

(10) "A Guide to the Blind": God's Expectation of Israel (2:17-24)

# **Romans: The Outwork of the Righteousness of God**

# Condemnation!—Line of Thought

- Fact: All Men Are Condemned!
  - The Gentiles Are Condemned due to Sin (1:18-32).
  - The Jews Are Condemned due to Hypocrisy (2:1-5): A Diatribe.
- Questions:
  - Is God Just in This Judgment? (2:6-11)
  - Is God Fair in This Judgment? (2:12-16)
- Resuming the Diatribe (of 2:1-5):
  - There Is a High Expectation for the Jews (2:17-20).
  - They Failed Tragically and Miserably (2:21-24).
- Expected Questions:
  - Are Not the Jews Special due to Circumcision? (2:25-29)
  - Is God Faithful if He Condemned the Jews? (3:1-8)
- Conclusion (3:9-20).

# The High Expectation of the Jews

- “<sup>17</sup> But if you bear the name "Jew "
  - and rely upon the Law
  - and boast in God,
  - <sup>18</sup> and know *His* will
  - and approve the things that are essential,
    - being instructed out of the Law,
- <sup>19</sup> and are confident that you yourself are
  - a guide to the blind,
  - a light to those who are in darkness,
  - <sup>20</sup> a corrector of the foolish,
  - a teacher of the immature,
    - having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,”

(Rom 2:17-20 NAU)

# What Is in the Name?

- **“Bear the Name”** = Call Your Self the Name of
  - The “Hebrews”:
    - “Descendant of Eber” (Gen 14:13)
    - From the Call of Abraham at Age 70 (1876 B.C.)
  - “Israel”
    - “The One Who Wrestles/Strives with God” (Gen 22:28)
    - From the Conversion of Jacob at Age 97 (1689 B.C.)
  - The “Jews”
    - “From the Country of Judah” (2 Kgs 25:25)
    - From the Exile of Judah to Babylon (586 B.C.)
- **Israel/Jews = God’s Chosen People**
  - Israel = God’s Chosen People for the Visible Kingdom of God!
  - Church = God’s Elect for the Spiritual & Full Kingdom of God!

# What Is Special for the Jews?

- They Have the Law of Moses
  - They “**rely upon the Law.**”
    - They Receive the Law after Being Delivered from Egypt.
    - The Law Was a the Guidebook for the Saved.
    - It Was the Condition for Israel to Stay on the Promised Land.
  - “**Being instructed out of the Law**”
  - “**Having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.**”
- They Can “**boast in God.**”
  - There Are Proper Boastings (Jer 9:23-24; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17)
  - It Is Great to Be among the People of God!
- “**And know His will**” (Supposedly).
- “**And approve the things that are essential**”
  - Probably “**Distinguish** the things that really matter”.
  - “*diaphero*” = Excelling, †Differing, without Explicit Thing to Compare.

# Proper Boasting in OT

- <sup>23</sup> Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;
- <sup>24</sup> but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.

(Jer 9:23-24 NAU)

# Proper Boasting in NT

- <sup>30</sup> But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, <sup>31</sup> so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."  
(1Co 1:30-31 NAU)
- <sup>17</sup> But HE WHO BOASTS IS TO BOAST IN THE LORD. <sup>18</sup> For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends. (2Co 10:17-18 NAU)

# Expectations on the Jews

- They Are Supposed to Be:
  - “a guide to the blind,”
  - “a light to those who are in darkness,”
  - “a corrector of the foolish,”
  - “a teacher of the immature.”
  - These Are the Terms in Jewish Intertestamental Literatures for Jewish Mission to the Gentiles.
- They Became Confident in Themselves:
  - “And are confident that you yourself are...”
  - The Mandate Became Proudful Perceived False Reality.



# The Disappointing Fall of the Jews

- “<sup>21</sup> You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?
  - You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?
  - <sup>22</sup> You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?
  - You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?
- <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?
- <sup>24</sup> For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU  
(Isa 52:5; Ezek 36:20ff)," just as it is written."  
(Rom 2:21-24 NAU)

# The Jews Also Sin

- The Mismatch Is a Sharp Disappointment.
  - “You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?”
- They Fall to the Typical Temptations:
  - Greed: “You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”
  - Fleshliness: “ You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?”
  - Pride: “You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”
    - “Rob Temples” Could Mean:
      - Not paying Tithe = Idolizing Money (Mal 3:8): Repeat Theme of Greed.
      - Sacrilege/Impiety by Prideful Thoughts/Acts That Rob God the Glory.

# Hypocrisy Is the Biggest Turn-off

- The Unexpected Disappointment Hurts Most
  - <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?"
    - It Is OK to "Boast in the Law": If One Practices It.
    - It Is Not OK to "Break the Law": Judgment Is by Deeds.
    - It Will Greatly "Dishonor God": Hurt Self and God's Name.
- It Gives Unbelievers Excuses:
  - <sup>24</sup> For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU (Isa 52:5; Ezek 36:20ff)," just as it is written."

# When God's People Sin

- <sup>3</sup> For thus says the LORD, "You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money."
- <sup>4</sup> For thus says the Lord GOD, "My people went down at the first into Egypt to reside there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause."
- <sup>5</sup> "Now therefore, what do I have here," declares the LORD, "seeing that My people have been taken away without cause?"
- *Again* the LORD declares, "Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually blasphemed all day long. (Isa 52:3-5 NAU)

# When God's People Suffer for Sin

- <sup>20</sup> "When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.'
- <sup>21</sup> "But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went.
- <sup>22</sup> "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. (Ezek 36:20-22 NAU)

# Why Were the Jews Judged

- God's Standard Is the Same: By Deeds.
  - The Gentiles Are Judged by Their Deeds.
  - The Jews Are Also Judged by Their Deeds.
    - Having the Law Is Not Enough.
    - Doing the Law Is the Expectation.
    - Failing to Do It Is a Great Disappointment and Turn-off.
    - Consistency and Perfection Is the Requirement.
    - All Fall Short:
      - The Vice in the Gentiles Is Expected.
      - The Vice of the Jews Is Not!

# How to Deal with Hypocrisy?

- It Is Better to Have a Standard Than None.
- Having God's Law as Standard Gives High Expectations to Conform.
- Everyone Falls Short.
- The More Honor in Having the Truth of God, the More Responsibilities for Holy Living.
- It Applied to the Jews and the Christians.
- Learn and Obey!
- Be Humble Always!
- Do Not Judge Those Who Fall Short!
- Try Hard to Be Holy!
- Forever Depend on Grace!