

PSALM 14:1-7

CHAPTER STUDIES ON THE PSALTER

"For God is with the generation of the righteous."

(Ps. 14:1) **The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.** Sin is always folly; it is the height of sin to attack the existence of the Most High. To say that there is no God, to ignore the plainest evidence, is obstinacy. To oppose the common consent of mankind is stupidity. To stifle consciousness is madness. If the sinner could by atheism destroy the God he hates, there would be some sense, although much wickedness, in his infidelity. Denying the existence of fire, however, does not prevent its burning the one who is in it. Doubting God's existence will not stop the Judge of all the earth from destroying the rebel who breaks His laws. Atheism is a crime that provokes heaven. Atheism will bring down terrible vengeance on the fool who indulges it. "A fool's tongue cuts his own throat." In this case it kills soul and body forever. Would to God the mischief stopped there. Yet one fool makes a hundred others, and a noisy blasphemer spreads this horrible doctrine as lepers spread the plague.

(Ps. 14:3) **They are all together become filthy,** spoiled, and soured like corrupt leaven. The reason we do not clearly see this foulness is that we are accustomed to it. Those who work among offensive odors cease to smell them; the miller does not hear the noise of

the mill. We are slow to discover our ruin and depravity. Are there no exceptions? Are all sinful? "Yes," says the psalmist, in a manner not to be mistaken, "They are." He put it positively; he repeats it negatively; there is none who does good, no, not one. The Hebrew phrase is an utter denial that any mortal does good. What can be more sweeping? This is the verdict of the all-seeing Jehovah, who cannot exaggerate or make a mistake. What do the opponents to the doctrine of natural depravity say to this? What do we feel concerning it? Do we not confess that we by nature are corrupt? Do we not bless the sovereign grace that has renewed us in the spirit of our minds that sin may not have dominion, that grace may rule and reign?

(Ps. 14:5) These heady, high-minded sinners, **they are in [great] fear.** A panic terror seized them. "They feared a fear," as the Hebrew puts it. An undefinable, horrible, mysterious dread crept over them. The most hardened have times when conscience casts them into a cold sweat of alarm. As cowards are cruel, so all the cruel at heart are cowards. The ghost of past sin is a terrible specter to haunt anyone. Though unbelievers may boast as loudly as they will, a sound is in their ears that makes them uneasy. **For God is in the generation of the righteous.** This makes the godly irksome to the wicked, because

they know that God is with the righteous. They perceive God's image in His people's character. They see that He works for their deliverance. Like Haman, they instinctively tremble when they see God's Mordecai (Esther 5:9). Although the saint may be in a difficult position, mourning at the gate where the persecutor rejoices in state, still the sinners feel the influence of the believer's true nobility, and they are frightened, for God is there. Let scoffers beware; they persecute the Lord Jesus when they molest His people. The union is close between God and His people; it amounts to a mysterious indwelling, for God is with the generation of the righteous.

(Ps. 14:7) 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. Natural enough is this closing prayer. What would effectively convince atheists, overthrow persecutors, stop sin, and secure the godly? The manifest appearance of Israel's great Salvation! The coming of Messiah is the desire of the godly in all ages. Though He has already come with a sin offering to purge away iniquity, we look for Him to come a second time without a sin offering. Oh, that these weary years would end! Why does He tarry? He knows that sin abounds and that His people are downtrodden. Why doesn't He come? His glorious coming will restore His ancient people from literal captivity and His spiritual children from spiritual sorrow. Wrestling Jacob and prevailing Israel will rejoice when He is revealed as their salvation. Oh, that He would come! What happy, holy, halcyon,

heavenly days we would see! Nevertheless, do not count Him slack, for behold He comes; He comes quickly (Rev. 3:11). Blessed are they that wait for Him.

(The Treasury of David, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, updated by Mark Wash)

What is at the root of atheism? Rom. 1:21

Show how these verses bring out the natural depravity of man? Also show here man's beginning and redemptive end.