

Psalm 14 - God's Definition of a Fool

For the director of music. Of David.

- ¹ *The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.*
- ² *The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men
to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.*
- ³ *All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt;
there is no one who does good, not even one.*
- ⁴ *Will evildoers never learn—
those who devour my people as men eat bread
and who do not call on the LORD ?*
- ⁵ *There they are, overwhelmed with dread,
for God is present in the company of the righteous.*
- ⁶ *You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor,
but the LORD is their refuge.*
- ⁷ *Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!
When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!*

New International Version

I. Background

- a. Author is David
- b. Background – unknown when this psalm was written
- c. Overview – This psalm is nearly identical to psalm 53 especially in verses 1-4. This concept of “The fool” was first introduced in Psalm 10:4 where it states: ***The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him, All his thoughts are, "There is no God."*** In Psalm 14, this concept is greatly expanded upon and we can find 12 characteristics of the “fool” according to Finis Dake:
 - 1) Deny the existence of God
 - 2) Live corrupt lives
 - 3) Do abominable works
 - 4) Lack understanding
 - 5) Ignore God-do not seek Him
 - 6) Are not good
 - 7) Have all gone astray from God
 - 8) Have become filthy in life
 - 9) Live in ignorance of God

- 10) Destroy God's people
- 11) Never pray
- 12) Oppress the poor

II. Verse by Verse Analysis

- a. Verse 1 – this verse simply defines the “fool” as an atheist and the atheist as a fool. The end result of believing and living like there is no God is described here. In Luke 12:16-21 Jesus told a parable about a rich man that God called a “fool.” He lived as if there was no God and he was not ready to meet His Maker when he died. The verse goes on to say that moral corruption becomes the essence of an atheist’s character and his actions are defined as “vile” and “abominable.”
- b. Verse 2 – this verse describes God as searching the whole earth to see if there is even a single person who seeks God.
- c. Verse 3 – God’s conclusion is that there is none. In fact, in the original language there is a triple negative used – “none, no, not one”. This is a very powerful statement. God saw that all people had become “corrupt” - or the KJV translates the word as “filthy.” This is a simple truth of scripture – all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God. (Rom. 3:23) Yet God has a people that He has imputed His righteousness to – and they are referred to in this psalm as “the righteous.”
- d. Verse 4 – one Biblical commentator (Keil and Delitzsch) called this verse a “divine outburst of indignation.” God is angered over how the ungodly treat His people as well as the fact that they do not pray or call on God themselves!
- e. Verse 5 – Here God states that these ungodly people will have a sudden encounter with terror themselves – the day comes when they will face a panic attack as God defends His people. God’s tangible presence would strike fear in the heart of any ungodly person.
- f. Verse 6 – Here God describes another aspect of the atheist’s behavior – always oppressing the poor. Yet God promises them His protection.
- g. Verse 7 – The psalm ends with a cry for the salvation that God will send forth from Zion – the Messiah promised in His Holy Word.