For what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and Divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that people are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking and darkened in their foolish hearts. Romans 1:18-21

General Revelation

¹The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of His hands.

²Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.

³Without speech or language,
without a sound to be heard,

⁴their voice has gone out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world. Psalm 19:1-4

⁷Just ask the animals, and they will teach you.
Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you.

⁸Or speak to the Earth, and it will teach you.
Let the fish of the sea inform you.

⁹Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the LORD has done this? Job 12:7-9

God has not left Himself without testimony. He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons. He provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy. Acts 14:17

¹⁹For what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from His workmanship, so that men are without excuse. Romans 1:19-20

the day when God will judge men's secrets, 16

Judgment Day

Riches are worthless in **the Day of Wrath**, but righteousness brings deliverance from death. Proverbs 11:4

²⁸Do not be amazed at this, for **the hour** is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice ²⁹and come out—those who have done good to the Resurrection of Life, and those who have done evil to the Resurrection of Judgment. John 5:28-29

But because of your hard and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for **the Day of Wrath**, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

Romans 2:5

his workmanship will be evident, because **the Day** will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will prove the quality of each man's work.

1 Corinthians 3:13

You are fully aware that **the Day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the night.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

⁵All this is clear evidence of God's righteous judgment. And so you will be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. ⁶After all, it is only right for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷and to grant relief to you who are oppressed and to us as well. This will take place when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels ⁸in blazing fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will suffer the penalty of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His might, ¹⁰on **the day He comes** to be glorified in His saints and regarded with wonder by all who have believed, including you who have believed our testimony. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

...the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on **the Day of Judgment**. 2 Peter 2:9

And by that same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for **the Day of Judgment** and destruction of ungodly men. 2 Peter 3:7

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And books were opened, and one of them was the Book of Life. And the dead were **judged** according to their deeds, as recorded in the books. ¹³The sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead, and each one was **judged** according to his deeds. Revelation 20:11-13

the day when God will judge men's secrets, 16

Judgement will be by the Son

Furthermore, the Father judges no one, but has assigned all judgment to the Son, John 5:22

For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the Man He has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead. Acts 17:31

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Timothy 4:1

Francis Schaeffer has some helpful words about the importance of believing in a coming day of judgment. Under the heading “The Necessity of Judgment,” he makes these comments:

But let me stress this warning. It (the message of coming judgment) is more than just. It is the only message that is able to speak into the 20th-century mentality because it is the only message which really gives an answer to the two great problems of all men—modern man and man throughout the ages. First, man needs absolutes, universals, something by which to judge.

If one has no basis on which to judge, then reality falls apart, fantasy is indistinguishable from reality, there is no value for the human individual and right and wrong have no meaning.

There are two ways to get away from God’s judgment of men. One is to say that there is no absolute. But one must be aware that if God does not judge on a 100% basis, he is indeed like an old man in the sky. And worse—not only is man left in relativism, but God himself is bound by relativism. God must be the judge whose own character is the law of the universe or we have no absolute. We do not need to be embarrassed as we speak of the individual coming to God to be judged in the full historic sense of judgment. It is quite the other way. If this is not true, then we no longer have an absolute, and we no longer have an answer for 20th-century man. (*The Church at the End of the 20th Century*, pp. 49-50) (With thanks to Ray Pritchard)

Music and songs

Songs about General Revelation

All creatures of our God and King, H 19

All things Bright and Beautiful, H 593

Awesome God (Mullins)

Beyond all time

Creation calls (Doerksen)

Creation creed

Creation sings the Father’s song (Getty, Townend)

For The Beauty of the Earth, H 33

God of wonders beyond our galaxy, Ot 7

How great Thou art, H 743

If I were a butterfly

Jesus is Lord, creation’s voice proclaims it

Lord of all creation, of water earth and sky... God of wonders

Morning has broken

O Lord my God... How great Thou art, H 743

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation! H 8
Sing out, earth and skies (Marty Haugen)
The Earth is the Lord's, Ot 131
The heavens shall declare, 537
This is my Father's world, H 615
Very early this morning
When morning gilds the skies
Who put the colours in the rainbow
Why should I feel discouraged... His eye is on the sparrow

Songs about justice or judgement

Lo, He comes with clouds, descending, H 200
O sinner man, where you gonna run to
When He rolls up His sleeves... Our God is an awesome God,

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion.

1. Is there any such thing as an 'innocent' native (Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23)?
2. Would it be fair for God to punish people for disobeying laws they could never know about; and how do you know He won't punish them (Psalms 119:137)?
3. How can people know about God, even if they have never seen a Bible (Psalm 19:1-4, Romans 1:19-20)?
4. How is it possible for people to know what God wants, even when they have never been told what He requires of them (Romans 2:14-15)?
5. How can the experiences of King David (2 Samuel 12:13-23), and King Jeroboam (1 Kings 14:1-13), be an encouragement to those who have lost children, or who have children with disabilities?
6. So, how would you answer someone who asks 'What happens to the innocent native who dies without ever hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ?'