

Darkest before the Dawn

Psalm 14: 1-7

We have read another psalm of David this evening. The timing and circumstances of this particular psalm are unclear. Some believe David was writing about past history within Israel. They think he may have written of the time in Noah's day, possibly during the rebellion and iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah, or even the wickedness of Pharaoh and Egypt during the time of Moses and the Exodus. Others believe David wrote about personal experiences, possibly in regard to Saul or Nabal. The truth is: we really don't know for certain.

Regardless of the time period or individual characters David may have had in mind as he wrote this psalm, it reveals a narrative that every generation can understand and relate to. It deals with the depravity of humanity and the trials of the righteous. Paul quoted this psalm in Romans 3 as he discussed the holiness of God and the guilt of humanity.

As I considered these words, I was encouraged by the hope offered in the end. We too face difficulty and trials, and yet hope remains. We are living in a dark and trying time, but God has a definitive and determined plan for our future. Let's discuss the [characteristics](#) of time David speaks of as we think on: [Darkest before the Dawn](#).

I. A Day of Corruption (1-3) – These verses deal with the corruption within humanity that David was pondering. His thoughts reveal:

A. Their Attitude (1a) – [The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God](#). Whether considering those of the past or people within his day, David contemplated those who denied the very existence of God. Had he thought of the days of Noah and the great flood, the wrathful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or the events surrounding the Exodus, either event would have revealed the awesome power of God within the lives of humanity and within nature itself. His generation had experienced the mighty hand and provision of God enough to prove His existence as well. Yet there were many who denied the existence of God.

- Our world is filled with those who embrace this attitude. They refuse to acknowledge that God does in fact exist. They view Him as nothing more than a myth or legend passed down through the generations by weak and ignorant people. David described these as fools. "This is the person who has descended to the depths of depravity, one who is morally *reprehensible* and completely unconcerned about others. Being totally void of conscience, the wicked individual preys on others." ⁱ

B. Their Activity (1b) – *They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.* David realized those who denied God were corrupt, engaging in abominable works, accomplishing nothing good or spiritually beneficial for themselves or those around them. The word corrupt speaks of the atmosphere present in Noah's day. The thoughts of men were continually on evil, seeking any means necessary to fulfill their lustful desires.

- Sadly we are experiencing an increase in such activity today as well. Many will stop at nothing to satisfy their lustful desires. There are no limits or restraint within society. We have created a culture that refuses to stand against anything for fear of offending or preventing someone from their desires, no matter how vile and corrupt they may be.

C. Their Apathy (2) – *The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.* The context of this statement reveals few desired the ways of God or sought Him in any way. As the Lord looked upon humanity, He saw an apathetic people who cared little, if any, for the Him. Would you not agree that our society has declined to such a state here in America as well? The majority today are unconcerned about the state of our world, with no desire to seek the Lord or please Him with the lives they live.

D. Their Apostasy (3) – *They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* As David pondered the lives of men, he realized society as a whole had completely abandoned the Lord, seeking only to satisfy their sinful desires. They had become apostate before the Lord, refusing any measure of righteousness.

- We are not there yet, but we are getting perilously close. I am thankful for the remnant of believers within our society, but America is heading toward a wholesale apostate culture. We cannot abandon the ways and Word of God and expect a different outcome.

II. A Day of Confusion (4-6) – Here David speaks of their confusion and the detrimental effects associated with it. Consider:

A. Their Incompetence (4a) – *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* This refers to their lack of knowledge and understanding. They were so focused on their desires, fully determined to obtain them at any cost, that they failed to see the effects of their sinful ways. They had no moral compass and felt as if they were accountable to no one. These denied God and refused to even consider His existence or judgment.

- I am getting to the point where nothing really surprises me anymore, but I do wonder what many are thinking, and often if they are thinking at all. Does the majority really believe there is no accountability? Do they think they can live as they please, with no regard for God or His demands, and never face their actions? As troubling as this may be, it is also tragic. We are living among a generation with no regard for themselves, others, or a holy and righteous God.

B. Their Intolerance (4b) – *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD.* Those whom David speaks of sought to consume and destroy any measure of resistance. They viewed those who followed the Lord as a threat to their indulgence. They would stop at nothing to promote their agenda and fulfill their lustful desires.

- You will have to agree that we too are experiencing such behavior on a larger scale today. There is a movement within America to silence the Christian voice and remove any hindrance to sinful indulgence. Those who championed “tolerance” for their lifestyles have become totally intolerant of any who oppose their way of life. I fear the Bible believing, God honoring Christian will soon be pushed to the fringes of society, marginalized and isolated because of our stand. The liberal agenda being promoted today will seek to remove any Christian influence from society.

C. Their Isolation (5) – *There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous.* David knew these were embraced and celebrated by the majority, but they were isolated from the Lord. They had never submitted to Him and had no relationship with the Lord. God will not honor sinfulness and utter wickedness. David knew they may have enjoyed a season of revelry and indulgence in this life, but they would all stand before God in judgment.

- As I consider the landscape in America today, I am saddened by what I see. Most have no desire for the Lord. They refuse to embrace the finished work of Christ as the means of salvation. Many refuse to acknowledge the Lord at all. Their focus and passion is pleasing the flesh. They live their lives, never knowing or experiencing the grace of God, and yet they will stand before Him in judgment. Those who have never received Christ in salvation will face eternal separation from God in torment.

D. Their Intimidation (6) – *Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge.* David witnessed many social injustices committed against believers, often for nothing more than being considered financially inferior. The wicked sought to intimidate and marginalize those whom they viewed different or opposed to their ways. The same tactics are being used today. Those who chose to stand for the Lord are viewed as ignorant, intolerant bigots. Intimidation is often used in an effort to silence and prevent any and all opposition.

III. A Day of Coronation (7) – While considering the depravity of mankind, David was not left without hope. While sin had ravaged the lives of many, the Lord remained sovereign. In Him there was hope. Consider:

A. The Anticipation (7a) – *Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!* Regardless of the time period David was contemplating, we do know he lived prior to the coming of Christ. Although that event had yet to happen, David looked forward to the coming of Messiah with great anticipation. He knew the sovereign plan of God would never be derailed by the dictates of men.

- We too can rest with great anticipation. We live on the other side of the first advent, but prior to our Lord's ascension, He promised He would come again. We live in a world consumed with darkness, but hope remains. The wickedness of our day cannot prevent the return of Christ!

B. The Restoration (7b) – *Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people.* David knew God had been faithful to His people throughout their history. If he spoke of the Exodus, he knew God had delivered them from bondage in Egypt. If through inspiration he spoke of the coming bondage in Babylon, he knew God would be faithful in restoring His people. David knew God would not ultimately forsake those who were His.

- God will restore Israel when He comes to establish His kingdom. We can rejoice in the sovereign power of God in relation to that event, but it has no personal implications for us. However, we can rejoice knowing that the Lord will preserve the saved. We may be forced to endure difficulty and trials, but we will prevail in Christ. All of the saved will be gathered into His presence as He returns for the church!

C. The Jubilation (7c) – *Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* Those who served the Lord may have groaned under the adversity they faced at the hands of wicked men, but their adversity would not last forever. When God brought restoration, joy would return. They may endure a season of suffering, but God would carry them through and provide joy again!

- I don't know how dark this world may get. We have no way of knowing what we might face in the future. I believe we will face some difficult and trying days, but we must keep our focus on the Lord. It is always darkest just before the dawn. The difficulties and trials we may endure will not compare to the joys we will share in the presence of our Lord. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy is coming in the morning!

Conclusion: I think we can relate to these words of David. It is abundantly clear that our world is changing at a rapid pace. It is easy to focus on the adversity and become consumed with worry about the future. That is exactly what the enemy wants each of us to do. He wants us to become so filled with fear that we are ineffective for the Lord. I will not tell you that we will enjoy everything that comes our way, but we are more than conquerors in Christ. It is dark now, but dawn is coming. The SON will soon rise and we will gathered out of this life of pain and sorrow.

Are you prepared for the coming of the Lord? Do you know Him as your personal Savior? We all will stand before Him one day. The question is: which judgment will you be present at? Will you stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ with the saved or at the Great White Throne Judgment with those who denied the Lord? Now is the time to respond to the Lord if you are yet unsaved. If you need strength and wisdom to endure, come to Christ for that as well.

ⁱ Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Psalms I.