

Review: In vv. 1-16, Paul is explaining that those who are not saved under the Age of Grace will be “on their own,” and judged for entrance into the Kingdom by their **patient continuance in well doing** (v. 7). This explains that the Age of Grace will come to an end (with the rapture, which he doesn’t mention here), and that those who enter the Kingdom by surviving the Tribulation will be judged based on their good works (which aligns with Matthew 25). His argument in Romans 2 is incompatible with the Age of Grace.

ROMANS 2:17-25 | THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF JUDAISM

- Verse 17 –
 - **Thou art called a Jew** - Here (vv. 17-29) Paul shifts his focus to the unbelieving Jew living in the future, when the age of the law has been restored.
 - He speaks in general (rather than to a specific individual), but is speaking about individuals, not to the Jews as a nation. That is, he is speaking to the "proverbial Jew" living under the Law.
 - His goal is that this individual Jew would recognize his need to live fully according to the Law (see v. 25).
 - *Note: this is further evidence that the book of Romans is written to Jewish believers.*
- Verse 18 - The Greek διαφέρω [diaphero] means *thoroughly carried*. That is, the things that would never be left along the way, thus, by extension, **more excellent**.
- Verse 19 – **art confident** - The confidence, grammatically, stems from the **being instructed** foundation.
 - The Jews were instructed to be **an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes** (Is. 42:6).
 - Note the arrogant condescension of the writer of the New American Commentary:
 - **2:19–20** Self-righteous Jews had persuaded themselves that they were superior to people of other nations. They pictured themselves as guides for the blind¹¹⁸ and lights for those in darkness (v. 19). There is no one quite so blind as those who are confident they can see. Jesus’ most severe words were directed against the Pharisees. He called them “blind guides” (Matt 23:16, 24). Instead of being a light to those living in the darkness of paganism, the Jewish nation had withdrawn from other cultures. The less contact with those who disregarded ceremonial distinctions the better. The Gentiles were “foolish”¹¹⁹ and in need of instruction, “infants”¹²⁰ who needed to be taught.¹²¹ The Jews to whom Paul was writing considered them to be devoid of spiritual perception. They needed guidance and instruction from the spiritually mature. Jewish self-righteousness stemmed from a basic misunderstanding of what it meant for them to have been the favored recipients of the law. It is true that in the law they had the “embodiment¹²² of knowledge and truth.” But knowledge and truth were intended to be carried out in the affairs of life. They were never meant to be co-opted into the service of personal self-aggrandizement. The Jewish audience to whom Paul wrote fell miserably short of God’s intention for those so blessed with divine favor. They serve as a type of all believers who prostitute the blessings of God to serve their own selfish instincts. Mounce, Robert H. *Romans*. Vol. 27. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995. Print. The New American Commentary.
- Verse 20 – **the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law** –
 - These words are a strong argument for dispensational theology.
 - The Jews had the μόρφωσις [morphosis] **of knowledge and of the truth in the law**. The word *morphosis* signifies that the **knowledge and truth** is actually present in the Law, it is not the *mere appearance* but the *substance itself* (compare Phil. 2:6 and Psalm 19:7-9).

- The Jews indeed had **knowledge** of God's expectations and **the truth** about a right relationship with God, and these were contained **in the law**.
- Today, however, we have been delivered a *new form* of knowledge and the truth, which has been given in the revelation of the age of Grace. Compare Romans 6:17. This truth is not included in Romans 2.
- Verse 21-24 - In vv. 21-24 Paul speaks the same warning that begins the chapter.
- Verse 25 –
 - **for circumcision verily profiteth** - This statement is ONLY valid in the future, when the age of the law shall be restored. In the current age of grace, Paul would argue strongly against circumcision (see Acts 15 and Gal. 5:11-12).
 - **but if thou be a breaker of the law...** - Why would Paul argue for the keeping of the Law when he later argues that we are free from the law? The only way to reconcile this is to apply these teachings only to the future, after the rapture of the church and the close of the age of grace. Those who claim Paul is speaking theoretically must prove their point, and wonder why he uses a theory that he so often disproves.

ROMANS 2:26-29 | THE REALITY OF JUDAISM

- Verses 26-27 - Once again, Paul, who later so strongly argues against the value of keeping the Law, here is arguing that the one who keeps **the righteousness of the law** will be **counted for circumcision** (which seems to say, "shall be included in the inheritance of the Jews.") He also declares that circumcision in itself was not sufficient for inheritance of the Kingdom (something consistently argued in both the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels).
- Verses 28-29 - This does not argue that "gentiles can be Jews," but only that Jewishness goes deeper than circumcision.