

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

"Misers of Wrath"

Romans 2:15

June 24, 1984

INTRODUCTION

1. This chapter provides a list of judgment principles by which God will judge the world. Included are:

1. Truth (vv. 3, 4), 3. wrath (vv. 4, 5), 3. choice (v. 6), 4. respect of persons (v. 11), 5. God's standards (vv. 14, 15), 6. Gospel (v. 16).

2. Scripture teaches there is "no excuse" and "no escape" from the righteous judgment of God which is according to truth (vv. 1-3).

3. There are at least four ways by which men seek to escape who have sinned against human laws: a. Keep crime undetected. b. Escape beyond jurisdiction. c. Technicality of the law. d. Convicted may escape prison. BUT GOD'S judgment is by truth and the only way to escape is to settle out of court through Christ (John 3:36).

4. Now the second principle is that it will be in proportion to the hoard of wrath a person has stored up for himself (v. 5). How horrible! How does it come about? Study the text:

1. GOD'S RICHES v. 4.

The word "riches" is a favorite one with Paul to describe the quality of His attributes and gifts (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:4, 7; 3:8, 16). In this instance it concerns the theological concept of "common grace." God does not owe the human race anything. However, He has manifested His "riches" toward the unsaved. How? Many ways: keeping one from immediate hell; provision of health; comfortable living; employment; abundance of food, clothes, etc.--all is common grace, but we do not deserve it. Note: This grace is detailed:

a. Goodness

This root is rendered "easy" (Mt. 11:30), but that is not satisfactory. Originally the word meant "good, serviceable." It is used of wine (Lk 5:39). Thus the word means wholesome, serviceable, kindly. The word occurs nine times in the N.T. and only by Paul (kindness four times; gentleness one time; goodness three times; good one time).

b. Forbearable

Strictly this means a holding back, toleration. Implies something temporary which may pass away under

new conditions. The certainty of judgment is not removed.

c. Long-suffering

This means slowness in avenging wrongs and suggests a long-protracted restraint of the soul from yielding to passion. It is a tremendous expression of common grace by God toward men.

2. GOD'S GOODNESS v. 4.

a. Despised

The indicative unites a declaration with the question, therefore, the idea is: of course you do. Man's base nature is ingratitude. The verb means to look, think down. Consider this: Look down on God's goodness (cf. Mt. 6:24; 1 Cor. 11:22).

b. Unrecognized

"Not knowing" is a verb meaning "ignorant" i.e. ignoring a fact that might be known. What? That God's goodness leads (present) to the goal of repentance (change of mind). Repentance is "about face." It is more than human sorrow and intent to quit. It is an immediate pivoting to a new position. How terrible is rejection of goodness.

3. GOD'S JUDGMENT v. 5

a. Why?

The reason is given: Hardness and impenitent heart. The former word speaks of a sclerosis of the heart i.e. hard, stiff. The term impenitent means no about face, no change of mind (cf. repentance, v. 4).

b. How?

There is irony in the word "treasure." It's like a miser who is actually saving odds and ends of wrath! He tucks them away in his collection not thinking what he is doing. Wrath--awful term!

c. When?

There is a day of wrath. It is the time of God's righteous judgment of the unsaved. The Revelation refers to it as the Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15).

CONCLUSION Common grace has it's day of reckoning. Don't be a miser of wrath. Chuck it and repent now. That is the real purpose of God's goodness.