

The Journey from “no God” and “no good” (אין)
to Total Restoration (שוב שְׁבוּת “turn...turning”)

Psalm 14 (Nabal’s landing)

<p>1 לְדָוִד</p> <p>אָמַר נָבָל בְּלִבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים הַשְׁחִיתוּ הַתְּעִיבוּ עָלֶיָהּ אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב :</p> <p>2 יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁקִיף עַל-בְּנֵי-אָדָם לְרֹאוֹת הַיָּשׁ מִשְׁכִּיל דָּרַשׁ אֶת-אֱלֹהִים :</p>	<p>1 By David</p> <p>The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”</p> <p>They have become corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.</p> <p>2 I AM looks down from heaven on the sons of mankind, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.</p>
<p>3 הַכֹּל סָר יַחְדָּו נֶאֱלָחוּ אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב אֵין גַּם-אֶחָד :</p> <p>4 הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ כָּל-פֹּעֲלֵי אָנָן אֲכָלֵי עַמִּי אֲכָלוּ לֶחֶם יְהוָה לֹא קָרָאוּ :</p>	<p>3 They all have turned away; altogether become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.</p> <p>4 Do they not know [anything], all those doers of evil, who eat up my people as they eat bread [and] I AM they do not call upon?</p>
<p>5 שָׁם פָּתְרוּ פֶתַח כִּי-אֱלֹהִים בְּדוֹר צַדִּיק :</p> <p>6 עֲצַת-עָנִי תִבְיֹשׁ כִּי יִהְיֶה מִחֹסְהוֹ :</p>	<p>5 There they are seized in terror, for God is among the circle [generation] of the righteous.</p> <p>6 The plans of the poor man you may shame, but I AM is his refuge.</p>
<p>7 מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יִשׁוּעַת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ יִגַּל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל :</p>	<p>7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When I AM restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.</p>

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1

By David

The **fool** says in his heart, “There is **no God**.”

They have become corrupt, they do abominable deeds;
there is **none** who does good.

2 **I AM** looks down from heaven on the sons of mankind,

to see if there are any who understand,
who seek after **God**.

3 They all have turned away; altogether become corrupt;

there is **none** who does good,
not even one.

4 Do they **not** know [anything], all those doers of **evil**,

who eat up my people as they eat bread
[and] **I AM** they do **not** call upon?

5 **There** they are seized in terror,

for God is among the circle [generation] of the righteous.

6 The plans of the poor man you may shame,

but I AM is his refuge.

7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!

When **I AM** restores the fortunes of his people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

I. God Dismissed on Earth

The fool’s denial of God, and its far reaching consequence: all goodness is lost

II. Man Assessed from Heaven: A Prophetic Word

A. I AM’s search for God seekers

B. The tragic result: the search turns up empty, with corruption everywhere, affecting everyone

C. The great miscalculation: no accountability

1. They devour the poor with impunity

2. with no regard for I AM

III. God’s Intervention

A. The destiny of the wicked: from *tyranny* to *terror*

B. The fate of the poor: from *shame* to *security*

IV. Response: Longing for the Great Turning

A. Petition: longing for restoration

B. Vow of praise: *restores the fortunes* = “turns the turning” (see Rom 8:19-25)

The poet takes us through **three fields of vision**. 1. The **exposure of the human heart** where all have been tainted by corruption; 2. **Distinctions** mysteriously emerge; by some miracle, there is still yet a people God would call ‘mine’, a circle of ‘righteous,’ a people inevitably suffering from the ruthless; 3. The **vision of transformation** of a world made new, when I AM will send out salvation for his people and turn their deserts to life, beauty and joyful praise. (Adapted from John Eaton, *The Psalms* (London: Continuum, 2005), 93.)