

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"The Lord Looked Down"
Romans 3:10, 11

INTRODUCTION

1. Paul is a master logician. The first chapter puts Gentiles down as sinners. Then he shows that Jews are just as bad (chapt. 2). None is better off before God as sinners (3:9).
2. God's great principles of judgment are clear (2:1-29). Anyone brought to judgment will lose. The only way is to settle out of court!
3. Men everywhere are guilty. God is not to blame (3:1-8). Support for this total picture of humanity is found in Scripture (3:10a). What the Word says settles the issue. It (the Bible) is our only authority. It is, therefore, to Scripture Paul now turns. Note he does it by giving selections from the Psalms, Prophets and Proverbs. What an indictment!
4. The universality and totality of sin are shown by:
 - a. Sin in man's character (vv. 10-12).
 - b. Sin in man's conduct (vv. 13-17).
 - c. Sin in man's conscience (v. 18).

1. GOD'S PERSPECTIVES

a. Positionally

Psalm 14:2a is the true perspective from which God views matters. It is the LORD (Jehovah) Who does this. The verb "look" is from a root meaning to "bend forward." He sees as one does when looking down from a high height (cf. airplane, astronauts). Virtually everything looks flat. All the bumps are vain imaginings.

b. Scripturally

As Scripture is quoted here, all of humanity is seen as part of a putrifying whole. Humanity lies before God with all human inequalities dismissed. Note Psalm 14:2 speaks of the "Sons of Adam" (KJV "children of men").

c. Totally

This is God's description of your own heart. It is how we are by birth. Only believing in Jesus Christ as Saviour changes our state before God. Don't live in a spiritual make-believe. You cannot camouflage your true circumstances. Total depravity is what is taught. It does not mean there is no good in man, but man has no good which can satisfy God. The quotations (vv. 10-18) show man is sinful in his being, mind, and will. Man's actions have departed from God so he has spoiled his environment. It all is traced to man's failure to consider God as he should (v. 13). While every member

of the race is not guilty of every sin noted, the roots of all sin are in all men.

2. GOD'S INDICTMENTS

a. None righteous

The quotation is from Psalm 14:1. The idea of "righteous" needs clarification because man has muddled it. The term expresses the theme of Romans (1:16, 17). Originally it meant "one who is such as he ought to be." Only Jesus Christ satisfies this definition. The issue is: are you less perfect than God? If you are, then you are unrighteous in His sight and need salvation. Place yourself alongside of Christ and you will see you are not righteous.

b. None understands

Adam was not righteous; he was merely innocent. In his innocence he sought his own way--he had no understanding. Paul affirmed the race's lack (1 Cor. 2:14). This is why the entire philosophical literature about religion is a worthless heap. Any source apart from Scripture is only wasting his time and is an affront to God. Note 1 Cor. 2:9, 10. To know the truth, you must be on the proper wave length (Holy Spirit, cf. 1 Cor. 2:11).

c. None seeks

Do not look at pagan structures to say they are monuments of man's search for God. Many present the phallus as god, exalt debauchery, and employ foulness as a sacrament. It is God Who seeks men (cf. Gen. 3:9; Mt. 2:2 (God made the star); Lk 19:10).

CONCLUSION

The Lord looked down (O.T.). He is looking down today (here). Christ came to us--in our unrighteousness, our lack of understanding, and running from Him. Why? That we might stand before a Holy God--not in the filthy rags of human righteousness (Isa. 64:6)--but in that righteousness which comes through faith on Jesus Christ. All glory to Him.