

Paul has faithfully exposed the fearsome pedigree of Mankind when left to themselves after the Fall, with the testimony of Creation and Conscience. But again, after God's judgement by the great Deluge, they took the same downward path of departure from God as before. Having been given a chance for a "clean start" they "blew it." Sadly the judgement Flood only added to their responsibility. They knew the judgement of God from the testimony of those eight who had survived the Flood in the ark. They could see the evidence of it and we still can. They passed down verbal traditions which still exist world wide among many cultures. But as time wore on their children chose to ignore the true God and go their own way. For this cause God gave them up to their own thinking and their own sinful way. So verses 26-31 describe that descent into hell, so to speak. Verse 32 shows that their way of life still persists on this poor globe despite many drastic interventions [including the Cross] by their Creator God since.

In chapter 2 Paul goes on to direct his remarks to those who judge and condemn others who commit unrighteous acts. They somehow consider themselves better because they know better than these ignorant sinners. (How deceptive is the human heart.) So people judge other people all the time silently in their thoughts and sometimes verbally, or worse, in their actions. Such people are hypocrites because they know and profess to know better, but they sin too. They self righteously tout their "superior" morality and even count it to be pleasing to God despite their own lapses. We see public figures, politicians, clergymen, leaders of a cause, etc., making statements condemning some evil or bad thing they see in society, seeking reform. Yet all too frequently the very one demanding righteousness of those involved in some immoral or sinful practice is exposed as guilty of the same themselves, or of something else just as bad. They are despised by others who laugh at them and are in turn hardened by their inconsistency. Knowledge of good and evil does not deliver one from doing evil. Eve coveted this knowledge, to the ruin of all of her descendants. Those who keep prescribing more education as the solution to various social ills are deluded by this same mistaken philosophy. They ignore or deny the inborn sinfulness of all mankind. Sadly even believers fall into this deceptive rut seeking to reform the world instead of preaching Paul's Gospel, God's Gospel, to sinners.

None will escape the judgement of God. It will be according to truth, despite their "morality". We can't fool God, though we may fool others and even ourselves. But people despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long suffering. They mistake this as God's tolerance of sin because He refrains from instant judgement, giving space for repentance, 2Peter 3:9; Acts 14:15-17; and 17:24-30. God's goodness in blessing mankind so lavishly is intended to lead to repentance, not self indulgence. What impenitent hearts! They **treasure**

up wrath, so that in the day of wrath they will fully receive the wrath they have accrued.. What they deserve. Doom. In the day of His wrath God will render to everyone according to his deeds. His righteous judgement will be revealed then, though held in abeyance now in this Day of Grace. His judgement will be perfectly righteous. Paul says any who seek for glory and honor and immortality, and succeed "in patient continuance [enduring persistence] in well doing" will receive eternal life. This sounds like salvation by works. And it is. If salvation by our works were not a righteous proposition God would not be righteous to judge those who do not seek it. But we learn in chapter 3 that none will succeed and actually none even really try, and none come close to meeting the standard of patient continuance [enduring persistence]. Just trying is not enough either. We all know of many who "are doing the best they can." Many of us tried that at first. Most recognize they fall short but think if they try hard enough God will "let them in" anyway for trying. Paul declares in chapter 3 that will not happen! Repentance and faith are required, not self discipline or even self improvement. Self discipline or self improvement is but human pride at work. Instead of eternal blessing the self-improvement bunch will reap God's wrath. God considers such as contentious. They willfully obey not the truth. (Not exactly overt disobedience, but a definite failure to obey.) They are said to obey unrighteousness. Even if they are trying their best? Yes, for they unrighteously deny the truth that they are guilty, lost, and need to repent. Such will be subject to God's righteous indignation and wrath.

Note that so far the Law of Moses has not been mentioned or even the brief commands God gave Noah. This is about self righteousness and prideful disobedience of what every heart, Jew or Gentile, knows from birth – its responsibility to the Creator God. Ecclesiastes 3:11[NKJ].

Summing up, God will visit tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. And God will visit 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.** But there are none that will make the grade.

We will also learn later in Romans that, in one sense, every believer does indeed fulfill this requirement both positionally and practically, in Christ, because of His finished work on the cross. We were justified, were born again and received the Holy Spirit upon being saved. Thereafter as saved, born again believers we now, by the Spirit, do seek glory and honor and immortality, eternal life by patient continuance in well doing. But this is not salvation by or of works but working out our salvation (Philippians 2:12) in our lives for Christ. So, go for it!