

ROMANS 44 – ARE YOU IN YOUR RIGHT MIND?

DR. LEON L. SANDERS

ROMANS 12:3

PROLOGUE: PAUL LINKS BACK TO HIS OPENING

- PAUL MASTERFULLY BEGINS THIS PRACTICAL SECTION WITH HIS OPENING STATEMENT TO THE ROMANS WHICH IS CLEAR IN THE GREEK
 - PAUL BEGAN ROMANS STATING HE SERVES GOD WITH HIS SPIRIT TO BRING THE GOSPEL (RD 1:4)
 - SERVE (ΛΑΤΡΕΥΩ, LATREUC) – MEANS TO SERVE AS RECOMPENSE FOR WHAT ONE HAS RECEIVED
 - CHRIST DIED FOR US WHILE WE WERE STILL WEAK, SINNERS; THUS, WE OWE HIM (RD 5:6-11)
 - UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE: WORKS – GOD IS OBLIGATED TO SAVE BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN BOUGHT – THIS IDEA WAS DEBUNKED BY ABRAHAM'S EXAMPLE AND IN JOB (RD 4:1-8)
 - GRACE – GOD GIVES EVERYTHING AND VIA ONE'S NEW COVENANT NATURE, EMULATING CHRIST'S EXAMPLE, GIVES SERVICE BACK TO THE FATHER VIA INDWELLING SPIRIT (1 CO 15:20-28)

PROLOGUE: THESE REQUIRED WITH EVERY BLOOD SACRIFICE (RD 28)

GRAIN OFFERING

- OFFERED ONLY IN THE PROMISED LAND; MILLENNIAL KINGDOM (RD 15:1-2)
- FINELY GROUND, SIFTED GRAIN WITH SALT, OIL AND FRANKINCENSE; EACH BELIEVER (DE 2:14-16)
- REPRESENTED CHRIST'S BODY WITHOUT SIN WHICH HE VOLUNTARILY OFFERED (MT 26:26)

DRINK {POURED OUT} OFFERING

- OFFERED ONLY IN THE PROMISED LAND; MILLENNIAL KINGDOM (RD 15:1-2)
- EXPRESSED GOODNESS OF GOD AND THANKFULNESS FOR HIS MERCIES IN US (DR 1:12-16; RE 4:8-11)
- REPRESENTED CHRIST'S BLOOD SHED FOR THE NEW COVENANT (MT 26:27-28)

PROLOGUE: COMPLETE INTENT OF THE OFFERINGS

- THE FULL INTENT AND TEACHING OF GOD THROUGH THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM IS NOW CLEAR THROUGH PAUL'S WRITINGS (1 CO 13:20-26; RO 8:17-19; 2TI 1:12-14; 1PE 1:6-8)
 - EACH BLOOD SACRIFICE LOOKS TO CHRIST'S DEATH AS THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN
 - THE GRAIN OFFERING REPRESENTS THE HARVEST OF SOULS TO COME BECAUSE OF HIS DEATH AND THEIR ONGOING REFINEMENT, MATURATION, PREPARING THEM AS FIT VESSELS FOR ETERNITY
 - THE WINE OFFERING REPRESENTS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH EACH BELIEVER, THE GOODNESS THAT COMES FROM CHRIST'S ATONING DEATH
 - JUST AS CHRIST WILL GIVE ALL TO GOD IN THE END; SO ALSO WILL WE GIVE ALL PRAISE TO CHRIST FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AS IT IS DUE TO THE SPIRIT, NOT OURSELVES

ANOTHER LINK TO THE BEGINNING

- AGAIN, PAUL LINKS THIS OPENING WITH THE BEGINNING OF ROMANS INTEGRATING THIS SECTION INTO THE TOTALITY OF ROMANS (RO 1-3)
 - PAUL BEGAN WITH PRACTICAL STATEMENTS OF HIS INTENTION IN WRITING ROMANS
 - HE SEGUED INTO THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS ON WHICH HIS PRACTICAL STATEMENTS ARE BASED
 - AS HE AGAIN TRANSITIONS TO PRACTICAL LIVING HE STRENGTHENS HIS THESIS WITH LINKAGE TO HIS OPENING STATEMENTS; I.E., ONE'S PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY ALWAYS HAS A FOUNDATION
 - EITHER IT IS POORLY APPREHENDED, HAPHAZARDLY LAID WITHOUT REGARD TO SCRIPTURE OR IT IS LEARNED FROM SCRIPTURE AND BUILT BY THE SPIRIT INTO AN EVER-GROWING COHERENT UNITY THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME AND ETERNITY -- FOUNDATION OF SAND OR ROCK (MT 7:24-27)

GRACE IS GIVEN

- PAUL'S, "BY THE GRACE GIVEN TO ME," IS SIMILAR TO HIS OPENING STATEMENT, "WE HAVE RECEIVED GRACE" (RO 1:4)
 - GRACE, LIKE FAITH, IS NOT A QUALITY A BELIEVER GENERATES FROM WITHIN
 - GRACE COMES FROM GOD, BASED ON THE SON AND IS BUILT BY THE SPIRIT VIA THE BIBLE; I.E., EACH BELIEVER PARTICIPATES IN THE GROWTH OF THIS GRACE GIVEN BY GOD
 - PAUL SUBTLY EMPHASIZES THAT HIS TEACHING DOES NOT COME FROM HIM BUT FROM GOD THROUGH HIM; HE IS MERELY THE CONDUIT SO OTHERS MAY LEARN OF GOD
 - PAUL WANTS EVERYONE TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE AND BE CONDUITS USED OF GOD ALSO

PAUL'S MINISTRY BASED ON THINKING

- TO LEARN OF AND BE USED BY GOD REQUIRES THAT ONE HAVE A RIGHT MIND WHICH IS FOREIGN TO OUR FLESHLY WAY OF THINKING, THE WRONG MIND WHICH PROMOTES SIN
 - (ΥΠΕΡΦΡΟΝΕΩ HYPERPHRONEO) COMBINES TWO GREEK WORDS WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL IN UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT PAUL IS CONVEYING AS THE BASIS FOR THIS VERSE
 - HYPER – MEANS ABOVE OR GREATER AND IS COMMON IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH
 - PHRONEO – MEANS TO THINK WITH THE INTENTION OF CONFORMING ONE'S MIND TO WHAT IS BEING LEARNED; THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE INTO WISDOM
 - PURPOSE OF THINKING IS TO ARRIVE AT A CONCLUSION; SETTING ONE'S MIND ON SIN YIELDS SIN WHILE SETTING ONE'S MIND ON CHRIST YIELDS CHRISTLIKENESS (PH 1:10-16, PH 3:17, 10:16)

WRONG THINKING

- THUS, HYPERPHRONEO LITERALLY MEANS TO ELEVATE ONE'S THINKING ABOVE OTHERS; THUS, IT IS NEGATIVE QUALITY OF PRIDE; THINKING OF ONE'S SELF ABOVE OTHERS
 - PAUL ESTABLISHED IN OUR EARLIER STUDIES THAT THIS WAS THE ERROR OF THE JEWS THAT BUNDED THEM TO GOD AND CHRIST; THE REASON THEY WERE ONE THE SHEEP (RO 9:30-33, 10:1-4)
 - PAUL DOES NOT WANT THE GENTILES TO SUFFER FROM THIS SAME SIN – PRIDE OF SELF (RO 11:19-24)
 - PAUL'S REFERENCE TO THE GRAIN OFFERING EMPHASIZED THAT GRINDING, TESTING, MAKES BELIEVERS CHRIST-LIKE, HUMBLE, UNDERSTANDING THAT ALL IS FROM GOD AND NOT SELF (RO 12:3)
 - THIS QUALITY DOES NOT COME FROM WITHIN FOR THE FLESH ALWAYS SEEKS SELF OVER OTHERS (RO 7:14-25, 8:5, 1PE 5:4-6)

RIGHT THINKING

- PAUL CONTRASTS HYPERPHRONEO AND SOPHRONEO (ΣΟΦΡΟΝΕΩ), WHICH LITERALLY MEANS TO BE IN ONE'S RIGHT MIND, NOT BY WILL BUT BY THINKING ON THAT WHICH IS TRUE, JUST, PURE, LOVELY AND COMMENDABLE; WHILE COARSE JESTING AND FOOLISH TALKING PROMOTES HYPERPHRONEO (EP 5:3-4, PH 4:8)
 - PAUL EMPHASIZES THAT TENSION EXISTS THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE BETWEEN WRONG THINKING, SELF, AND RIGHT THINKING, HUMILITY; THIS TRUTH IS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE CONCEPT OF DUALITY
 - CHRIST LIVED THIS RIGHT THINKING AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW WE ARE TO LIVE (PH 2:6-11, HE 2:10-18)
 - CHRIST, GOD, TOOK ON FLESH, SUFFERED TEMPTATION AND DIED FOR SINNERS TO EXPERIENTIALLY UNDERSTAND US AND BE AN EXAMPLE TO US (1PE 2:21)

ADAM OUR ORIGINAL EXAMPLE

- ADAM WAS THE ONLY MAN TO BE SINLESS AND THEN SIN; WE SHOULD SEE BOTH RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING IN HIS WORDS
 - RIGHT THINKING – WHEN PRESENTED WITH WOMAN, HE PRONOUNCED SHE WAS ONE WITH HIM; THOUGH HE BASED THIS ON THE FACT SHE WAS MADE FROM HIM, IT WAS ALSO BECAUSE THEY WERE OF ONE MIND WITH AND IN CHRIST (GE 3:23-24)
 - WRONG THINKING – AFTER BOTH HAD HELPED EACH OTHER SIN, ADAM SEPARATED HIMSELF FROM WOMAN, GIVING GOD THROUGH HER THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS SIN AND WOMEN'S DESIRES WOULD BE AGAINST HIM THOUGH SHE WILL HAVE BE UNDER HIS AUTHORITY (GE 3:16, 17 3:13)
 - EACH ELEVATED SELF ABOVE THE OTHER DESTROYING THEIR UNITY SINCE SEPARATED FROM CHRIST

CAIN AND ABEL EXAMPLES OF THINKING

- CAIN AND ABEL ARE ALSO EXAMPLES OF RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING
 - CAIN – GIVEN OF GOD AND TRAINED BY EVE AS THE MAN OF PROPHECY TO RID THE WORLD OF SATAN THROUGH COMBAT, RESTORING THEM TO THE GARDEN; AND MAYBE TO GOD (GE 4:1)
 - ABEL – WORTHLESS ONE, COMPARED TO CAIN, WHO WAS FIT TO ONLY WATCH SHEEP WHILE HIS BROTHER, WITH DAD , WORKED THE GROUND TO PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE FAMILY (GE 4:2)
 - WHEN GOD REJECTED CAIN'S OFFERING, PRIDE, AND ACCEPTED ABEL'S OFFERING, HUMILITY, CAIN BECAME ANGRY AND KILLED THE WORTHLESS ONE HE WAS TO PROTECT AS MESSIAH (GE 4:4-8)
 - HYPERPHRONEO- LEADS TO VIOLENCE AND DEATH OF PEOPLE WHOM GOD SAVED SINCE GOD HIMSELF IS SPIRITUAL AND THUS UNTOUCHABLE

MOSES EXAMPLE OF RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING

- MOSES, AS THE CONDUIT OF THE MORAL LAW ALSO HAD ISSUES WITH ANGER WHICH GROWS FROM WRONG THINKING; I.E., PRIDE
 - LEADING THE HEBREWS FROM EGYPT THE PEOPLE REACHED A PLACE DEVOID OF WATER, THEY REBELLED, GOD TOLD MOSES TO STRIKE THE ROCK TO PRODUCE WATER, PICTURE OF CHRIST DYING ON THE STAUROS PRODUCING THE WATER OF LIFE (NEW COVENANT SALVATION) (EX 17:1-7, JO 7:37-39 1CO 10:1-4)
 - NEXT GENERATION ENCOUNTERED THE SAME PROBLEM, REACTED THE SAME; MOSES WAS TOLD TO SPEAK TO THE ROCK FOR WATER TO FLOW; MOSES MADE HIMSELF EQUAL WITH GOD BEFORE THE PEOPLE AND ANGRILY STRUCK THE ROCK. WATER FLOWED DUE TO GOD'S FAITHFULNESS, BUT MOSES FORBIDDEN TO ENTER PROMISE LAND (CHRIST DIES ONCE FOR SIN – OPEN SHAME) (NU 20:10-13; HE 6:4-6)

ELIJAH ALSO SUFFERED FROM WRONG THINKING

- ELIJAH, THE FIRST PROPHET TO EXHIBIT SIGN CHARISMAS TO AUTHENTICATE HIS MESSAGE SHOWING ISRAEL, NORTHERN KINGDOM, THEIR ERROR IN REJECTING GOD'S SUFFERED FROM THIS DICHOTOMY OF THINKING
 - ELIJAH PUBLICLY DEMONSTRATED THE POWER OF GOD BEFORE THE PEOPLE, CHALLENGING BAAL'S PROPHETS TO ASK THEIR GOD TO LIGHT THEIR SACRIFICE; AND HE WOULD DO THE SAME WHICH GOD DID – INTERESTINGLY, ELIJAH REFERRED TO HIMSELF AS THE ONLY PROPHET OF GOD (1K 18:20-40)
 - WHEN JEZEBEL THREATENED TO KILL HIM, ELIJAH RAN TO MT HOREB TO HIDE; FROM THIS SPOT WHERE THE LAW WAS GIVEN, GOD SHOWED ELIJAH THAT GOD'S POWER WAS NOT IN MIRACLES BUT IN A GUIDING INNER VOICE; ELIJAH WHINED HE WAS THE ONLY BELIEVER, EMPHASIZED SELF (1K 19:1-18)

RIGHT THINKING CHURCHES: SMYRNA AND PHILADELPHIA

- THE BODY OF CHRIST ALSO IS COMPOSED OF RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING EARTHLY CHURCHES, CALLED-OUT ASSEMBLIES; IN THIS DISPENSATION OF FIRST FRUITS CHRIST EMPHASIZES THE ROLE OF GROUP COHESION OVER INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS (PRIDE)
 - SMYRNA – POOR CHURCH, THOUGH RICH IN CHRIST, SUFFERING TRIBULATION FOR REMAINING FAITHFUL TO CHRIST BY FALSE JEWS WHO THINK OF THEMSELVES ABOVE GOD (PRIDE) (RE 2:8-11)
 - PHILADELPHIA – ANOTHER POOR CHURCH PERSECUTED BY FALSE JEWS; THEY REST IN THE POWER OF CHRIST HOLDING THE KEY OF DAVID WHO SECURES THEIR FAITH FOR ETERNITY (RE 3:7-13)
 - CHRIST DOES NOT HAVE A CRITICISM AGAINST THESE TWO CHURCHES AS HE DOES WITH THE REMAINING FIVE CHURCHES; NOTICE THE TENSION BETWEEN WRONG (PRIDE) AND RIGHT (HUMILITY) THINKING

WRONG THINKING CHURCHES: EPHESUS AND LAODICEA

- CHRIST'S CRITICISMS OF THE REMAINING CHURCHES DEPICT THE MINDSET OF CHRISTIANS HISTORICALLY AND TODAY
 - EPHESUS – THIS FAITHFUL CHURCH BEGAN TO SLIDE BY LEAVING ITS FIRST LOVE, CHRIST; THE IMPLICATION IS THAT CHRIST IS BEING REPLACED WITH SELF AND THUS ALLOWING THE NICOLAITANS TO REPLACE THE TRUE GOSPEL WITH GNOSTICISM – HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE (RE 2:1-7)
 - LAODICEA – THIS CHURCH THOUGHT OF ITSELF AS RICH, WISE AND POWERFUL, BUT ONLY IN SELF; CHRIST CALLED THEM POOR, BLIND AND WEAK; THE DECEPTION OF PRIDE (RE 3:14-22)
 - NOTICE: THE SMALL, EARLY ACCEPTANCE OF MAN'S TRUTH OVER GOD'S WHICH EVENTUALLY RESULTS IN REJECTION OF CHRIST'S TRUTH – TRANSITIONING FROM RIGHT TO WRONG THINKING

THE PATH OF THIS TRANSITION

- TRANSITION FROM RIGHT TO WRONG THINKING FOLLOWS THE SAME PATH SINCE ADAM
 - BASIS OF SIN IS COVETOUSNESS, THE TRUE IDOLATRY OF MAN (COL 3:6)
 - MAN COVETS WHAT GOD HAS NOT GIVEN AND SEEKS TO REPLACE GOD WITH HIMSELF BASED ON HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING MAKING HIM, AND HER, GODS (GE 3:4-6)
 - THIS KNOWLEDGE IS EMPIRICAL, LIMITED TO THE PHYSICAL, MATERIAL UNIVERSE FOR MAN'S SENSES ARE LIMITED TO THE EMPIRICAL THOUGH THE MIND KNOWS THERE IS MORE THAN EMPIRICAL AS IT IS MADE AFTER GOD'S MIND (GE 1:26-27, 2:5-7; HE 11:17-3)
 - MAN'S UNGODLY MIND REJECTS GOD AND SUBSTITUTES HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING ELEVATING SELF WHICH LEADS TO DEGRADATION AND VIOLENCE. COVETOUSNESS IS THE BASIS OF ALL SIN (RO 1:18-32)

EACH TO BE SATISFIED AS CALLED BY GOD

- PAUL EXPLAINS HOW TO AVOID THIS SLIDE FROM RIGHT THINKING INTO WRONG THINKING
 - GOD GIVES THE MEASURE OF FAITH, AND GRACE, TO EACH PERSON AS HE HAS DETERMINED JUST AS GOD GAVE TO ADAM, AND THUS EVE VIA ADAM, THE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR THEIR WALK WITH HIM IN THE WORLD (RO 8:14-21)
 - BELIEVERS VIA EXPERIENCE UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF THE SPIRIT TURN GOD'S KNOWLEDGE INTO WISDOM FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (PS 1; PR 2; 1CO 2:14; HE 8:17-24)
 - BELIEVERS ARE TO ASK GOD FOR WISDOM, IN FAITH, TO KEEP FROM BEING CRUSHED ON THE SHOALS OF DOUBT BY SATAN AND SELF (PS 107:25-30; IA 1:8-10)
 - BELIEVERS ENTER INTO A COMPACT WITH THE SPIRIT TO GROW INTO RIGHT THINKING (2PE 1:8-10)

EPILOGUE: GRACE IS GIVEN

- PAUL'S, "BY THE GRACE GIVEN TO ME," IS SIMILAR TO HIS OPENING STATEMENT, "WE HAVE RECEIVED GRACE" (RO 1:5)
 - GRACE, LIKE FAITH, IS NOT A QUALITY A BELIEVER GENERATES FROM WITHIN
 - GRACE COMES FROM GOD, BASED ON THE SON AND IS BUILT BY THE SPIRIT BASED ON THE BIBLE; I.E., EACH BELIEVER PARTICIPATES IN THE GROWTH OF THIS GRACE GIVEN BY GOD
 - PAUL SUBTLY EMPHASIZES THAT HIS TEACHING DOES NOT COME FROM HIM BUT FROM GOD THROUGH HIM; HE IS MERELY THE CONDUIT SO OTHERS MAY LEARN OF GOD
 - PAUL WANTS EVERYONE TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE AND BE CONDUITS USED OF GOD ALSO

EPILOGUE: THE PATH OF THIS TRANSITION

- TRANSITION FROM RIGHT TO WRONG THINKING FOLLOWS THE SAME PATH SINCE ADAM
 - BASIS OF SIN IS COVETOUSNESS, THE TRUE IDOLATRY OF MAN (CO 3:6)
 - MAN COVETS WHAT GOD HAS NOT GIVEN AND SEEKS TO REPLACE GOD WITH HIMSELF BASED ON HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING MAKING HIM, AND HER, GODS (GE 3:4-6)
 - THIS KNOWLEDGE IS EMPIRICAL, LIMITED TO THE PHYSICAL, MATERIAL UNIVERSE FOR MAN'S SENSES ARE LIMITED TO THE EMPIRICAL THOUGH THE MIND KNOWS THERE IS MORE THAN EMPIRICAL AS IT IS MADE AFTER GOD'S MIND (GE 1:26-27, 2:5-7, HE 11:7-12)
 - MAN'S UNGODLY MIND REJECTS GOD AND SUBSTITUTES HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING ELEVATING SELF WHICH LEADS TO DEGRADATION AND VIOLENCE: COVETOUSNESS IS THE BASIS OF ALL SIN (RO 1:18-32)

EPILOGUE: EACH TO BE SATISFIED AS CALLED BY GOD

- PAUL EXPLAINS HOW TO AVOID THIS SLIDE FROM RIGHT THINKING INTO WRONG THINKING
 - GOD GIVES THE MEASURE OF FAITH, AND GRACE, TO EACH PERSON AS HE HAS DETERMINED: JUST AS GOD GAVE TO ADAM, AND THUS EVE VIA ADAM, THE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR THEIR WALK WITH HIM IN THE WORLD (RO 8:14-21)
 - BELIEVERS VIA EXPERIENCE UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF THE SPIRIT TURN GOD'S KNOWLEDGE INTO WISDOM FOR GUIDANCE IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (PS 1, PR 2, 1CO 2:14, HE 8:17-18)
 - BELIEVERS ARE TO ASK GOD FOR WISDOM, IN FAITH, TO KEEP FROM BEING CRUSHED ON THE SHOALS OF DOUBT BY SATAN AND SELF (PS 107:25-30, IA 1:8-10)
 - BELIEVERS ENTER INTO A COMPACT WITH THE SPIRIT TO GROW INTO RIGHT THINKING (2PE 1:8-10)

IN WHATSOEVER STATE...

- BEFORE PAUL CAN DISCUSS ONE'S PLACE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST, HE MUST EMPHASIZE TO EACH BELIEVER TO ACCEPT THE PORTION OF FAITH GIVEN THEM AS A GROWTH FOUNDATION (PH 4:11-12)
 - THESE VERSES DO NOT MEAN GOD SUPPORTS YOU IN EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO DO; THAT IS THE OPPOSITE MEANING OF THESE VERSES – WRONG THINKING
 - THESE VERSES MEAN THAT EACH BELIEVER TRUSTS GOD REGARDLESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY ARE PLACED KNOWING THAT GOD MEANS IT FOR GOOD (GE 38:26, RO 8:28-30)
 - IF ADAM HAD BELIEVED THIS AND TAUGHT EVE THE SAME, SATAN COULD NOT HAVE TEMPTED THEM
 - IF WE BELIEVED THIS, AND TAUGHT OTHERS THE SAME, WE WOULD BE LESS TEMPTED BY SATAN AND MORE MATURE IN CHRIST AS THE WORLD WORSENS UNTIL HE COMES (2K 21:4-15, PH 3:2)