

Romans 3:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

Analysis

God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? Another emphatic *mē genoito* (μὴ γένοιτο). Paul's *reductio ad absurdum*: if the previous objection held, God could not judge *ton kosmon* (τὸν κόσμον, "the world"). The verb *krinei* (κρινεῖ, "shall judge") is future tense, assuming the reality of final judgment—an axiom shared by Paul and his Jewish interlocutors.

The logic is devastating: if God cannot punish sin that allegedly magnifies His glory, He cannot judge anyone, since all sin ultimately serves His sovereign purposes (see Genesis 50:20; Acts 2:23). But God's role as righteous Judge is non-negotiable in Jewish theology. Paul thus exposes the absurdity of the objection: you cannot have a holy God without judgment of sin, regardless of how God uses that sin in His providence.

Historical Context

The universal judgment of God was bedrock Jewish theology (see Genesis 18:25, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"). Paul's argument would have been compelling to Jewish Christians: you cannot affirm God as Judge while denying His right to punish those whose sin He uses for His purposes.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you reconcile God's absolute sovereignty over evil with His perfect justice in punishing evildoers?
2. Why is the doctrine of future judgment essential to a coherent understanding of God's righteousness?
3. How should the certainty of divine judgment shape your daily decisions and priorities?

Interlinear Text

μὴ γένοιτο· ἐπεὶ πῶς κρινεῖ ὁ θεὸς τὸν
God forbid G1096 **for then** G1893 **how** G4459 **judge** G2919 G3588 **God** G2316 G3588
G3361
κόσμον
the world
G2889

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 18:25 (Judgment): That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Acts 17:31 (Judgment): Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Job 8:3 (Judgment): Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?