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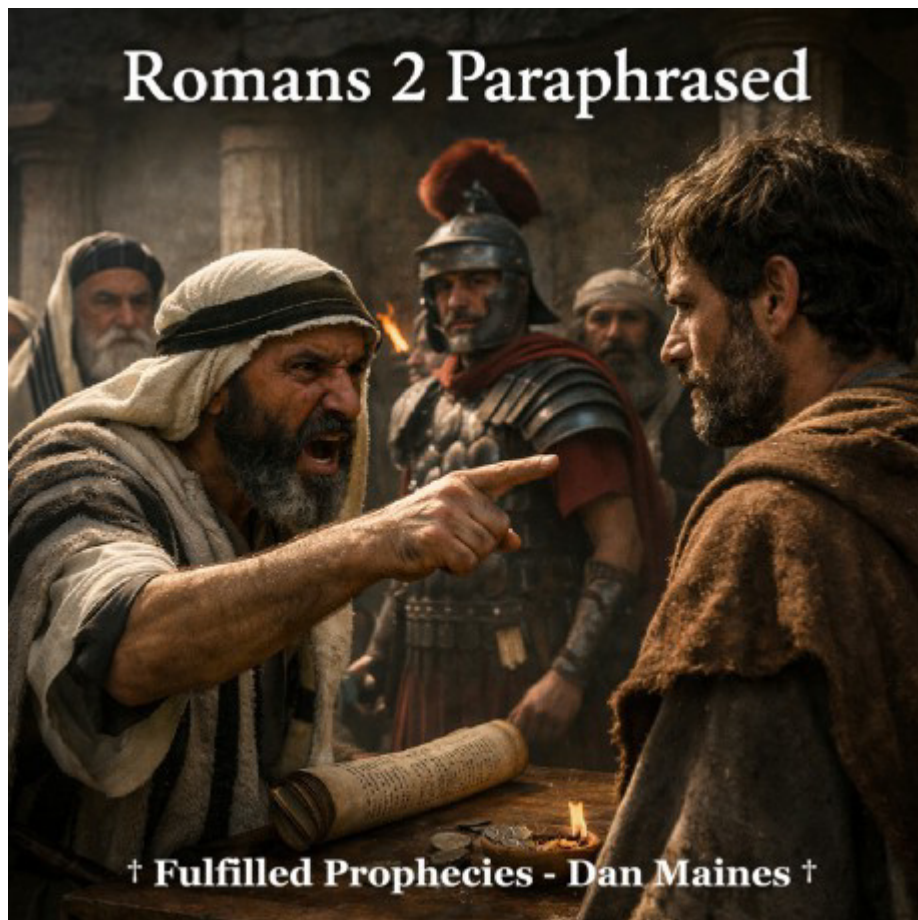
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## Romans 2 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## Romans 2 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† In Romans 2, Paul turns from exposing open wickedness among the nations to confronting those who judged others while doing the same things themselves. The point is simple, God's judgment is impartial and based on truth. Those who relied on the law while breaking it were just as guilty.

† Paul is speaking directly into the covenant transition period when Israel still boasted in the law but had rejected the Messiah. Their confidence in possessing the law did not excuse

their hypocrisy (Matthew 23:27-28).

† The chapter exposes a central truth, outward religion does not justify anyone. True righteousness comes from a transformed heart, something the prophets had already foretold (Jeremiah 31:33).

### **Romans 2:1**

So you have no excuse, whoever you are when you judge someone else, because when you judge another you condemn yourself, since you who judge practice the same things.

† Paul exposes hypocrisy, condemning sin in others while committing the same things proves guilt before God (Matthew 7:1-5).

† Judgment is not the issue, hypocrisy is. The same standard used against others exposes the judge himself.

† Early Christians like Clement of Alexandria warned against self-righteous judgment while ignoring personal sin.

### **Romans 2:2**

But we know God's judgment rightly falls on those who practice such things.

† God's judgment is not emotional or biased, it is based on truth and reality (Psalm 96:13).

† Unlike human judgment which can be partial or corrupted, God's judgment always aligns with perfect knowledge.

† Irenaeus wrote that God's judgment exposes both hidden and public sins.

### **Romans 2:3**

Do you think you will escape God's judgment when you judge those who practice these things and yet do the same yourself?

† Paul confronts the false belief that religious identity provides protection from judgment.

† Many Jews believed covenant identity shielded them, but Paul makes it clear that sin removes that protection (Amos 3:2).

† Josephus described how many leaders in Israel condemned

others while committing similar corruption.

### **Romans 2:4**

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness, patience, and restraint, not realizing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

† God's patience is not approval of sin, it is an opportunity for repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

† The delay of judgment on Jerusalem showed God's long patience before the final covenant judgment came in AD 70.

† Eusebius recorded that Christians understood the delay before Jerusalem's fall as God's mercy.

### **Romans 2:5**

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

† Hardness of heart multiplies guilt, each refusal to repent increases accountability (Hebrews 3:13).

† The coming day of wrath was the covenant judgment that fell on Jerusalem within that generation (Matthew 23:36).

† Early Christian writers connected this judgment with the destruction of the temple.

### **Romans 2:6**

He will repay each person according to their works.

† God judges fairly, actions reveal the true condition of the heart (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

† This principle appears throughout scripture, even Jesus repeated it (Matthew 16:27-28).

† Irenaeus wrote that deeds reveal whether a person truly follows God.

### **Romans 2:7**

To those who patiently continue doing good and seek glory, honor, and immortality, He will give eternal life.

† Perseverance reveals genuine faith and devotion.

† Eternal life is not earned by works but demonstrated through faithful living (James 2:17).

† Early Christian writings often connected faithful endurance with true discipleship.

### **Romans 2:8**

But to those who are selfish and reject the truth while following unrighteousness there will be wrath and anger.

† Rejection of truth leads to judgment because it reveals a willful choice against God.

† The contrast between truth and unrighteousness shows two opposing paths.

† Clement of Alexandria emphasized that selfish ambition corrupts spiritual understanding.

### **Romans 2:9**

There will be trouble and distress for every person who does evil, first for the Jew and also for the Greek.

† The phrase first for the Jew reflects covenant responsibility. Those who received greater revelation had greater accountability (Luke 12:48).

† The gospel came first to Israel, but judgment also began there (1 Peter 4:17).

† Josephus recorded the terrible distress during the Roman siege of Jerusalem.

### **Romans 2:10**

But glory, honor, and peace will come to everyone who does good, first to the Jew and also to the Greek.

† The gospel removes ethnic barriers, righteousness is available to all.

† Both Jew and Gentile share equally in God's grace under the new covenant (Ephesians 2:14-16).

† Early church historians noted the rapid spread of Christianity among the nations.

## **Romans 2:11**

For God shows no partiality.

† God's justice is impartial, heritage and status do not influence His judgment (Acts 10:34).

† This statement dismantles ethnic pride that existed in first century Judaism.

† Irenaeus emphasized that salvation is offered equally to all nations.

## **Romans 2:12**

All who sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

† Accountability matches the level of revelation received.

† Gentiles were judged according to conscience while Jews were judged according to the law (Romans 1:19-20).

† This principle reflects God's fairness in judgment.

## **Romans 2:13**

Because it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified.

† Simply hearing the law does not make someone righteous.

† Israel had the law but often failed to live it (Matthew 23:3).

† This verse exposes religious hypocrisy that relied on knowledge rather than obedience.

## **Romans 2:14**

When Gentiles who do not have the law naturally do the things of the law, they show that the law is written in their hearts.

† Conscience reveals moral awareness even outside the Mosaic law.

† This anticipates the promise of a new covenant heart (Jeremiah 31:33).

† Early Christian thinkers saw conscience as evidence of God's moral law within humanity.

## **Romans 2:15**

Their conscience also bears witness and their thoughts accuse

or defend them.

† The inner moral witness acts like a courtroom within the heart.

† Conscience confirms accountability even without written law.

† Clement of Alexandria described conscience as the inner judge placed by God.

### **Romans 2:16**

On the day when God judges the secrets of people through Christ Jesus according to the gospel I preach.

† Christ is the appointed judge of humanity (John 5:22).

† Hidden motives will be revealed because nothing escapes God's knowledge (Luke 12:2).

† Early church writers affirmed Christ's authority as final judge.

### **Romans 2:17**

But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God,

† Paul addresses those who placed confidence in covenant identity.

† Many believed their status as Jews guaranteed favor with God.

† Jesus confronted the same attitude among religious leaders (John 8:39).

### **Romans 2:18**

And know His will and approve what is excellent because you are instructed from the law,

† Israel had great spiritual privilege through the law.

† Knowledge of truth increased their responsibility.

† This privilege should have produced humility rather than pride.

### **Romans 2:19**

And if you are confident that you are a guide to the blind and a light to those in darkness,

† Israel believed they were the spiritual teachers of the world.

† The law was intended to reveal God's truth to the nations

(Isaiah 42:6).

† Yet many failed to live by what they taught.

### **Romans 2:20**

A corrector of the foolish and a teacher of the immature, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth,

† Paul acknowledges that the law contained true knowledge.

† The problem was not the law but the hypocrisy of those teaching it.

† Religious pride often grows when knowledge increases without humility.

### **Romans 2:21**

You who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal?

† Paul exposes hypocrisy by confronting contradictions between teaching and behavior.

† The law revealed sin but could not change the heart.

† Jesus condemned the same hypocrisy among the Pharisees (Matthew 23:3).

### **Romans 2:22**

You who say not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery?

You who hate idols, do you rob temples?

† Religious leaders condemned visible sins while ignoring hidden corruption.

† The issue is moral consistency.

† Josephus records corruption among some religious authorities in Jerusalem.

### **Romans 2:23**

You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law.

† Boasting in the law while breaking it dishonors the very God the law represents.

† This exposes the failure of the old covenant system to produce lasting righteousness.

† Paul later explains that Christ fulfilled what the law could not

accomplish (Romans 8:3).

### **Romans 2:24**

Because God's name is blasphemed among the nations because of you.

† Hypocrisy damages God's reputation before the world.

† Israel was meant to reflect God's holiness to the nations (Ezekiel 36:20).

† When God's people live hypocritically it distorts the truth about Him.

### **Romans 2:25**

Circumcision has value if you keep the law, but if you break the law your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

† External covenant signs are meaningless without obedience.

† Circumcision was meant to represent covenant faithfulness (Genesis 17:10-11).

† Without obedience the sign loses its meaning.

### **Romans 2:26**

If an uncircumcised person keeps the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?

† Paul shows that obedience matters more than outward identity.

† True righteousness is measured by faithfulness rather than ethnicity.

† This prepares the argument that Gentiles can be part of God's people.

### **Romans 2:27**

And the one who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will judge you who break the law even though you possess it.

† Faithful Gentiles expose the hypocrisy of law-breaking Jews.

† This reverses expectations within first century Judaism.

† Early Christians saw this fulfilled as Gentile believers embraced the gospel.

## **Romans 2:28**

A person is not a Jew outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical.

† Paul shifts the focus from outward identity to inward reality.

† True covenant membership is not determined by physical descent.

† This prepares the explanation of spiritual transformation.

## **Romans 2:29**

But a person is a Jew inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit and not by the letter. His praise comes not from people but from God.

† True covenant identity is inward transformation.

† This fulfills the promise that God would change hearts under the new covenant (Deuteronomy 30:6).

† The praise that matters comes from God rather than human recognition.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus described the corruption and hypocrisy among certain leaders in Jerusalem before the temple fell.

† Irenaeus explained that outward rituals without inward faith cannot produce righteousness.

† Clement of Alexandria emphasized that conscience and inner transformation reveal true devotion to God.

† Eusebius recorded how early Christians saw the destruction of Jerusalem as confirmation of Christ's warnings.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Religion without transformation is still hypocrisy today.

† God's judgment still looks beyond outward appearance to the heart.

† True faith produces real change in how we live.

† We must examine ourselves before judging others.

† The gospel calls us to inward renewal, not just outward religion.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** What is the main warning in Romans 2?

**A:** Hypocrisy, judging others while doing the same things brings condemnation (Matthew 7:1-5).

**Q:** Does having religious knowledge make someone righteous?

**A:** No, hearing the law without obeying it does not justify anyone (James 1:22).

**Q:** Why does Paul say God shows no partiality?

**A:** Because judgment is based on truth and actions, not ethnicity or status (Acts 10:34-35).

**Q:** What does circumcision of the heart mean?

**A:** It means inward spiritual transformation rather than outward ritual (Deuteronomy 30:6).

**Q:** Why did Paul's message challenge Jewish confidence in the law?

**A:** Because possession of the law did not guarantee obedience or righteousness.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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### **Source Index**

† Romans 2

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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