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## The "Good" Person 2: 1-16



After reading **Paul's** severe condemnation of those who have abandoned **ADONAI** and plummeted into the gross **sins** previously mentioned (**to see link click An - The Depraved Mind of the Pagan Gentile**), one naturally wonders about how **YHVH** deals with the more upright, moral, and "good" person, who has a sense of right and wrong, and leads an outwardly virtuous life. They would say, "I'm not as bad as those other people. I don't commit adultery, I don't murder, rob and steal. I pay my taxes and stay out of other people's business. I try to help people. I follow the Golden Rule. I'm a 'good' person."

Many such ethically upright people would heartily agree with **Paul's** assessment of the flagrantly immoral people he had just described. They obviously deserved the judgment of **Ha'Shem**. Throughout history many pagan individuals and societies have held high standards of conduct. Even the lost have a basic knowledge of good and evil built into them and into society. As a result, many people today recognize and seek to uphold the moral principles of Scripture even if they are not saved. But they do not have **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** living within them to restrain their sinfulness. They trust in baptism, in their church membership, in their being born into a Christian family, in the sacraments, in high ethical standards, in orthodox doctrine, or in any number of other outward ideas, relationships, or ceremonies for spiritual and even eternal safety.

But no one can understand or gain salvation apart from recognizing that they stand guilty

and condemned before **ADONAI**, totally unable to bring themselves up to **God's** standard of perfect righteousness. And no one is exempt. The "good person" who is friendly and charitable, but self-satisfied is, in fact, usually harder to reach with the Good News than the one who is **filled with every kind of wickedness (1:29)**, who has hit bottom, recognized his sin, and given up hope. As a result, after showing the immoral pagan that he is lost and separated from **Messiah**. **Paul** proceeds with great force and clarity to show the "good person" that, before **God**, he is equally guilty and condemned.<sup>45</sup>