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The Warning to the "Good Person"

2: 11-16

The warning to the "good person" DIG: How does Paul explain the difference between being religious, a "good person," and being right with God? What guidelines does Paul say that God will use to reward or punish people? If hearing the Torah doesn't make people right with God, what does? In what sense is the Torah God's "blueprint for living?"

REFLECT: How would you define hypocrisy? Why do you think it is so harmful to the Church? We are not to judge others, but we are to be fruit inspectors (Matthew 7:17-20). How can you tell a spiritually "good person" from someone who is genuinely saved? How can you tell right from wrong in your own life? What guides you in this?

ADONAI has set up a universal stream of blessing and cursing. Anyone, saved or not, who follows the Torah as a blueprint for living will be blessed, and anyone, saved or not, who violates the Torah as a blueprint for living will be cursed.



For God does not show favoritism. All who have sinned outside the framework of Torah (apart from the Torah) will die outside the framework of Torah; and all who have sinned within the framework of Torah (in connection with the Torah) will be judged by Torah (2:11-12). Despite the assertion of **Sanhedrin 11:1, which teaches that "all of Isra'el has a share in the world to come,"** Paul explains that being Jewish, or having a knowledge of Torah will not automatically save one from God's judgment, or

guarantee eternal life (**Matthew 3:9-10; Acts 10:28; Galatians 2:15**).⁵¹

For it is not merely the hearers of Torah whom God considers righteous; rather, it is the doers of what Torah says who show evidence of their righteousness in God's sight (2:13). The Jews were hearers of the Torah because scrolls were rare and Torah knowledge came from hearing them read aloud and memorizing them, but if the Jewish "good person" doesn't do what it says he is a sinner who will die. **Don't deceive yourselves by only hearing what the Word says, but do it! For whoever hears the Word but doesn't do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, who looks at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But if a person looks closely into the perfect Torah, which gives freedom, and continues, becoming not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work it requires, then he will be blessed in what he does (James 1:22).**

God has set up a universal stream of blessing and the universal stream of cursing. For whenever the Gentile "good person," who has no Torah, does naturally what the Torah requires, then he, even though he doesn't have Torah, unwittingly enters into God's stream of blessing (2:14)! In other words, if the Gentile "good person" pays his taxes, honors his parents, doesn't steal, commit adultery or murder anyone, his life will go relatively smoothly. It doesn't mean that he can't have hardships, or bad things happen to him, but generally speaking, his life will be blessed. When the Gentile "good person" does what is right, he is actually fulfilling **the Torah** without even knowing it because it **is written on his heart**. It's **his conscience**. So, there is a level playing field as far as judgment is concerned. **Their consciences also bear witness to this, for their conflicting thoughts sometimes accuse them if they are guilty and sometimes defend them if they are innocent (2:15).**

On the other hand, if a **Jewish** or **Gentile** believer lies, cheats, and steals, doesn't honor his parents, commits adultery and murder, he enters into **God's stream of cursing** because he is **grieving the Ruach**. Paul warned believers against this when he said: **Don't cause grief to God's Ruach Ha'Kodesh, for He has stamped you as His property until the day of final redemption (Ephesians 5:30)**. It doesn't mean that he can't have good things happen to him, but generally speaking, he is going to have an extremely difficult time in his life. Even though the believer is saved and will inherit eternal life, there will be consequences in his life for violating **the Torah, God's blueprint for living**. Knowing who is merely a "good person," and who is truly saved will be made clear **on a day when God passes judgment on people's inmost secrets (2:16a)**.

The very presence of **Torah** testifies to a godly standard, which ultimately is **Yeshua Messiah**. **According to the Good News as I proclaim it, he does this through the Messiah Yeshua (2:16b)**. God is fair. **The Gentile** "good person," who does not have **the Torah** is not judged because of **it**; and **the Jewish** "good person," who possesses **the Torah**, is not saved because of **it**. **God** will punish sin and reward righteousness on the basis of trust in **Yeshua**.

I have wondered, at times, what kind of a person Judas was. What he looked like, how he acted, who his friends were. I am sure outwardly he seemed like a "good person." But for all the things we don't know about him, there is one thing we know for sure: he had no relationship with **the Master**. He had seen **Yeshua**, but he did not know **Him**. He had heard **Messiah**, but he did not understand **Him**. Judas had religion, but no relationship.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Relationship with **You** is so important. Religion is man trying to reach up to **God**; but **You** reached down to offer relationship to all who would choose to move beyond mere intellectualism into a loving covenant relationship with **You**. **After you heard the message of truth - the Good News of your salvation - and when you put your trust in Him, you were sealed with the promised Ruach Ha'Kodesh. He is the guarantee of our inheritance, until the redemption of His possession - to His glorious praise (Ephesians 1:13-14)! But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12). All who receive You as Lord and Savior, You put them into Your family and Your family will live with You in heaven forever!***

*Dear Daddy, Many friends and family are trusting in their own goodness to enter heaven. Please help them to see the sure hope of heaven when they trust **You** and the joy that as **Your** mighty power raised **Messiah** from the dead, so too **Your** mighty power will raise those who love and trust **You**, to life with **you** in heaven. **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the richness of His glorious inheritance in the kedoshim, and what is His exceedingly great power toward us who keep trusting Him - in keeping with the working of His mighty strength. This power He exercised in Messiah when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heaven (Ephesians 1:18-20). In Messiah Yeshua's holy name and power of resurrection. Amen***

As the Adversary worked his way around the table in the Upper Room, he needed a special kind of man to betray our **Lord**. He needed an outwardly "good person." A man who had seen **Yeshua**, but did not know **Him**. He needed a man who knew the actions of **Messiah**



but had missed out on the mission of **the Son of God**. Judas was that "good person." He bore the cloak of religion, but never knew the heart of **the Master**. Let's make it our goal to know **Him** . . . deeply.