

ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD'S LAW #2 (GENTILES LAW & THE LAW OF MOSES)

A. In our first lesson we noted that divine law & sin existed before the giving of the law at Sinai.

1. We also noticed that a divine law concerning marriage (sexual morality) was known by all who wished to know it.
 - a. God spoke at various times & in different ways to the fathers by the prophets (**Heb 1:1**).

[**In this lesson** we want to notice that God, during the Mosaical dispensation, still held the non-Jew accountable to His law, including His law concerning marriage & or sexual morality.]

I. THE CONDITION OF THE GENTILES (O.T. REFERENCE)

A. Jonah prophesied...**Jeroboam II** (8th century B.C.).

1. He was of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun, in lower Galilee (**Josh 19:13**).
2. He prophesied in the reigns of Jeroboam II, & Joash, kings of Israel (823 B.C.).
3. As a prophet, it is likely that he had only this one mission.

B. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire (non-Jews).

1. God sent Jonah to warn them of their impending doom (Jonah 3:4).
2. The King & the city reacted properly to God's warnings (3:5-10).

Luke 11:32 (Jesus) – The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation & condemn it, for **they repented at the preaching of Jonah**; & indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

3. From what did the Ninevites need to repent? Sin!
4. But “sin is not imputed when there is no law” (Rom 5:13), so what law had they violated?
 - a. **The Law of Moses? No**, that was a law for a specific covenant people. **Jonah** did not preach the Law of Moses to the Ninevites.
 - b. The Ninevites had violated the law(s), which God had specifically given to them (Heb 1:1).
 - c. And there is one thing about those laws of which you can be certain; they did not conflict with the laws given to the Israelites.

[**The** Ninevites were sinful apart from the Law of Moses; & Jonah was sent to warn them of the consequences of their sins.]

II. THE CONDITION OF THE GENTILES (N.T. REFERENCE)

A. Paul & Barnabus @ Lystra on 1st tour (Acts 14:8-17).

1. God allowed them to “walk in their own ways”.
2. He gave them proof that He alone was God.
3. So the worship of any other god was simply “vain”.
 - a. The word “vain” shows that God had judged their worship to be fruitless.
 - b. They had rejected the testimony of the true God, & thus they were sinners before Him.

B. Paul in Athens on 2nd tour (Acts 17:22-31)

1. Paul referred to “these times of ignorance” which “God overlooked” (winked at, to take no notice).
2. It was the exception, rather than the rule, for God to send a prophet to warn these people as He did to Nineveh.
3. However, they were accountable to God for their actions, because even they will be judged by Jesus Christ.

C. How God can be just in judging & condemning people for being ignorant? (Rom 1:18-25)

1. What led to their ignorance?

- a. They suppressed the truth by unrighteousness (18-19)
- b. They did not ascribe His creation to Him (20)
- c. They did not glorify Him as Creator, nor did they give Him thanks (21)
- d. Then they considered themselves wise (22)
- e. At that point they became fools, darkened in heart to the point of making their own gods (22-23)
- f. Having replaced the glory of God with the glory of men, God gave them over to their lusts (24-32)

[**What** caused the ignorance that ultimately led to idolatry & sexual sins? **The choices** they were allowed to make; **choices** about which they would face the righteous judgment of God; **choices** that led to practices that carried the sentence of death.]

III. WERE GENTILES ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD'S MARRIAGE LAWS (LAWS RELATING TO SEXUAL PURITY & MORALITY)?

A. **“They are without excuse (Rom 1:20)...because they did not like to retain in their knowledge” (1:28).**

1. What actions were they NOT excused from guilt?

- a. “Unrighteousness” (29) – unjust, morally wrong
- b. “Sexual immorality” (not in the Alexandrian – Egyptian text)
- c. “Wickedness” – evil intent, plot to sin
- d. “Covetousness” – desire what belongs to another
- e. “Untrustworthy” (31) – covenant breaker

1) There is no better example of a covenant, than the marriage covenant (Mal 2:14).

2) Because God has stipulated the terms of that covenant (Gen 2:24; 3:16-18; Matt 19:5-6).

B. **Jews knew that the Gentiles were accountable to God's marriage laws** (law relating to sexual morality – Rom 2:17-24).

1. Paul reprimanded the Jews for committing the same sins they were condemning in the Gentiles.
2. Adultery was one of the sins of which the Gentiles were guilty (22), but so were the Jews.
3. So the same sins the Jews were guilty of (who were under the Law of Moses), the Gentiles were guilty of (who were NOT under the Law of Moses – 2:11-16).

CONCLUSION

A. **No one has ever been guilty of violating a law to which they are not accountable?**

Rom 3:9 – What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged **both Jews & Greeks that they are all under sin.**

Rom 5:13 – For until the law sin was in the world, **but sin is not imputed when there is no law**

So we must conclude
that even the Gentiles
were accountable to divine law,
though they were not under the covenant
God made with Israel.