



Psalm 14

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

¹ The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

They are corrupt,

They have done abominable works,

There is none who does good.

² The LORD looks down from heaven

upon the children of men,

To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.

³ They have all turned aside,

They have together become corrupt;

There is none who does good,

No, not one.

⁴ Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge,
Who eat up My people as they eat bread,
And do not call on the LORD?

⁵ There they are in great fear,

For God is with the generation of the righteous.

⁶ You shame the counsel of the poor,

But the LORD is his refuge.

⁷ Oh, that the salvation of Israel

would come out of Zion!

When the LORD brings back

the captivity of His people,

Let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

The state of things, v1. The world is full of fools, and sadly the church too. Romans 3, which quotes from this Psalm, does so describing how Jews and Gentiles both were shut up under sin. And each of us knows in our own soul that our lips may be speaking of God while our heart is denying Him. "Corrupt" in this verse means something like "ruined."

We can tell our "true" theology by our works (v1c) and what we do (v1d). Whatever else we are saying with our lips, these will show us what the controlling factor is in our heart. And all have sinned.

The discovery of this state: *coram deo*, vv2–3. How many of us push down upon the knowledge of God, hoping that we can convince ourselves that our sinfulness is not discovered. But however hard a man may try to hide the truth about God from his own eyes, the truth about this man is never hidden from God's eyes: "Yahweh looks down from heaven upon the children of men." The Lord is always watching, always observing.

For what does He look? The heart (to see if there are any who understand) and the action (who seek God). He is looking for both. He desires purity in every part, the inward man and the outward action. Not only the clean hands, but also the pure heart. Not only the pure heart, but also the clean hands.

But what does He see? They have all turned aside—and that in both areas. "corrupt" in v3 means rotting, putrefying. God still sees that every intention of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil and that continually. When He examines their works, there is no one who does good.

The flood is not repeated, but God's assessment remains the same. He is always watching every one of us, and apart from His grace in Christ, this is the only thing that there is for Him to see. And He sees it.

The delusion of this state: the greatest disobedience to the greatest commandments, v4 (and how violation of the first is displayed in violation of the second). If v3 is what Yahweh discovers, v4 is His response to what He sees. It is given in words that sound exasperated and astonished. How can people be so completely devoid of any knowledge?

We are to love our neighbors as ourselves, but the wicked view others as existing only for their own use (v4a). They are consumers, and they view others as objects to be consumed.

We are to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, but many cannot even be bothered to pray to Him (v4b). What a rebuke this should be to those who profess Christ, and think they love God, but live nearly prayerless lives! Psalm 14 puts the behavior that comes out of their hearts in the category of astonishing wickedness.

The danger of this state: provoking God in both His own and His people's behalf, vv5–6

The put-on boldness of the wicked will evaporate in the day of judgment (v5a). They have tried to deny the existence of God as they devour His people, but they will find the God they denied in the midst of the people whom they devoured (v5b)!

So, while the wicked appeared for a moment to have the upper-hand, even to the point of shaming the counsel of the poor, it is his own counsel that will be devastated as folly, when Yahweh is discovered to be His people's refuge. There can be nothing more dangerous than to oppose the people who have God with them and Yahweh as their refuge (cf. 1Cor 3:17).

The desire of the righteous: that the Lord would vindicate and be vindicated by putting things right, v7.

When the believer realizes that God's own Name and honor are invested in His church and will be vindicated by His

saving her, we become that much hungrier to see it happen. When He returns us from our suffering, He will be glorified, and we will rejoice in His salvation and glory!