

## DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN

Wednesday, April 18

Reading: Psalm 53

**Psalm 53:4** *Do all these evildoers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread; they never call on God. 5 But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread. God scattered the bones of those who attacked you; you put them to shame, for God despised them. 6 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!*

Ever had a déjà vu experience? Déjà vu is the feeling that your current circumstances are somehow familiar or that you have experienced something or been to this place before. When we read Psalm 53 you should get that feeling. That is because a majority of the psalm is a repetition of Psalm 14. It only differs in a few minor word changes and the contents of verse 5.

Why this repetition? Perhaps it is drive home the theme of these psalms. They pronounce God's divine verdict on humanity - "there is no one who does good, not even one" (53:3). If God Himself did not provide salvation we would all be lost (53:6)!

The big difference in these psalms comes from a change in audience. Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 are speaking to two different groups of people. We can see this in the parallel below:

**Psalm 14:4** *Do all these evildoers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread; they never call on the LORD. 5 But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, for God is present in the company of the righteous. 6 You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor, but the LORD is their refuge. 7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!*

**Psalm 53:4** *Do all these evildoers know nothing? They devour my people as though eating bread; they never call on God. 5 But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread. **God scattered the bones of those who attacked you;** you put them to shame, for God despised them. 6 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!*

Psalm 14 is a warning to the heathen who foolishly reject God. They need to fear because "God is present in the company of the righteous" (14:5). Psalm 53 is written to give hope to God's people because God will bring judgment when they least expect it ("where there was nothing to dread") on those who attacked His people (53:5). This adds a new perspective to this psalm. Because the wicked reject God, attack God's people, and never learn their lesson (53:4) they have everything to fear. But those who trust in God have nothing to fear for they belong to the Lord.

We must pay special attention to the theme of this psalm. Anything God repeats three times must be important (Psalm 14, 53, Romans 3:10-12). The truth that we are all lost in sin should drive us to the feet of the only One who can save us. It encourages us to be humble in the face of God's salvation. It urges us to grieve that so many become "fools" by rejecting God's free gift.

**THRU THE BIBLE Reading: 1 Samuel 1-3; John 10**