

**Psalms 53:0 ¶ To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A Psalm of David.**

This psalm is basically a duplicate of Psalm 14. It was written by David for use by the chief Musician at the tabernacle, possibly using the tune of another popular song (from the Hebrew for Mahalath). A maschil is a poem that is meant to be instructive.

**Psalms 53:1 ¶ The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good.***

David doesn't pull any punches; he is not worried about being politically correct. He is not worried about hurting anybody's feelings. He is not worried about possible repercussions to himself. He boldly declares that anyone who denies the existence and authority of Almighty God is a fool. The Hebrew definition of this word is direct—"stupid, wicked, vile person." My response—Amen!

Those who reject God are always corrupt, seeking to destroy and ruin those that do believe in God. Their acts have been morally detestable. No one who denies God is capable of doing good—actions that align with God's expectations and result in eternal benefit.

Frankly, this is the first time I have read this whole verse in proper context. Though the last clause mirrors the truth of Romans 3:12...

*"...there is none that doeth good, no, not one."*

...and I have used it in corroboration of the sinfulness of all men, the context in this Psalm is in reference to those that claim there is no God. Why do they make such a claim despite all the evidence to the contrary? Because they do not want to submit to His authority.

Spurgeon: "He was a fool to think it. He was not fool enough, however, to say it except in his heart. Fools have grown more brazen-faced of late; for now, they not only say it in their heart, but they say with their tongues, 'There is no God.' Oh, no; I have made a mistake! They do not call them 'fools' now; they call them 'philosophers.' That, however, is often exactly the same thing."

Guzik: "There are many powerful arguments for the existence of God; among them are these:

- The Cosmological Argument: The existence of the universe means there must be a creator God.
- The Teleological Argument: The existence of design in the universe means there must be a designer God.
- The Anthropological Argument: The unique nature and character of humanity means there must be a relational God.
- The Moral Argument: The existence of morality means there must be a governing God."

**Psalms 53:2 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God.**

The first time you read these verses, it would seem to be a contradiction of truth. There are many that seek to follow God in faith and obedience. I think the key to understanding is in the phrase “the children of men.” Once one chooses to place one’s faith in God, he/she is no longer just a child of men, he/she is born again as a child of God.

I remind myself that David was writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit and may not have fully grasped the truth of what he was saying. Maybe at the time he wrote this Psalm, he was overwhelmed with the wickedness that surrounded him.

Those who do not seek God and have no spiritual understanding always choose to ignore the truth of God’s word and follow the wisdom of this world as defined by the god of this world—Satan. It is he who has blinded them, causing them to deny the truth.

*2 Corinthians 4:3–4 “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom **the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not**, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”*

Even so, the evidence of creation surrounds him, and the fool that denies the Creator is without excuse.

*Romans 1:19–20 “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse....”*

**Psalms 53:3 Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

All who reject God become more and more filthy, morally corrupt and more entrenched in the ways of wickedness. There is none that does what is good according to the truth as established by God and revealed in His word—not a single one. As our Creator, God is the only Being with the authority to define what is good.

**Psalms 53:4 Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.**

In looking at the Hebrew for the word *knowledge*, it references “...to ascertain by seeing...comprehend...discern, discover...learn...understand.” David questions if such fools can ever learn to comprehend the truth about God. As long as they choose to yield to the deceit and lies of Satan, they will remain blind to what they should be able to see and will never be able to discern or understand that they are wrong. They will continue to attack and try to destroy those that call upon the LORD just as surely as they eat.

**Psalms 53:5 There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.**

Eventually these evil people will find themselves in great fear before God as they stand in judgment before Him. They will be made to recognize that God takes care of His own.

How blessed we are to know that we are accounted righteous in Jesus!

*2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*

No matter how prevalent were the wicked that surrounded him, David was confident that God takes care of his own.

Spurgeon: "'There were they in great fear, where no fear was.' David sees the end of the ungodly, and the ultimate triumph of the spiritual seed. The rebellious march in fury against the gracious, but suddenly they are seized with a causeless panic. The once fearless boasters tremble like the leaves of the aspen, frightened at their own shadows. In this sentence and this verse, this Psalm differs much from the fourteenth. It is evidently expressive of a higher state of realisation in the poet, he emphasises the truth by stronger expressions. Without cause the wicked are alarmed. He who denies God is at bottom a coward...."

**Psalms 53:6 Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.**

David is longing for the people of Israel as a whole to embrace God as their LORD. He seems to be making direct reference to the coming of the Messiah, "the salvation of Israel" that will come out of Zion. He knows that Messiah's kingdom will be a time of great blessing, a time of rejoicing.

We know that David's longing will one day become reality as recorded by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the Apostle Paul.

*Jeremiah 31:33 "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."*

*Ezekiel 36:26-28 "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."*

*Romans 11:26 "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob...."*