

Psalm 53:1-6

In our language and with our modern technology, we have many ways to emphasize what we have written in a piece of text.

In the ancient world, the Hebrew language did not have such grammatical tools and presentation options. It used repetition of the text for emphasis.

Summary

Psalm 53 highlights the foolish and fallen condition of man and teaches that salvation for sinful mankind only comes from the Lord.

1. Foolish Atheism vs. 1a

Psalm 53 addresses the folly of atheism (**Ps. 53:1**).

The teaching of Psalm 53 regarding the folly of atheism is expanded by Paul in Romans 1, where the apostle indicts the entire fallen human race, including those who claim to have no knowledge of God.

How do all people know that God exists?

God's creation bears unavoidable and irrefutable testimony to the being and power of God (**Rom. 1:19-20**).

Why are there professed atheists, if everyone by necessity knows about God?

People deny God because "by their unrighteousness [they] suppress the truth" (**Rom. 1:18**).

What do atheists worship if not God?

Unbelieving man inevitably worships idols in the place of God (**Rom. 1:21-25**).

2. Divine View vs. 2

There were very few formal/intellectual atheists in the ancient world; i.e. those who had no belief in gods.

The fool who denies the existence of God in **Psalm 53:1** deals no so much with formal/intellectual atheism but with what we might call "practical atheism."

These are people who are not so much concerned to deny the existence of God intellectually or formally, but they allow no place for God in their personal lives (**Psalm 53:1b**).

In answer to those who are so foolish as to dismiss God, David pictures God as stooping down to observe the conduct of his creatures (**Ps. 53:2**).

What does God see when He looks down on mankind from heaven?

He sees humanity that is totally corrupt and rebellious (**Psalm 53:3**).

This is the biblical doctrine of total depravity. Man's corruption is so pervasive that there is no part or function of what he is that is not fatally corrupted by sin.

3. Fallen Man vv. 1b; 3

David unfolds man's fallen condition.

First, he speaks of man's unrighteousness before God (**Ps. 53:1b**).

Secondly, David speaks about man's morally corrupt nature (**Psalm 53:3**).

Thirdly, David points to the fact that man's folly and fallen state are not only total but also universal (**Ps. 53:3**).

4. Longing Plea vv. 4-6

As David reflects on man's great need for salvation, he marvels at the destructive nature of morally corrupt man (**Psalm 53:4**).

It is not as though unbelieving men and women calmly enjoyed their rebellion against God (**Psalm 53:5**).

All mankind is gripped by the misery of depravity outlined here in Psalm 53.

This sobering reality leads David to long for salvation from God (**Ps. 53:6**).

Knowing the total depravity of man, David looks only to God for a salvation that is entirely of sovereign grace.

The glad day that David prophesied arrived with the coming of Jesus Christ.

The temple on Mount Zion, with its sacrifices for sin, taught God's people to look for a Savior whose substitutionary death would cleanse from sin.

By trusting in Jesus Christ, totally depraved sinners may be washed clean and renewed to spiritual life, experiencing the gladness of God's restoring mercy.