

PSALMS 14 and 15

The 14th psalm exposes the principles and practices of those who opposed Yahweh, the God of Israel. We find verse 1 quoted by Paul in Romans chapter 3, where he contends that all mankind is under the taint of sin. The wicked man here is called a fool, one who has said in his heart that there is no God. Infidelity is the beginning of sin, and folly is the foundation of infidelity, and the heart is the seat of them both. Let us pray, like David, for that coming day when salvation will come to Israel, when the Messiah will sit on this throne, and when righteousness will flow like a mighty river.

Psalm 14

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 1 The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.
- 2 YAHWEH looks down from heaven on the children of man,
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 none who does good, not even one.
- 4 Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread
and do not call upon YAHWEH?
- 5 There they are in great terror, for God is with the generation of the righteous.
- 6 You would shame the plans of the poor, but YAHWEH is his refuge.

- 7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!
When YAHWEH restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

The thought pattern followed by David in Psalm 15 is as follows: an opening question is addressed to Yahweh and thus sets forth the theme of the whole psalm. This is followed by a detailed answer spoken by David himself as standing in the presence of God. In this answer are found three broad principles of conduct and then a number of basic virtues, all of which together equal ten commandments of conduct. To this is added the reassurance that he who meets these requirements shall be able to stand firm.

Psalm 15

A Psalm of David.

- 1 O YAHWEH, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

- 2 He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart;
3 who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
4 in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear YAHWEH;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
5 who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.

PRAYER

O gracious Father, let your mercy preserve us in holiness and innocence. And if through infirmity we fall, lift us up by your Holy Spirit that we might walk in the straight and narrow path. Grant us humility, truth, and justice. Keep us from slandering our neighbor or oppressing the needy, but enable us to do good to all. May we never fall from your favor but obey your word with sincere and zealous diligence, until we take our rest in the heavenly realm where you reign with infinite glory. We ask in the name of our great Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.