

The Folly and Future of a Fool

Psalm 14 (KJV)

1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. **2** The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. **3** They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. **4** Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord. **5** There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous. **6** Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge. **7** Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

Psalms 14

There are certain patterns in scripture that we should pay special attention to. When words are repeated, they should get our attention. There were times when the Lord would say, “Verily, verily” (Truly, truly) and then He would launch into a lesson. What is notable about the use of that phrase is that it is only used in the Gospel of John. In fact, it appears twenty-five times. Some of the most powerful doctrinal issues that are raised in Scripture were addressed when the Lord used those words.

But it is extremely rare when you find a portion of Scripture that appears only three times. This is one of the passages that is linked to two others. Psalm 14 is almost identical to Psalm 53 (only verses 5-6 are different) and it is used again in Romans 3:10-12 by Paul.

Psalm 14 can be seen as a comfort to the faithful and Psalm 53 can be seen as a warning to the wicked.

John Phillips makes the following observation about these two Psalms:

Psalm 14 is personal... Psalm 53 is private...

Psalm 14 is pragmatic... Psalm 53 is prophetic...

Psalm 14 is about the past... Psalm 53 is about the future...

Both are about fools and their contact with the righteous.

Where the Psalm Came From:

Psalm 14 falls into the category of a lament psalm. It is a cry of anguish of how that those in Israel no longer have a belief or a reverence for God. It is a psalm that is authored by David, but there isn't a clear-cut time that can be applied to it taking place in his life.

Even though it is considered a psalm of lament, it is also a psalm of wisdom, because it is clearly marking the path and direction for those who are fools.

A Biblical Description of Fools

The word "fool" occurs 73 times in the KJV and the word "fools" occurs 42 times. There is a lot that is learned about those who are fools from the standpoint of Scripture.

A fool is disobedient and rebellious (Saul) "I have played the fool"—1 Sam. 26:21

A fool will die who forsakes safety (Abner)—2 Sam. 3:33

A fool says there isn't a God—Ps. 14:1; 53:1

A fool will die and leave his wealth to others—Ps. 49:10

A fool will go to jail—Prov. 7:22

A fool has a chattering mouth—Prov. 10:8, 10

A fool is one who slanders others—Prov. 10:18

A fool thrives on mischief—Prov. 10:23

A fool will always be a servant to the wise—Prov. 11:29

A fool is always right and receives advice from no one—Prov. 12:15

A fool cannot restrain his anger—Prov. 12:16

A fool despises his father's instructions—Prov. 15:5

A fool is always chasing a get rich quick scheme—Prov. 17:24 (i.e. the ends of the earth)

A fool stirs up fights with his words that soon come to blows—Prov. 18:6

A fool uses his mouth for his own destruction and uses words that become a snare to his soul—Prov. 18:7

A fool is always meddling in someone else's business—Prov. 20:3

A fool does not use his ears to hear wisdom—Prov. 23:9

A fool cannot be trusted to send a message—Prov. 26:6

A fool will tell every thought that crosses his mind—Prov. 29:11

Fools mock sin—Prov. 14:9

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools—Rom. 1:22

A fool is not a category we want to fall into!

God and The Foolish

Now we come to the exposition of Psalm 14.

The Arrogance of Fools

Psalms 14:1 KJV The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

There are three Hebrew words that are translated as “fool.” All three of them speak of a moral direction more than they do an intellectual direction. Yet the society that we live in would like to consider the idea that an atheist is an intellectually superior individual.

Our modern times have identified four men as the four horsemen of atheism. Although one of them died about two years ago or so. They insinuated that anyone who believed in God was not very smart and only were using their so-called ‘lizard brain.’ Richard Dawkins (the scientist), Sam Harris (the scholar), Daniel Dennett (the sceptic), and Christopher Hitchens (the rebel, now dead) were men who had great impact in the academic communities in the English-speaking world.

When I was still working at the hospital, the writings of Dawkins and Hitchens were among some of the regular fare of those who were readers. We cannot think that our little city deep in the heart of the Bible-belt is exempt from this kind of thing.

All of them were pushing to remove any elements of morality from our society. If you remember in Psalm 11:3, David said that if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? This is exactly what the fools of atheism are working diligently to do.

What they failed to take into consideration was that many of the supposed enlightened societies that pushed toward atheism were governments that practiced genocide.

The French Revolution—Fueled the Reign of Terror where 300,000 were killed. This spawned the works of the likes of Voltaire, Sade, Diderot, and Rousseau which continue to have influence in our days.

Joseph Stalin—Communism, according to The Black Book of Communism, boasted of 100 million due to genocide.

Adolf Hitler—Posed as a Christian in the early stages, but when he rose to power, he took over the churches and then killed six million Jews. Overall a total of 12 million were murdered.

Mao Ze-Dong—Killed 78 million under a Communist government.

Pol-Pot—Murdered 1.7 million in his nation of Cambodia.

Kim Il Sung—1.6 million people murdered in North Korea.

Tito—570,000 people murdered in Yugoslavia.

Suharto—500,000 people murdered under Communism.

Ante Pavelic—359,000 people murdered in Croatia.

Ho Chi Min—In Vietnam there were 200,000 people murdered.

Vladimir Ilich Lenin—In the USSR from 1917-20, 30,000 people murdered.

There are consequences of atheism that pseudo-intellectuals, educational gurus, and environmentalist/naturalist health pundits are refusing to admit are present. Here is the thing, our children who are attending even our local colleges are having to endure some of this influence. Some of it is very subtle and some of it is very militant. The consequences of atheism:

The spiritual darkness it encourages.

The man-centered humanism that honors a modern-day Tower of Babel.

The breakdown of social order that's created by laws.

The direction toward abortion and euthanasia to rid society of the burdens of the normal process of life.

The loss of the value, meaning and purpose of a life that has been granted by God.

It leads toward the selective elimination of certain populations on the earth.

There was a Christian movie that came out recently that addressed some of this idea of atheism of a young man confronting a hostile professor as he attempted to go to law school. While much of the arguments presented by the young student were accurate, the doctrinal conclusion was not right when it spoke about salvation. We need discernment in our times like never before! There is still a necessity for the New Birth, the Oneness of God, holiness, and being Word-driven and Spirit-led.

These ideas of the fool who say that there is no God gained these from hell.

Those who have this idea are morally perverse, but not mentally deficient. They see their intellect as enlightened and exalted, but I see it as fallen and in need of a Savior.

“That sapless fellow, that carcass of a man, that walking sepulcher of himself, in whom all religion and right reason is withered and wasted, dried up and decayed. That apostate in whom natural principles are extinct, and from whom God is departed, as when the prince is departed, hangings are taken down. That mere animal that hath no more than a reasonable soul, and for little other purpose than as salt, to keep his body from putrefying. That wicked man hereafter described, that studieth atheism.” – John Trapp

The thing that combats what the fools say, is a church that is vibrant, growing both spiritually and numerically! That happens when we take this matter of our walk with God serious!

The atheist is an arrogant fool!

The Action of Fools

Psalms 14:1 KJV The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.

Psalms 14:4 KJV Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.

This word “fool” also is associated with the character in 1 Samuel 25:25, Nabal, who the Bible says was a churlish (rude, boorish, coarse) man. David was going to kill him except that Abigail came along and saved him from the hands of David’s men by cooking a huge meal.

Because of the arrogance of a fool, there are actions that follow.

They are corrupt. They do abominable things. They cannot do good. They devour the righteous.

They conduct their lives in such a way that they believe there is no God and even if there is one, He takes no interest in the actions of people and will not call them to accountability for their deeds.

They Are Corrupt and Evil

All their actions flow from a corrupt heart.

If you have been even half aware of some of the news coverage that has spilled over into the nation, you have probably been aware of a very prominent actor who has been incredibly silent. More than ten women have come forth and have accused this man of violating them in the distant past. These allegations have been around for more than a decade, but have gained some credible traction in

the last few weeks. Yet this man was seen by Americans as a “family-friendly” actor with a wholesome show. But there was corruption that he had managed to paint over with the ability of his charisma and reputation. A corrupt heart at some point makes its way into expression. (And many are clamoring at me wanting me to give license to watch that kind of stuff. I will go to my grave believing that much of the entertainment industry has tried to anesthetize us to sin! It cannot be healthy for you and I do devour that kind of content daily.)

I wonder how many other corrupt men and women have managed to stay hidden in their darkness and yet their spirit comes into our homes very subtly. We ought to have preachers rising everywhere in America and preaching... Noah... A preacher of righteousness!

The Lord cannot find any principle of spiritual life in them. What they do (conduct) flows out of who they are (character).

Corrupt! The Hebrew word indicates this is like sour milk.

They Devour the Righteous

Their corruption leads them toward some actions. The first one that David points out is that they devour the righteous.

They Don't Pray to The Lord.

This is not surprising. However, the bigger lesson that comes from this passage is the condition of a preacher, a saint, or a church that does not pray.

Prayerlessness is literally a form of atheism.

Here is the burden of any real preacher's heart; He desires to pray and he longs to inspire and encourage the church to pray! We cannot make it without prayer!

The condition of my prayer life tells me all I need to know about the condition of my own soul!

The Abundance of Fools

Psalm 14:2-3 (KJV)

2 The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. **3** They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

We have seen the actions of the fool, the arrogance of the fool, and now David looks about and observes that there is an abundance of fools. It is like a ship of fools who are careening toward a shipwreck on the reefs.

The Lord looks down and He is watching them. An old evangelist, Sister Mattie B. Poole from Chicago, Illinois, used to sing a song written by J. M. Hensen:

Verse 1: All along on the road to the soul's true abode,
There's an Eye watching you;
Every step that you take this great eye is awake,
There's an Eye watching you.

Verse 2: As you make life's great fight, keep the pathway of right,
There's an Eye watching you;
God will warn not to go in the path of the foe,
There's an Eye watching you.

Verse 3: Fix your mind on the goal, that sweet home of the soul.
There's an Eye watching you;
Never turn from the way to the kingdom of day,
There's an Eye watching you.

Refrain: Watching you, watching you,
Ev'ry day mind the course you pursue;
Watching you, watching you,
There's an all-seeing Eye watching you.

We ought to remember that, not out of fear, but out of reverence. People who have problems with their relationship with God is because their view of God and

of Scripture is too low! The higher your view of God and His Word are, the higher you will seek to live your life out.

They are all gone aside... they are all become filthy... there is none that does good! No redemption has taken place and there is no reconciliation with God. They are like madmen running to their own swift destruction, but unaware of it.

The word “filthy” sums up what they are about. In the Old Testament, it means to be corrupt morally, literally to be tainted and tarnished from the original purpose.

The word “filthy” describes several things in the Old Testament:

- Filthy men
- Filthy rags
- Filthy cities
- Filthy garments

But when you get to the New Testament, the word filthy has a connection to the soul of a man:

- Filthy communication
- Filthy lucre (money) driven by greed
- Filthy conversation (lifestyle)
- Filthy dreamers
- Filthy men

Take note that the bible mentions filthy money. We should take instruction from that and realize it is crucial that our money not be a controlling factor in our lives. Money can push a man toward a material atheism.

Sin is like a child who is playing in mud hole, the longer he stays; the dirtier he becomes. Soon he is covered with it from head to toe.

David felt like he was surrounded by this spiritual breed of people. Again, we must move toward that great doctrine of separation that the Lord has called His church out of!

Revelation 18:4-5 (KJV)

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. **5** For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

Isaiah 48:20 (KJV) Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

Isaiah 52:11 (KJV) Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.

Jeremiah 50:8 (KJV) Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

Jeremiah 51:6 (KJV) Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

Jeremiah 51:45 (KJV) My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 6:17 (KJV) Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

The Anguish of Fools

Psalms 14:5 (KJV) There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.

We have seen their arrogance, their actions, their abundance, but now we can see their anguish. The Lord is going to put them in great fear for Him. Even though they did not have any to start with, the Lord is going to embed it in them.

If ever an attitude, a doctrine, or a spirit needed to come to our aid in this hour it is the fear of the Lord. You will notice the connection between the generation of

the righteous, the presence they have, and the devotion they express is directly connected to the fear of the Lord.

In Acts 5, when Ananias and Sapphira were judged, great fear came on the church. When God is lowered with disrespect as a Sugar Daddy in the Sky, we don't serve the church well.

The glory of the Lord brings about great fear and it is always connected to holiness (Isa. 6:1-9). The anguish of fools will be the day that the glory of the Lord is elevated so that they will see God as Isaiah saw him... Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips!

God and The Favored

Psalm 14:6-7 (KJV)

6 Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge. **7** Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

We have examined God and the fool and now we come to the last two verses where we can see God and those whom He has favored.

The Lord Watches His Own

Psalm 14:6 (KJV) Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his refuge.

The Lord has kept a careful eye on how the fools have destroyed the poor. Although the righteous poor have found their refuge in the Lord, the fool has done his best to destroy the favored.

Here is where we must make a crucial point... It is not the class of the poor that has caused God to see them, but rather the class of the righteous. They are poor because the atheists, the fools, have torn them down at every opportunity.

Any business venture or attempt to better themselves, the righteous have had to endure the attack of the fools. God has watched this and has become their refuge.

The word indicates it is a shelter of some kind, but more importantly, it is used in conjunction with hope and trust. Our refuge in the Lord is more than just a place that protects us, it is place that builds hope and trust into us.

Grasp what the Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount when he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Herod attempted to destroy the baby Jesus. Haman attempted to destroy the Jews as a race. Pharaoh attempted to destroy the Jews by being a harsh taskmaster.

The fool has tried to mock the poor, the elect, the church of God, but it will all come to nothing!

David interjects something else here when he writes that the fool has shamed the counsel of the poor. The poor, the saint of the Lord, has taken his own counsel by observing the fools.

He looks at this world and discovers that the ungodly don't derive a lot of pleasure from their sin. He notes them in the shouting and riotous ways where their wine and drink never satisfies the spiritual hunger they have. He watches them in their possessions and can see that they are never satisfied in that either, reaching for the coolest, driving the coolest, typing on the coolest, talking on the coolest, and living in the coolest, but it brings no contentment to them. Occasionally, he will see an ungodly person die and he realizes that in their death there are no spiritual principles whatsoever they can build their hope on.

Take counsel with the Word of the Lord! The Word of the Lord has far more value than a whole university full of human reasoning and secular education.

You can take counsel with your own conscience and understand that when you walk close to the Lord, you are in possession of the greatest joy.

While experience should not be the highest logic you have in the spiritual world, you can take counsel with your own experience in the Lord and look to answered prayers, supplied needs, moments of rescue, blessings of encouragement, and great doors opened with small ones being closed off.

You can trust in the Lord and you can put your hope in Him also.

David Wishes for Rescue

Psalm 14:7 (KJV) Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

We find this same request in Psalm 53, but it also pours from the prophets too (Isa. 2:3; 59:20; Zech. 9:9).

The best refuge for a saint of God to find in his time of persecution is his secret refuge of the Lord. Pray for those who treat you the worst. When you may be mocked for praying for them, consider the fact that this life will be the only place of happiness for them since there will be none in the one to come.

The real comfort for the godly is always the return of the Lord. It was true in David's day and it should be our hope of His glorious appearing in our day.

Titus 2:11-15 (KJV)

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, **12** Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; **13** Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; **14** Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. **15** These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

The Lord is coming back for His church.

Think about that when your days seem to be filled with despair. Think about that when you are battling the unbelief of sinners. Think about that when you are

being trodden under by the wicked. Think about that when you are mourning the loss of a loved one. Think about that when you seem like you cannot get a fair shake in life.

This world is not our home... We are just a passing through!