

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

KNOWING THE MEANING OF WORDS IS IMPORTANT – Part 2

Romans 2:12 “All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.”

Here in chapter two, verse 12, the second word first used by Paul in his letter to the Romans, is “law.” As a Christian, when you read the word law, your first instinct is to think of the Ten Commandments. Indeed, they are God’s law. However, there is more to this word “law” than the Ten Commandments.

The Greek word here in Romans is nomos. Nomos is the Greek word that usually translates the Hebrew word Torah. Torah was the Hebrew word that eventually became the proper noun for the five Books of Moses which were also known as the Pentateuch. Michael Mittendorf, in his commentary on Romans states “it is lamentable that the common English translation for Torah is law. He continues, “Indeed the Torah has laws, particularly those given on Mount Sinai but. . .the Torah also gives instruction regarding creation, genealogies, the Gospel promise to Adam and Eve and the patriarchs . . .(and) it reveals God’s saving actions in the exodus. . .” Here in Romans 2:12, nomos does refer to God’s law as we read in the next verse with the words “the doers of the law.”

Romans 2:12 implies there is a standard all individuals must meet in God’s eyes whether they have read or heard the Torah or not. The message of the Scriptures is God expectation of all people, Jews and Gentiles, believers, and unbelievers to “be perfect as He is perfect.” (Matthew5:48) God will judge the unrighteousness of those who have never read or heard the words of the Bible in the same way as those who have. God does not “wink” at sin. . . sin is sin and the wages of sin is death. (Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23)

This is why it is imperative that the Gospel is proclaimed since only the gospel gives “righteousness and life.” (Romans 1:16-17) This is why your personal reception of the gospel is so important. “It (alone) is the power of God for your salvation. . .” (Romans 1:16)

Prayer: Chief of sinners though I am, You dear Jesus taken every one away from me and give me Your righteousness. Amen.

In Adam we have all been one, One huge rebellious man;
We all have fled that evening voice That sought us as we ran.

We fled Thee, and in losing Thee We lost our brother too;
Each singly sought and claimed his own; Each man his brother slew.

But Thy strong love, it sought us still And sent Thine only Son
That we might hear His Shepherd's voice And, hearing Him, be one.

O Thou who, when we loved Thee not, Didst love and save us all,
Thou great Good Shepherd of mankind, O hear us when we call.

Send us Thy Spirit, teach us truth; Thou Son, O set us free
From fancied wisdom, self-sought ways, To make us one in Thee.

Then shall our song united rise To Thine eternal throne,
Where with the Father evermore And Spirit Thou art one.
(LSB 569)