

Psalm 14

Last time we finished Psalm 13. In Psalm 12 we discovered that God was going to open up a new dispensation of his words that would purify the hearts of the people. And the purpose of that was so that they would be prepared for God's perfect salvation, deliverance from every oppressor. That's something that couldn't come until all of the oppressed of Israel were made godly and faithful. But at that time the godly and faithful were ceasing. And so this ministry of the words of the LORD was being given by God, at David's request, to maintain a godly seed, and ultimately prepare the people to receive God's salvation, so that it could come.

And so, in Psalm 13, we saw that ministry opening up. We saw God begin working on the hearts of the people. He started with them right where they were. They had been trying to bring their own salvation, because God hadn't brought his deliverance to them. But Psalm 13 instructed them, that in response to the thought that God had forgotten them, instead of forsaking him back, they should continue to cry out to him. That that should just be all the more reason to pray to him. And they were to ask God "how long?" To acknowledge that even if God wasn't bringing salvation yet, that didn't mean that it wasn't coming. It was only a matter of time until God would remember them, and bring deliverance.

And so with little baby steps, God was showing the people the way. Showing them that they should continue to cry out to him. After all, it is only when all of the people cry out to him with a perfect heart that his salvation will come.

And so God began purifying the hearts of the people there, turning them back to him. Getting them to seek to him in their sorrow and distress, not to exalt vile men. Prompting them, when they consider in their soul, to cry out to him for reviving, for a lightening of their eyes. For a refreshing in the midst of their weariness, even if full deliverance won't come yet.

And so in that God was trying to get the people to ask for just the thing that he's already promised to king David. He's already prepared a dispensation of his words to enlighten and sustain them in their trial. And now he wants the people not just to receive that, but to be in a frame of heart that they are seeking that from him as he continues to give it.

And so God has already begun to answer that prayer. So much so that at the end of Psalm 13 they are prompted to cry out, "I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me." To say that God isn't just going to give them one little taste of honey to revive them a bit, he is going to sustain them with his bounty, of the bread of life.

Now, Psalm 13 started out slow, started out with little baby steps back toward God, toward where their heart should be. But this is a trial, a trial by the words of the LORD. And in a trial in a furnace like that, the thing being tried has to be melted completely. Otherwise it can't be completely purified.

And so we noticed that by the middle of Psalm 13, God was getting them to completely repudiate their previous quest for salvation. To recognize the vile men being exalted as their enemies, to ask that men like that would not prevail, to put their trust wholly in God's mercy, and rejoice, not at the destruction of the poor and the godly as their oppressors did, but instead in God's salvation.

And so that's a 180° turn from where they were before. But God's going to one day bring them complete salvation, and so they need to be completely prepared to receive it.

God didn't hold anything back. He even asked them to be humble enough to pray for him to do this not for their own sakes, but for the sake of justice, and for the glory of God's name. Just so that the wicked wouldn't have a chance to triumph against God.

And so God has really begun working on their hearts.

But he's not through yet. This is just the beginning. In Psalm 14 he's about to really unleash it.

Verse 1

Much like Psalm 1, this Psalm is starting out talking about men. This isn't a psalm of praise, or a prayer. It is a psalm of doctrine and prophecy, to give men wisdom and purify their hearts.
"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

FOOL

Now, we all know what a fool is: someone who's unwise. That's a very general definition of it. That's the way that we find it used in the book of Proverbs a lot. But as I was looking up the term fool each time it appeared in scripture, I noticed that it sometimes is used in a particular context.

Job 1:20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,
21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.
22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God **foolishly**.

So it said Job didn't charge God foolishly. What would it have been to do that? What would Job have said that would have been a foolish thing to charge God with?

Well, what did Job say? "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

And so Job, although he had lost everything, still blessed God. It seemed like he was being punished for something, far beyond what he deserved. But Job didn't charge God foolishly. He blessed God anyhow.

He said, "God gave it to me, and he can take it back. Blessed be his name."

So what would be charging God foolishly? Well, that would have been for Job to tell God that he didn't deserve this, that this wasn't right what God had done to him.

To get angry at God. To not bless God, but to curse him.

In fact, in the next chapter of Job it gives us an example of what it would be to speak foolishly about this:

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.
10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the **foolish** women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

And so, Job said that it would be foolish to curse God, to blame it on God, to question God, to charge God, just because something bad happened to you.

And you'll note, that this wasn't just something that just chanced to happen to Job. All that stuff happening at once, Job knew that it wasn't coincidental. Fire coming down from heaven, and all, Job knew that this was a supernatural occurrence.

But he said, if God gives us good we accept it. If he wants to give us evil, well, we ought to accept that too.

And so it is foolish to blame God when bad things happen in life. To be angry at God. Even if it something that God has purposefully done to you.

It's a fool who gets angry at God when bad things happen, who tells God that he isn't treating him right.

That's charging God with a fault. That is saying that he is doing something wrong. That he is unjust.

Only a fool would do that.

There's plenty of fools around though, isn't there? Most everybody probably plays the fool there once or twice in their life.

So, that is one context in which the term fool is used. One connotation that it can carry if you will.

Foolishness is to charge God when you are going through a trial.

Now, I wanted us to understand that, to get the picture of that, because that is going to help us understand Psalm 14.

That's the context that Psalm 14 is in. The people are going through a trial. And they have been rejecting God because of it. They've been turning away from him because he hasn't delivered them yet.

In Psalm 13 he's instructed them not to do that. To keep crying out to him, and blessing him, and praising his name, despite the trial that they are going through and that he has refused to deliver them from.

And now in Psalm 14 he is going to show them why they are going through this trial and he hasn't delivered them yet.

He's already revealed that to David in Psalm 10, but he's going to lay it out in more detail.

In Psalm 10 all it said was that "thou wilt prepare their heart." We just understood that the people weren't upright in heart yet, they weren't fully trusting in God, and him alone, for salvation.

But now God is going to expand on that. He's basically going to show them why they don't deserve deliverance. How they have played the fool here.

So it says here, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Now, the start of this Psalm seems a bit strange when you look at it. Verse 1 doesn't seem to connect to verse 2 properly. It doesn't even seem to connect to itself.

The two sentences in verse 1 are constructed completely differently. The first one has a singular subject, the second is plural.

"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."

It really doesn't seem to be cohesive. So it can be difficult to understand exactly what he's saying here.

It kind of looks like somebody just took two sentences pulled from different places and threw them together here.

In fact, when I was reading over this I thought to myself that it seems like the second part of verse one is a quote from somewhere that he inserted in there. It kind of sounded familiar.

And when I looked up the term "fool", I discovered where it came from.

If I gave you a couple guesses I think you could figure out where it is.

It's a passage that keeps inserting itself in here one way or another.

It is outside of the book of Psalms, but it is a song itself.

If you guessed Deuteronomy 32, you're right.

Deuteronomy 32:1 Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

So here he prompts them to praise God, to bless God, just as Job did. Because all of God's actions are perfect and just. He does only truth, he does no iniquity.

And so we should bless God no matter what happens, because all of our trials are just.

That's the gist of what he's saying here, and you'll see that in the next verses:

5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

That's the part that is paraphrased in Psalm 14. That's the same Hebrew word for corrupt.

That's what he's calling their mind to when he says: "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."

Now, what it is saying here in Deuteronomy 32, is that they are being punished justly.

Remember that the purpose of this song was to remind them of the wickedness of their fathers after they were carried captive, so that they would see why all that evil had befallen them.

And the job of this song is to show them that it isn't God's "fault" that that happened to them, it isn't because he's unjust. It's because they're unjust. He was giving them according to their works in all their judgement.

And so it's telling them, don't blame God, it's your fault. Instead turn back to him and acknowledge that he is just in this, and that you and your fathers are wicked.

Don't be angry at him because of the trial that he's brought on you.

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O **foolish** people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

So he calls them fools.

Now remember how in Job that was used in the context of somebody who charged God with a fault over something bad happening to them. It called somebody who did that a fool.

Well, here God is calling them fools. Because that's exactly what they would be tempted to do when they were carried captive: to blame God and say that he was wrong to bring this upon them.

And God says no. He tells them, I'm your father that bought you, I'm the one that made you and established you. I did all of that for you, and you received that good at my hand and blessed my name. And now that you are receiving evil at my hand, you're going to curse me?

No, you still need to bless, to ascribe greatness and righteousness to me. Because this isn't my iniquity. I brought all this upon you because of your iniquity.

You've been perverse and crooked and corrupt, and haven't behaved as my children. You haven't been godly. You've been children in whom is no faith. And that's why this is come upon you.

Don't be a fool and think that I'm doing something wrong. It's all you.

And of course, that's very much where the people are in these Psalms. They've been turning away from God, and then been angry at him and questioned him when he didn't bring them perfect deliverance. And so he's pointing out to them what they are doing, by quoting this earlier passage.

Now, it's not an exact quote. Sort of a paraphrase. But it is similar enough that there is a clear connection there. It's clear that it's drawing on that.

This would definitely bring these verses in Deuteronomy 32 to the mind of someone who had that passage memorized. And remember, most of Israel would. God told them that they would teach it to their children, and he knew that they'd pass it on and remember it even when they had forgotten the law.

And so this is definitely going to remind many of them of that passage. It will be familiar to them. So God is bringing something to mind that they've already had, that they've memorized, that they've probably all meditated on and talked about and discussed. Something that had become part of the fabric of their culture, even more so than the law itself.

And so God is drawing on that here, calling all of that to their mind.

That provides something that he can build on to show them how they have been fools. How he is a just and righteous Savior, and they've just been unworthy of full deliverance yet. Their hearts haven't been prepared.

As a side note, it's interesting to realize how much this dispensation of God's word is drawing on what he's already spoken.

I mean, we get that a lot in the NT. The NT clearly draws on many OT passages, quotes them and references them in various ways. But we generally don't think of that so much in the OT. We don't think of one OT passage quoting another OT passage.

But here God is clearly building on that foundation that he laid in the law, as he opens up the dispensation of prophecy.

So in Deuteronomy 32 he said that they were corrupt and foolish people, and he starts off Psalm 14 saying: "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."

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

So it's a fool that says, "How can all of these bad things happen to me, I've asked God to deliver me and he hasn't helped. He must not exist."

That's a fool.

What God is saying here is that nobody deserves anything better than what they get on this earth. Nobody deserves to receive his perfect salvation. Nobody is worthy of deliverance.

And yet God is going to bring it one day anyway, in his mercy. And here you are, charging him. That's a fool.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

That does seem kind of strong though, doesn't it? I mean, have they really been saying that? Have they really been denying the existence of God?

They've been saying that God wasn't going to deliver them, that it seemed like God had forgotten them. But nowhere have they said that God didn't exist.

Even their enemies, when it described what they were saying in Psalm 10, weren't saying that:

Psalms 10:11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.

And a few verses down:

13 Wherefore doth the wicked condemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.

And so even the wicked weren't exactly saying that God didn't exist. They were just saying that he was never going to do anything about their wickedness.

But you see, what God is telling them here is, that that's all the same thing.

When you say that, when you say that God isn't going to punish the wicked, that he isn't going to deliver the upright, that's really no different than saying that he doesn't exist.

I mean, if the only God out there is one that doesn't hear our prayers and do justice and bring deliverance, then how is that any different than no God at all? In practical terms, it isn't. For all intents and purposes, that's exactly the same thing.

And so God says, "When you say I don't do these things, what you're really saying is that I don't exist."

After all, God has said that he does hear, that he does deliver, that he will bring judgement. And so if you say that he doesn't, then you are denying that he is who he says he is. You are saying that the God that is proclaimed in his word doesn't really exist.

When you charge God because of bad things that happen, implying that he is unjust, when he tells us that he is just, you are really saying that he doesn't exist. That the God that the Bible declares doesn't exist, there is no just God out there.

And so when you deny an attribute of God that he has declared that he has, that is just like saying that he doesn't exist.

And that's the way God takes it. That's the way he sees it. He sees what they've been saying about him as if they've been saying that he doesn't really exist.

Because he claims to be a just God that brings deliverance, and they've been saying that no such God is out there. That's been the implication of their words and actions.

But he does exist, and he's not unjust. He does not do iniquity. The reason they aren't delivered is because of their own sin.

And if they are going to charge God, if they are going to in essence deny him, they are fools.

And that's a sharp warning for them, to quit saying that, to not be angry at God because of the trouble that is coming upon them.

Because in Psalm 5 God told them that all fools would be destroyed.

Psalms 5:1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

2 Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

And so David said, "I'm going to continue praying to you, God, despite all of this evil that has come upon me. Because I know that you will take no pleasure in my wicked oppressors, and if I revert to wickedness you'll have no pleasure in that either. But if I hold fast, and keep seeking you, you will bring my deliverance."

5 The **foolish** shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

And so David wasn't going to become a fool in charging God. Instead he'd cry out to him for mercy.

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

And God would destroy David's enemies.

7 But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

But David, because he refrained from foolishness, would receive God's mercy, and be saved.

And so the wicked who scoff at God's judgement will be destroyed. And the fools who charge God for the evil that comes upon them will be destroyed.

But those that continue to trust in God's mercy, and cry out to him, will be delivered.

Now, this is good news and bad news. The first half of Psalm 14 is both good news and bad news for the oppressed.

Its a warning to them, but its also an encouragement.

These things that he's saying are true of their enemies. And the bad news is, that because they've been following the pattern of their enemies, it is also been true of them.

But the good news is, as they turn from that, if their enemies continue to be fools, they'll be destroyed.

God is one day going to bring judgement. He does exist, and he does see what the wicked are doing, and he doesn't like it, and he will punish them for it.

And so this is a warning to them to stop being fools. To accept their persecution as God's punishment for their wickedness. Or else they'll be destroyed.

But its also an encouragement, because if they turn from that, and put their trust in God's mercy, it is their foolish wicked oppressors who will be destroyed.

And so this applies equally to the people and to their oppressors. And that's a warning as far as the people are concerned, but for those who's hearts are being purified, this Psalm is going to bring hope of God's deliverance from such fools.

CORRUPT

"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."

And so, it's not that God doesn't exist you fool. The reason for all of this evil that is coming upon you is because of your own corruption.

Now, when it says "they are corrupt" there, what does that mean?

Well, when we think of the word corrupt, we think of decay, or rot. And that is one way that it is used, that is one thing that it can mean.

But when you look it up in scripture, you realize that that isn't the essence of what it is meaning when it uses the word corrupt.

If I were to give you a synonym for the way the Bible uses the word corrupt, I wouldn't give you the word decayed. I'd give you the word impure.

Something corrupt is something impure, something mixed. And of course that is what happens when something decays, when it rots or rusts, it becomes corrupted, it no longer has its original purity. It is mixed with rot or rust. It's impure. It's corrupt.

That's the way the Bible uses it.

But don't take my word for it. Let's look at some passages that will make this clear to you.

The first three times that the term corrupt is used in the Bible is in Genesis chapter 6:

Genesis 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

So Noah was perfect, he was pure, in his generations. But:

11 The earth also was **corrupt** before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was **corrupt**; for all flesh had **corrupted** his way upon the earth.

So Noah was pure in his generations, but all other flesh of men on the earth had been corrupted with the seed of the sons of God.

Exodus 32:7 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have **corrupted** themselves:

8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And so they were corrupted, because they had made an idol, and said that these were their gods, plural, that had brought them out of Egypt.

They weren't denying God, they just weren't serving just one God anymore, but multiple gods. They weren't pure in their worship of God only anymore, they were corrupt, serving the LORD and the calf.

Matthew 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a **corrupt** tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

In other words, if you have a well bred tree, it is going to bear the right kind of fruit.

But if you have a hybrid, that's mixed in with a wild variety or something, it isn't going to produce good fruit. Because it doesn't come from pure stock, it will produce corrupt fruit.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be **corrupted** from the *simplicity* that is in Christ.

So it contrasts corruption with simplicity. And by simplicity he means something that is not complex, there aren't multiple parts to it, it is simple, it is single. It is just one thing, not multiple things.

It is single, it's simple, it's pure. It's not corrupt.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth *another* Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive *another* spirit, which ye have not received, or *another* gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

And so what would it be for them to become corrupt? To not have a simple gospel anymore. To not be single anymore. To have multiple Christ's. To not be pure and faithful anymore, but to be corrupt, having a different gospel or multiple gospels.

Revelation 19:1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did **corrupt** the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

And so it said that the whore corrupted the earth with her fornication. She produced a corrupt seed. Not a godly seed, not a faithful seed. A seed born outside of the covenant. Children of whoredoms.

So that should give you a clearer idea of what corruption is in its very essence. It is impurity. A lack of singleness, of oneness, of faithfulness.

To corrupt something is to take something that is pure, and mix it with something else.

To corrupt one substance with another. As a metal is corrupted with rust, or a rag with rot. It is no longer the pure substance anymore.

It is to serve two masters. To not be faithful to just one. That's corruption. We sometimes kind of use it that way today, when we talk about politics. We say somebody is corrupt, they weren't just serving who they were supposed to be serving, they were also pandering to somebody else on the side.

So that's the way that the Bible uses the term corruption. It is to be impure, to become impure. And decay or rot is usually a pretty good way of picturing that, because it is something pure being corrupted so that it loses its integrity.

So he is talking about the same thing that's been talking about since back in Psalm 10, and even before that. It is talking about the fact that they haven't been serving God with all their heart. They aren't faithful children, they aren't a godly seed, they aren't pure in heart.

They are double-hearted, they haven't been serving God only, they are corrupt.

And remember that we said that this comes from Deuteronomy 32. And there he is using the term the same way:

Deuteronomy 32:5 They have **corrupted** themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

And so what he is saying there is that they are children in whom is no faith. They are like children which don't match the character of their father. They are behaving as bastards.

They have corrupted themselves, so that even though they should be a right seed, a pure seed, they are behaving like a crooked and perverse seed, like children of whoredom.

Because they aren't serving God, they aren't serving their father, but they are going a whoring after strange gods.

And so, they are corrupting themselves, and in the next generation there won't be a pure seed, it will be a mixed seed, a corrupt seed.

It talks about the same thing at the start of Isaiah. In fact, the beginning of Isaiah is another passage that quotes or paraphrases this passage from Deuteronomy:

Isaiah 1:1 The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are **corrupters**: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

So he called them children that are corrupters, that pollute their seed.

Now again, as a side note, I find it fascinating that both Psalms and Isaiah have Deuteronomy 32 as their foundation. And they are the two most quoted OT books in the NT.

So it is kind of like those books are the two main OT pillars holding up the NT, and it is Deuteronomy 32 is the foundation upon which they stand.

It is one of the most important doctrinal passages in the law. Especially now in the dispensation of grace, when the letter of the law is not to be taught, this is one of the few doctrinal passages in the law that is still important.

Because it is transcendent. In fact, God even told them when he gave it to them that it was something that transcended the law, that even when they had forgotten the law they would still remember it.

It would transcend the law, it would reach around the vail into their hearts and turn them back to God after they had forsaken him.

And so that song is one of the most important doctrinal passages in the law.

Which is kind of ironic, finding doctrine in poetry, in song. Often we're told that you can't get doctrine from a poetic passage. But as we've studied the book of Psalms we've found it to be a very doctrinal book. And it is the main pillar of OT doctrine that the NT is built upon.

And so when people try to tell you that this or that passage is some kind of poetry, and therefore we shouldn't try to get doctrine out of it, that's absurd. People will try to say that about Genesis. But much of the most important and transcendent doctrine in the OT is found in poetry.

In fact if you study prophecy and prophets in the Bible, you'll find that prophecy is often associated with song.

And so it is only because Satan doesn't want us to take these passages to heart that he's got that false teaching into the church. Because he doesn't want people's hearts to be changed and purified by these powerful poetic doctrinal passages of scripture.

Anyway, what we see here in Psalm 14 is that God is reminding them that they are corrupt. He's reminding them of their own wickedness. So that when they think to themselves, "why is all of this evil coming upon me?", they won't charge God with iniquity.

They won't be fools, instead they'll acknowledge their own wickedness and that they aren't deserving. And instead of being angry with God, they'll put their trust in his mercy.

And this really builds on some of what we saw last time in Psalm 13.

There God prompted them to ask for enlightening in their sorrow, not for their sakes, but for his sake.

He was asking them to be humble enough to pray that God would revive and sustain them, even if just so that their enemies wouldn't rejoice and blaspheme, saying that they had prevailed against God.

They were asking God to do it just because of truth and justice and for his holy name, not because they were deserving. Not because they had such a good sob-story.

And so now God is pointing out how undeserving they are. How it's only a fool who doubts God's goodness when evil occurs, as if they were worthy of anything better.

Ezekiel 20:42 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers.

43 And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed.

44 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your **corrupt** doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

And so there is yet hope. Because God doesn't deal with man after his corrupt doings most of the time. He continues to work, for his name's sake.

And so, in their trouble, God has lightened their eyes. And one day he will bring deliverance. But in the mean time let no fool doubt whether it is coming, whether God will bring judgement. He will. The question is, when it comes, will the people be those who God will destroy, those who thought judgement was never coming, or will they be those that have put their trust in his mercy, and have been crying out to him for salvation?

ABOMINABLE

Now he says that they have done abominable works.

An abomination is something that is utterly detestable, a cursed thing, something utterly unclean, something to be held apart and destroyed.

Just to give you one practical example of how it is used:

1 Samuel 13:4 And all Israel heard say that Saul had smitten a garrison of the Philistines, and that Israel also was had in **abomination** with the Philistines. And the people were called together after Saul to Gilgal.

So the Philistines utterly detested Israel for killing some of their people, and they were going to go to war with Israel. Come up and destroy them. They held them in abomination.

Now, as far as what abominable works are, there are a variety of things in the Bible that are called abominations.

There are certain things which could not be eaten, that were called unclean, that were to be held in abomination.

There are also various different sins that the Bible declares to be abominable. Various sexual sins are called abominations. Cheating people with an unjust measure is considered an abomination. Idols, idolatry, spiritism, and the practices of idol worshippers were all considered abominations.

Deuteronomy 7:25 The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an **abomination** to the LORD thy God.

26 Neither shalt thou bring an **abomination** into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

1 Kings 11:7 Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the **abomination** of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the **abomination** of the children of Ammon.

So an idol or a false god is an abomination.

And it is interesting to note that the hill where Solomon set up the idols to worship those abominations is also called the mount of *corruption*:

2 Kings 23:13 And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the **mount of corruption**, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

And so serving these abominations was a corrupt thing.

So when it is talking about abominable works here in Psalm 14, it isn't just talking about heinous sins in general. It is especially focussed on abominable idols.

Remember, this is a paraphrase of Deuteronomy 32. And in Deuteronomy 32 it uses the word abominations, and it is talking about false gods.

Let's take a look at that, and some of the broader context of Deuteronomy 32, so that we can have a better understanding of what God is bringing to the minds of the people here in Psalm 14.

We already read the start of Deuteronomy 32 earlier, where he tells them that they have been corrupt, but that God has been just in bringing evil upon them, and it warns them not to be foolish in thinking otherwise, not to charge God foolishly.

Then it says:

Deuteronomy 32:7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

8 When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

So he is reminding them of all the good that God did to their fathers. The point being that God isn't dealing unjustly with them, he isn't bullying them. They're his inheritance. If he brought all this evil upon them, he must have a reason for it, it must be because of their own wickedness.

10 He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

12 So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

And so God blessed Israel, at that time when they followed him alone. But now they are corrupt, following other gods, and they are suffering oppression.

13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

So he blessed them with all this. And how did they respond?

15 But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

16 They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with **abominations** provoked they him to anger.

17 They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

And so after God had blessed them, they turned from him, and corrupted themselves, and served abominations, false gods of the heathen.

And it is because of their unfaithfulness that God has brought all this upon them.

18 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

19 And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

20 And he said, I will *hide my face* from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

They have been unfaithful and haven't followed him only, so he will hide his face from them, just has it said in Psalm 13.

21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

24 They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

25 The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the sucking also with the man of gray hairs.

By the way, that was seven judgements that he just listed.

26 I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:

27 Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the LORD hath not done all this.

And so God is not unjust to have brought evil upon them. They have forsaken him, should they complain if he has forsaken them?

But he has given them less than they deserve, for his holy name's sake. So that the wicked won't have the opportunity to prevail, and rejoice over them.

And so God won't destroy them utterly. Ultimately he'll bring their salvation, for his own sake. And it goes on to talk about that.

So that gives us some more context for Psalm 14, what it is building on there. Some of the same themes that we've already seen brought up in Psalm 13. And so now God is tying all of this together for them, tying it back into something that they are already familiar with so that he can make his next point. So that they will better understand the next step here, as he purifies their heart and brings it back to him.

You see, Psalm 13 asked them to keep trusting in his salvation, to keep asking for it, even just for the sake of God's name, so that their enemies wouldn't blaspheme.

Psalm 14 is now asking them to go a step further, and acknowledge that they don't deserve salvation. And not only that, that it is their fault that God hasn't brought it. That he is righteous, but they are wicked. They've been corrupt, unfaithful, and ungodly.

And so last time he just asked them to be humble enough to admit that God was more important than them, that his glory was more important than their own deliverance. And now they're being asked to go a little further, and admit that God is also more righteous than them. That he has been just in regard to their salvation, and that they are the ones who have brought sorrow upon themselves.

They've been corrupt and done abominable works, serving strange gods.

Have they really though?

Again, that seems a little bit strong.

Just as they haven't said that "there is no God" in so many words, nowhere has he told us that they've been serving idols.

But God is looking at this as if that is just what they've been doing.

You see, they've been corrupt in not following God wholly. They haven't been serving idols, but they still haven't been seeking the LORD with a whole heart.

They've been trying to bring their own salvation, to exalt their own deliverers, despite the fact that God had already promised them his salvation, and chosen his deliverer.

And so it is just as if they've been serving false gods. The result is the same: their heart is impure. They haven't been faithful to God. They are corrupt and have done abominable works.

Remember that this concept was really introduced back in Psalm 4, where David admonished his enemies to put their trust in God.

He used some language there that conveyed to us that what they were doing was in essence the same as forsaking the LORD for idols.

They weren't trusting in the LORD, they were loving vanity, which is a word that the Bible uses to refer to idols.

And it carried on that comparison until in Psalm 7 David's enemy was called Cush, the father of the great whore the mother of the abominations of the earth. The father of the kingdoms of wickedness, of Babylon, the land of idols.

And so, it doesn't matter what you are serving, where your heart is. If it isn't faithful to God, if it is corrupt, if it is impure, it is just as if you are worshipping idols.

And so God is asking them to acknowledge here, that in essence, they've forsaken him for idols. That their hearts are essentially in the same place as that depicted in Deuteronomy 32.

And that's pretty heavy. That's not going to be easy for them. But I told you, God isn't going to hold back. He's going to purify their hearts completely.

And so he's going to give them the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. And those that submit to the trial of his words will be purified seven times.

Do you remember when we were going through Psalm 12 and we were looking at how the word of was compared to silver?

And how we found in Proverbs what the dross is?

Proverbs 26:23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

25 When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven **abominations** in his heart.

And so it described a man with seven abominations in his heart as a potsherd covered with silver dross.

And so we said that such a man has not been purified, he is just the dross that is left over after the seven purifications, that the word of God is pure from.

He needs to go through seven purifications, because he has seven abominations in his heart.

And now God is telling them here in Psalm 14 that they've done abominable works.

Which means in other words, that they are dross too. That they need to be purified seven times by the words of the LORD.

It described the seven abominations that it was talking about there in Proverbs 6:

Proverbs 6:16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an **abomination** unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

And so, we observe that these things were very much like what the people were doing in Psalm 12. They were becoming just like their wicked oppressors, speaking lies and vanity every one with their neighbor, devising their own salvation, and being willing to shed innocent blood, the blood of David, to make that happen.

And so they have been doing these seven abominable works. Their hearts have been departing from the LORD, just as if they were going after idols. They have been leaving his salvation for a work of their own hands.

And so they have to admit that they have been corrupt, that they've done abominable works, and that God is just in not delivering them yet.

But they can put their trust in God's mercy. Because in his mercy he is giving them his pure words that can purify their hearts, remove the corruption, remove the seven abominations, and prepare them to be such as will be saved.