

QUESTION:

What about people who have never heard the Gospel at all? If they die without knowing anything about Jesus, are they considered without sin? According to this scripture:

John 15:22 - "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin."

ANSWER:

Jesus did not mean that anyone who has never heard about Him will automatically escape judgment. Rather, He meant that such people will not be judged according to His direct words, but by something else.

That is why the Bible says:

Romans 2:11-12 - "For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law."

Notice carefully: Paul does not say that those who sin without the law will be saved without the law. Instead, he says they will perish without the law. This means they are still guilty of sin in other ways. God will judge them by the light they had, not by the Mosaic Law which they never knew.

The Law Written on the Heart

There are universal moral truths God has written on every human heart. Even if someone has never read “You shall not murder,” their conscience already teaches them that killing is wrong.

Paul explains:

Romans 2:14-15 - “Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves... They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.”

This is why even remote tribes untouched by modern civilization still set moral boundaries. They instinctively know certain acts—such as stealing, dishonoring parents, or sexual perversions—are wrong. This internal law leaves them accountable before God.

Degrees of Judgment

Jesus also taught that judgment will be based on knowledge and responsibility:

Luke 12:47-48 - “That servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded.”

This shows two key truths:

No one is exempt from judgment. Even those who never heard the Gospel will face God.

Judgment is proportional. Those with less knowledge will face lighter punishment, while those who clearly knew God's will but rejected it will face greater condemnation.

The Greater Responsibility of Those Who Know

For us who have heard the message of the cross, the responsibility is far greater. If we reject Christ after knowing the truth, our judgment will be more severe than that of those who never heard His name.

Hebrews 10:26-27 - "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."

Conclusion

No human being will escape God's judgment. The conscience, creation, and the inner moral law testify to every person (Romans 1:18-20). But the greatest accountability lies with those who have heard the Gospel yet ignored it.

Therefore, we must flee from the wrath to come by embracing salvation through Christ Jesus.

Acts 4:12 - "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

This is why we urgently need to share the Good News—because ignorance does not mean innocence.

Shalom.

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