

Psalm 14

Last time we started Psalm 14, and we began looking at just the first verse, where it says: “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 we saw how God was admonishing them not to be fools and blame him for their trouble and sorrow, not to be angry at him and deny him because he hadn’t brought perfect salvation yet. He wants them to realize that he does exist, he is righteous, and he will bring their salvation. And that it is their own fault that it hasn’t come yet. That they don’t deserve any better than they’re getting. That they have been corrupt, not serving him with a whole heart. Instead their heart has been impure, and they’ve been doing abominable works. And so they need to be purified and have their hearts prepared before their salvation can come.

And so in telling them that, God paraphrased part of Deuteronomy 32, calling that passage to their remembrance, to give them some background for what he is about to say in this Psalm. Really, verse 1 of Psalm 14 is just an introduction, just some background to give context to what he is about to say. That’s sort of his base text, and now he’s going to go on and expound on that. And so that’s what we’re going to look at today.

Now, what he’s doing here in the first half of this Psalm, is really just preparation for the second half. He has something he wants to say in the second half of this Psalm, but he needs to say something else first, to make sure that the people’s hearts are in the right place. He needs to finish what he started in Psalm 13 before he takes the next step here. And so what we saw him doing here in Psalm 14 last time was bringing the people all the way, to not only repudiating their prior actions, but acknowledging them as wicked, as being in essence idolatry, and totally repenting of it. You see, before, God was just getting them to ask him to do it for his sake, if not for their sakes. But now he’s telling them that not only are they not important enough to be saved for their own sakes, but that they are totally undeserving of it as well.

And so God is taking them all the way here. And then in the second half of this Psalm he’s going to flip that around, and give them hope.

Verse 2

You remember in Psalm 13 they asked God to consider them, to not utterly forsake them but to return and revive them, and consider them and see when they were prepared for salvation. Well, now we find out that God did consider them, he looked down from heaven, and we’re going to find out what he saw.

LOOKED

So it says that God looked down from heaven.
The first time that the term looked is used in the Bible:

Genesis 6:12 And God **looked** upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

And we referenced that verse last week, talking about the corruption of all flesh before the flood. And so when God looked on the earth then, he saw corruption.

And that's what he's been talking about now as well. So it doesn't bode too well for Israel. They've asked God to consider them, but when he looks down and sees corruption, that isn't a good thing.

When he saw that in Noah's day he decided to destroy the whole earth.

Isaiah 5:4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I **looked** that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

So God looked at his vineyard, and it was filled with corrupt vines, that brought forth wild grapes. It didn't produce a pure seed.

Isaiah 5:7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he **looked** for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

And so because of their corruption, and their oppression, God brought Israel into bondage and captivity. He brought judgement upon them.

But that isn't always God's response. When Israel was crying out to God from their bondage in Egypt, it says:

Exodus 2:25 And God **looked** upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

So, when God looked down and saw them in oppression and bondage, and that they were crying out to him, he had respect unto them. And he sent them a deliverer.

Now, we know that right now full deliverance isn't coming to them. God isn't going to completely perfect salvation. He isn't going to forever destroy all oppressors yet.

Because their hearts aren't prepared. They haven't been crying out to him. They have been corrupt.

But perhaps all hope is not lost. Because when God looks on affliction, it causes him to want to do something about it.

David, when he was in distress said:

2 Samuel 16:12 It may be that the LORD will **look** on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.

So when Shemei the Benjamite was cursing David when he fled from Absalom, David asked that God might bless him for the cursing of his enemies.

We've also looked at what Samuel's mother prayed before he was conceived:

1 Samuel 1:11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed **look** on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

And so she also asked God to look on her affliction. And he did, and gave Israel a deliverer.

Job 33:27 He **looketh** upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not;
28 He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

And so God looks on those in affliction, and when he sees that they have repented, he revives them, and lightens their eyes.
And that's what he's told them here that he is going to do for them. But first they need to repent and recognize that they don't deserve it. And that's what God is working on here.

And so God's response is not based on whether the people are being oppressed.
There are times when he looks, and there is oppression and affliction, and he gets angry, and increases it in judgement on them.
And there are times when he looks, and sees oppression and afflictions, and brings revival and deliverance.
And which one happens is based upon the hearts of the people.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, **Look** not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man **looketh** on the outward appearance, but the LORD **looketh** on the heart.

And so when God sent Samuel to anoint the king of Israel, and ordain their strength, he told him that he was looking on the heart. And he rejected seven before he found that heart that was pure, in David.

And so when God looks down from heaven here, he isn't looking to see how much affliction their enduring. He isn't looking to see how bad life is down here on earth.

He doesn't look at any of that when he is determining whether to bring deliverance.

That's why so many fools get angry at God, as we talked about last week. Because it seems like this earth is so horrible. And people are so foolish they think that somehow they're entitled to be delivered from all of the bad things in this world.

But when God looks down at earth, he doesn't look at all that. He's looking at the hearts of the people. That's what he's concerned about. That's what determines whether he's going to grant them salvation.

And so it says: "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God."

And so God isn't looking at how bad their affliction is, how bad their sorrow is. He's looking at the hearts.

He isn't looking at the earth and saying, "This trouble and oppression is so bad, these people don't deserve this."

He's looking at the hearts and saying, "These people are so bad, they don't deserve to live outside of the torments of hell a moment longer."

But then he adds, "But some of those people will let me purify their hearts, and they'll glorify my name. And so I won't destroy the earth yet. I'll suffer mankind to continue a little longer, so that I can purify the hearts of some of the people, prepare them for salvation, and get eternal glory for my holy name through their deliverance."

And so when God is looking down, he's looking at the hearts.

And I think that again God is drawing on some passages from the law as he is building this second verse of Psalm 14.

I think that this phrase “looked down from heaven” is intended to remind the people of Deuteronomy 26.

Deuteronomy 26:12 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

So this is something that they would all have to do every three years. So again it is something that they will have been reminded of regularly. Just as Deuteronomy 32 would have been a passage that they would have known by heart, this is something that would also be more familiar to them.

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them:

14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

15 **Look down** from thy holy habitation, **from heaven**, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

So they were to ask God to look down from heaven, and see that they had kept his commandments, and bless them.

16 This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with *all thine heart, and with all thy soul*.

Uh, oh. They haven't been doing that. They've been corrupt, he's told them here in Psalm 14. They haven't been serving God with all their heart. They've been mixing that with their own quest for self-deliverance.

When he looked down and saw that they had kept his commandments he was going to bless them. But what if they haven't, then what? What will God's response be then?

I'd say they need to get their heart right real quick, huh?

If God is going to look down and see that, that's not going to be good.

This is why their heart needs to be purified. So that when God looks down he sees that they're serving him with all their heart and all their soul. And then he will bless them and bring them deliverance.

So what we are seeing here is that God was looking for something in the people. And we're going to see next time that he didn't find it. He's going to say there is none, no, not one. And this relates to an end-time prophecy in Isaiah 63:

Isaiah 63:1 *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*

2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

4 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

*5 And I **looked**, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.*

And so when Christ returns after the tribulation and tramples the armies of the antichrist at the battle of Armageddon, there won't be anybody on earth to help him.

He looked to see if there were any like him, righteous and with strength and might to save. But there will be no righteous kings on earth with strength to withstand that wicked one.

And so Christ will bring salvation alone.

Here in these Psalms the people have been trying to bring their own salvation. But in the end they won't. In the end their will be none with strength to save, none with might to speak righteously against the antichrist, and then God will be their only hope.

And so they will call out to him alone, with all their heart, for salvation. And he will hear them, and he alone will bring it.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

And so he is going to tread down the strength of all the people to the earth, and he alone will be mighty in that day.

But there's more to this than just judgement, their's also deliverance:

7 I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

8 For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

12 That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

13 That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

So it was Christ the LORD that saved them then, and it is he who will save them in the end.

15 Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

And so now seeing that God is going to do this, to save them as in the days of old, he asks him to look down from heaven upon their affliction, and have mercy, and do it. He asks him why he is waiting, why is he restraining his mercy?

16 Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

17 O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

And so there is a prophecy that God would harden the heart of Israel from his fear. Which has been taking place for the last 2000 years.

But there will come a time when God will return, and prepare their hearts, and bring salvation. Because he is their redeemer, and his name is everlasting. And he will do it for his name's sake.

18 The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

Which is of course what will happen during the tribulation.

19 We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.

And so he reminds God that Israel is called by his name, and that he must return and save them for his name's sake.

These other nation's aren't called by his name, he need show no restraint in destroying them. But for his own glory he must come and deliver Israel.

So there will come a time when they ask the LORD to look down from heaven, and he will, and he'll see the affliction of his people, and that there is none to help them, and then he alone will be their Savior, for the everlasting glory of his name.

CHILDREN OF MEN

So it says, "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men."

Now that phrase, "children of men", that's a phrase that we've seen used before in Psalms.

It's a way that God refers to man sometimes when he wants to put him in his place.

The first time that the phrase is used is in Genesis 11:

Genesis 11:4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the **children of men** builded.

And so when God called them the children of men there he was emphasizing how small they were compared to him. How he was God, and they were just children of men. Small and insignificant.

And it is used much in that way throughout the rest of the Bible.

You'll note also that in that passage it said that the LORD came down to see the tower. Kind of like it says that he looked down from heaven, here in Psalm 14. But it didn't say that he looked down there because God was emphasizing that their puny little tower was so itsy-bitsy, that he couldn't even get a good look at it from up there, he had to come down to see it.

And what were they doing there in Genesis 11? They were ignoring God and his commands and instead were trying to make themselves a name.

And that's not unlike what Israel has been doing here in these Psalms. They've been ignoring God's promise of salvation, and been trying to bring their own.

And now God has asked them to acknowledge that the glory of his name is more important than their name, than their comfort, than their deliverance.

And so when he looks down here it says that he's looking down on the children of men. Far, far beneath him. Tiny, insignificant, and inconsequential.

But yet he still considers him. He still is mindful of him. He is still looking down to see and try their hearts.

In Psalm 11 it talked about that:

Psalms 11:1 In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.

3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

So David observed how the wicked were trying to destroy all of the upright in heart, the foundations of salvation.

And if that happened, what would the righteous do? They would be destroyed. Their salvation could never come, because the upright in heart need to be increased before salvation comes.

All Israel needs to be prepared.

And yet the opposite was happening, the wicked were destroying the upright.

But God had a solution for that:

4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the **children of men**.

5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

And so God was going to uphold the foundations. He was going to look down, and try the children of men, and make more of the righteous upright.

And in Psalm 12 it went on to explain how God would purify their hearts through that trial. A trial that he would perform through his words.

And he's now begun that trial.

And now he's explaining to them why. What he saw when he looked down from heaven.

You see, when he started trying the hearts with his eyes, he saw that David was right. That the foundations were being destroyed.

You see, in Psalm 12 David lamented again:

Psalms 12:1 Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

And so when David cried out, “the LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”

And God saw that no, they were all failing. The foundations were perishing.

And so that’s why he’s given them his word, to try and purify them.

And he wants the people now to understand this. To see why he hasn’t brought salvation yet, and why this new ministry that he’s opened up is so important. So that they will embrace it, be enlightened by it, and be purified by it.

SEE

So it said that God looked down from heaving upon the children of men, “to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”

So God looked down upon them to see them, to try their hearts.

Now this is interesting, and it relates back to Psalm 10:

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

So the wicked said that God would never see their wickedness, because he had hidden his face.

And you know, that reminds us of how Psalm 13 started off prompting the people to ask how long God would hide his face, how long he would forget them.

So God had hidden his face from them. Yet now here he is looking down from heaven, and seeing if there are any that understand.

Does that mean that God isn’t hiding his face from them anymore?

Well, in answer to that, first off, we have to remember that what he is saying here in verse two is actually in past tense. It is talking about something that God has already done, previously.

“The LORD *looked* down from heaven.” So that’s past tense.

And so he may be talking about what God saw before, when David was crying out to him and asking him to bring perfect salvation back in Psalm 10, or Psalm 11, or Psalm 12.

He may not be talking about something that has happened since he started working with the people’s hearts in Psalm 13.

So in that case, you could look at this as God telling them what he saw that caused him to hide his face from them. Why he decided not to bring perfect salvation at this time.

And I think that is definitely a component of what he is saying here.

But it is also true that God looking at them isn’t necessarily contradictory with him having hidden his face.

Now that might sound strange. How could God hide his face and still be looking at them?

Of course, he’s God, so he sees all things all the time. But it still doesn’t seem at first that God would be hiding his face and yet looking upon them, considering them, trying and testing their hearts with his eyes.

But you see, back in Psalm 10, David said that God was hiding himself in times of trouble.

And the wicked, seeing that God was hiding himself, that he wasn't acting on behalf of the oppressed, that judgement didn't seem to be coming, said: "he hideth his face; he will never see it."

But David's response to that was:

Psalms 10:14 Thou hast **seen** it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.

So David said that God was hiding himself, and the wicked thought that meant that God wouldn't see, and wouldn't ever bring them into judgment for the things that they did.

But David said no, God does see it.

And so just because God was hiding himself, just because he was hiding his face, just because he wasn't bringing complete deliverance yet, didn't mean that he wasn't watching.

God was still taking note of the wickedness of the wicked, so that he could repay it to them when judgment comes.

In regard to perfect salvation he was hiding his face. He wasn't being responsive to their request for that. He was ignoring it. But he was still watching, and seeing what was happening. He was still seeing the wickedness of the wicked, and he would still hold them accountable for their wickedness.

And so even while God is hiding his face, and is not yet showing forth full salvation from every oppressor, he's still watching, looking down, and seeing into the hearts of men, to discern whether they understand.

UNDERSTAND

Now when it says that he looked "to see if there were any that did understand," what does it mean by that? What is it talking about them understanding?

Well, it says "understand, and seek God." So it is talking about them understanding something that will cause them to seek God.

What he's talking about is, them not being a fool. Them understanding that it is their wickedness that causes God to hide his face from men. Not to be fool and say that there is no God. Or to act like he doesn't exist, or isn't going to ever bring full deliverance.

But like we said last week, they've all been behaving as fools. They've all been acting like God wasn't ever going to bring salvation and judgement, so they'd have to deliver themselves.

They haven't understood. They haven't sought God because he stood afar off. Instead they corrupted themselves.

And this is something that God warned them against when he gave them the promised land. He warned them not to think that his blessings were something that they somehow deserved because of their own righteousness.

Moses told them:

Deuteronomy 9:1 Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven,
2 A people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!

3 **Understand** therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.

4 Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 **Understand** therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.

And then he recounts how God wanted to destroy them, but didn't for his holy name's sake.

And so God told them to understand that it wasn't their righteousness that brought his blessing upon them. It wasn't something that they deserved. It was something that he did to perform his word, to destroy the wicked, and to glorify his holy name.

And so now that they are experiencing trouble, they need to not think that God is no longer giving them what they deserve. He was never giving them what they deserve. That's not why he blessed them.

If they want to receive his blessing again, they need to understand this, and seek God. Seek his mercy. Not for their sakes, but for his holy name's sake, that the wicked might not blaspheme.

It talks about this same thing toward the latter part of Deuteronomy 32:

Deuteronomy 32:26 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.

So God said, I wanted to destroy you, but I didn't, because of the wrath of the enemy, for fear that they'd say that it wasn't the LORD that had done it.

28 For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any **understanding** in them.

29 O that they were wise, that they **understood** this, that they would consider their latter end!

30 How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?

And so he relates understanding to this concept of God wanting to destroy them, but not doing it for the sake of his name.

What he wants them to understand is that all the goodness and mercy that he shows them is for his sake. For his name's sake, so that the wicked won't blaspheme against it.

That he is bringing this judgement upon them, and he's doing it because of their wickedness.

They don't deserve better. They deserve far worse.

And if he had a choice, what he really wants to do, is just utterly destroy them. But if he did that the wicked would speak against his name. And he doesn't want that to happen.

So he's showing mercy to them, not because he cares about them or loves them so much, but because he cares about his name. He cares about his glory. And that's why he's given them less than they deserve.

And so here in Psalm 14 what God was looking for, when he was looking to see if there were any that did understand, was to see if they were acknowledging that God was bringing the trouble upon them for their wickedness, and that he was giving them less than they deserved for the sake of his holy name.

He wanted to see if there were any that understood that, and started seeking God's mercy. Leaving off their wickedness, and instead glorifying the name of the LORD, if perhaps he would preserve them. If perhaps he would see that he could get more glory by delivering them, because they would glorify his name.

There's a passage in Jeremiah 9 that talks about this. That's one that we've looked at several times before:

Jeremiah 9:12 Who is the wise man, that may **understand** this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

And so he asks who has understanding. Who knows why God is bringing judgement upon them, why he isn't delivering them, why they are experiencing trouble. Because the people, they don't understand. And so God tells them:

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

14 But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them:

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

16 I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

So it is because they have forsaken him for the works of their own hands. And because of that he is going to bring judgement upon them and slay them and scatter them among the heathen. Then in verse 22:

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he **understandeth** and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

And so God tells no man to glory in his worldly wisdom or strength or riches, because none of those things will deliver them.

But to glory, if they understand and know him, and why he has brought this upon them.

25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised;

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

So you see, God's going to punish them all. And all of the uncircumcised in heart will be destroyed. Only those that understand will be delivered.

And so God is telling them here in Psalm 14 that he looked down for those that understand, that he might deliver them and do them good.

He was looking for any that understood that it is God that gives blessing and judgement, and that he does it in proportion with the glory that he is going to get out of it. He does it all for his maximum glory, not because we're deserving of his goodness. It is for his glory that he shows mercy, and brings deliverance.

So that's what he wants them to understand, that's what he was looking for.

In Daniel 9, Daniel prays a prayer, in which he talks about this:

Daniel 9:13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and **understand** thy truth.

So Daniel talked about how they didn't turn back to God to understand and seek him when judgement came on them.

But now he's doing that, now he's praying before God.

And in Daniel 10 we find out what God's response to that was, by an angel that he sent to Daniel:

Daniel 10:12 Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to **understand**, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

And so when Daniel set his heart to understand, and seek God, to know why he had brought this evil upon them, God heard him. And God had respect unto him, and God sent an angel to reveal his word unto him, that he might understand.

And so that's what God is wanting from them here in Psalm 14. He is telling them what he was looking for when he looked down from heaven. And he wants them to seek understanding. To understand why he isn't bringing deliverance.

Because just as he sent to reveal his truth unto Daniel, he is revealing his truth unto them. He is giving them his pure words in these Psalms, to give them understanding.

But he wants them to see how that understanding is important, so that they will take heed to it and seek it. And so he's explaining to them here what is happening, what he was looking for, and why he's decided not to perfect salvation yet.

And so it says:

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your **understanding** being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

And so here God is lightening their eyes, to give them understanding, that they might know why salvation hasn't come yet, but what hope they have to look forward to when it does come.

Now it said here in Psalm 14 that when God looked down he was looking for those that understand. That's what he was looking for in his people, to determine whether not it was time to bring perfect deliverance.

He wants to deliver them for the glory of his name, and he wants them to understand that, to understand that it isn't for their own sakes, but for his sake, that he will do it.

And it is only when he looks down and sees that they understand, understand that they can't bring salvation, that the vile oppressors are wicked, that they are undeserving, and that God will bring salvation himself alone not for their sake's but for the sake of his name, it is only then that he will bring salvation.

So if God is going to look down at the end of the tribulation, and see their affliction, and decide to deliver them, that must mean that there will be many that will understand, right?

Well, it talks about that in Daniel:

Daniel 12:10 *Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall **understand**; but the wise shall **understand**.*

And so at the end there will be many that will be tried and purified, and they will understand. They'll be made white, as the 144000 will be. And so it says:

Isaiah 28:9 *Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to **understand** doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

And so those ordainers of strength, virgins, babes and sucklings, they are will understand, and through them all Israel will be saved.

SEEK

So, "the LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God."

So he was looking for them to understand these things, and to seek him.

But they haven't been seeking him. They've been seeking to vile men that they've been exalting to deliver them. They haven't been seeking to the LORD. They'd given up on up on his salvation.

And so in Psalm 4 David cried out to his persecutors:

Psalms 4:2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and **seek** after leasing?

3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

And so David's enemies were seeking after leasing, after falsehood. They weren't seeking after the LORD, and instead they were seeking after vanity, just as the heathen do. But David admonished them to stop that, and instead put their trust in the LORD. To not seek after leasing, but to seek after God. But they wouldn't hear.

Psalms 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not **seek** after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

And so they wouldn't do it. And many of the people have been following them, and doing just the same thing. They weren't seeking after God.

But now God wants them to know this, to know what he was looking for, and to understand these things, and seek him.

And you know, that's when salvation comes.

And again, that goes back to the law. In the law Moses admonished them about how they would forsake the LORD and be carried captive:

Deuteronomy 4:25 When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:

We talked last time about corruption. And here we see again how that is being unfaithful to God, not serving him only, but also serving something else, like idols.

26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

28 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

29 But if from thence thou shalt **seek** the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou **seek** him with *all thy heart* and with *all thy soul*.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

31 (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

And so Moses told them that when they corrupted themselves, and ceased serving God alone, judgement would be brought upon them.

But if they repented and began to seek the LORD, not corruptly, not in part, but thill all their heart and all their soul, they would be delivered.

God wouldn't forsake them, and he wouldn't forget them.

Psalms 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that **seek** thee.

And so if they truly want God to be their refuge in times of trouble, if they want him to revive them and lighten their eyes as they prayed in Psalm 13, then they need to seek the LORD, with all their heart.

And then he will no more forget and forsake them.

You see, as they've been crying out for salvation, this is what God has been looking for. When they've groaned in their oppression he's looked down to see if they understood and were seeking him.

But they didn't understand, and they weren't seeking him with all their heart. They were still trusting in men to deliver them. Vile men of their own exalting, not the LORD and his anointed.

Isaiah 31:1 Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither **seek** the LORD!

And so that's what they were doing. But now as God is turning their hearts back to him, he's explaining this, so that they will understand it, and will seek him.

And if they do that with all their heart, that's when deliverance will come.

Jeremiah 29:12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And ye shall **seek** me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

And so God will be found of them if they seek him with all their heart, and will save them.

But he isn't just telling them straight out to seek him here. He's just explaining how they haven't been seeking him, and that's why he hasn't brought deliverance yet.

He's not commanding them to seek him, but he wants them to see the need for that, so that their hearts will turn and they will begin to seek him.

So that as he unfolds his words in these Psalms, they'll be seeking for him, for his wisdom, for his direction, through them.