

PSALM 14

Folly and Wickedness of Men

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Roy Enoch (11-24-93).
- B. For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. "The Judicial Hardening of Mankind."
- C. Coffman gives the psalm this title because it is quoted by Paul in Rom. 3:10-18 concerning the hardening of Gentiles as well as the Jews. (These psalms are almost identical except for 53:5 which is not in 14.)
- D. The subject of God hardening the hearts of men, and men hardening their own hearts may need to be briefly examined. Some claim that God causes some men to be evil, or all men to be "totally depraved" and unable to do a good deed or think a good thought. This would make God responsible for whatever sin man commits. James says that sin comes from our lusts (Jas. 1:13-15).
- E. A person who is selfish and self-gratifying, will often be stubborn and bitter when a righteous standard is set before him, or he is told to do what is right, or condemned for doing wrong. Pharaoh is the classical example as ten times we are told that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and ten times we are told that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. The old classic explanation is that the heat of the same sun which softens butter or wax will harden clay. The same blessings of God and instructions of how to live for the greatest happiness will warm and soften the heart of a godly and submissive person. It will harden the heart of the stubborn self-willed person. The "goodness of God brings men to repentance" if they submit to His will, but some will react in rebellion.

THE TEXT.

- 14:1** The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds;
There is no one who does good.
- 2** The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men
To see if there are any who understand,
Who seek after God.
- 3** They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt;
There is no one who does good, not even one.
- 4** Do all the workers of wickedness not know,
Who eat up my people *as* they eat bread,
And do not call upon the Lord?
- 5** There they are in great dread,
For God is with the righteous generation.
- 6** You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted,
But the LORD is his refuge.
- 7** Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!
When the LORD restores His captive people,
Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.

COMMENTS.

- A. **[v1]** "The fool" is singular, but the application is to all men as shown by the last sentence: "They are corrupt, they have done..." Verses 2 and 3 show that it is applied to the whole human race. (Especially of our day.)
- B. **[v2,3]** All are fools when we do as we please and not what pleases God. Sometimes it is from ignorance, and sometimes we choose to be ignorant by refusing to study the word of God. Paul's use of these two psalms is from an almost exact quotation from the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the OT. See Rom. 3:10-18.
- C. **[v4-6]** The psalmist continues: They persecute the righteous, and do not call upon the Lord. They do not have the knowledge of God for salvation, but this does not mean that they do not have a conscious that recognizes some basic right and wrong.

- D. **[v7]** The expression “When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people” does not necessarily refer to the Assyrian or Babylonian captivities, but to the enslavement of ignorance and sin. Christ is the one who “led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men” (Eph. 4:8). It seems that this is a Messianic promise at the end of this psalm that refers to freeing any who would accept freedom through the gospel of Christ.