

PSALMS

Lyrics OF Prophecy

53/150

PSALMS ~ Lyrics of Prophecy

Psalm 53

No One Does Good, Not Even One

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through Psalm 53 and mark every reference to God, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through Psalm 53 and mark every reference to God's people, Israel, with the blue Star of David. (Two triangles on top of each other; one going up and one going down.)

Read through Psalm 53 and mark every reference to the fool and all pronouns and synonyms (i.e., them, workers of wickedness, him, etc.) with an orange capital "W."

Read through Psalm 53 and highlight the phrase "there is no one who does good" with yellow.

Read through Psalm 53 and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. No one does good.
2. God rejects the fool.
3. God restores His captive people.

READ AND ANSWER

Psalm 53:1-3

What has the fool said?

Point of Depth

**The Hebrew word for fool is "nabel."
It is a primitive root that means to wilt or (generally) fall away, fail, or faint.
Figuratively it means to be foolish or morally wicked.**

**You might remember a person from 1 Samuel 25 who bore this name.
Nabal was a perfect example of its meaning.
Take time to read the story asking God to help you see the meaning of this word.**

Where has the fool said, "There is no God."?

Point of Depth

**The Hebrew word for heart is "leb" and means heart.
It figuratively refers to the feelings, the will, and the intellect.**

Is there more than one fool?

How do you know?

How does God describe fools?

- 1.
- 2.

Point of Depth

**The Hebrew word for corrupt is "shachath,"
and means to decay, and therefore, ruin.**

**The Hebrew word for "committed abominable" is "taab,"
and means to abhor or loathe, or (morally) detest.**

**The Hebrew word for injustice is "owlah,"
and means iniquity, perverseness, unrighteousness, and wickedness.**

Is there anyone who does good?

Point of Depth

The Hebrew word for good is "towb," and, in a broad sense, means good or pleasant.

Anyone at all?

Not even one?

Who checked the entire earth to see if there was one who did good?

From where did God make His search?

What is expected from a son of man to be "good"?

1.

2.

Point of Depth

The Hebrew word for understands is "sakhal," and means to be wise or prudent.

From this passage, what can you "understand" about being wise?

What did God see when He "leaned out His window" from heaven and looked at the sons of men?

How many men had turned aside?

Were there any who had *not* turned aside?

How many men were corrupt?

Were they any who were *not* corrupt?

What phrase is repeated in verse 3 that was also in verse 1?

Point of Depth

Romans 3:10-18

...as it is written,

***"There is none righteous, not even one;
there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God;
all have turned aside, together they have become useless;
there is none who does good, there is not even one."
Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving,
the poison of asps is under their lips;
whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness
their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths,
and the path of peace they have not known.
There is no fear of God before their eyes."***

**As God has prophesied, the world will go into further and further darkness.
Christians will continue to feel more and more animosity
from those who do not see things God's way.**

**People like to think that almost all people are good and just a few are truly bad.
If you were to contradict their belief (in staying true to God's Word)
you would be in the minority and most likely be ostracized.**

Why would you need to let on that you believed anything different than the norm?

**Well... there is the principle of standing up for God and His truth...
but to make it more specific,
let's consider how you could possibly give the gospel
if you came at it from the premise that most people are good.**

**Truth is always and simply—whatever God says!
Always! Always! Always!
Whatever God says is true (as well as truth)**

but take note of the significant difference in what I am saying.
 Let me say that again: Truth is always and simply—whatever God says!
 Man resists the fact that the wrath of God
 is the very first part of the gospel message (Romans 1:15 and on)
 because it offends his own self-righteousness
 and interestingly, his own self-esteem.

God is God, and man is not!
 Man does not like to hear that unchangeable little fact,
 due to his ignorant low estimation of God
 and his arrogant high opinion of himself.

God says that His wrath is coming against all ungodliness and unrighteousness,
 and that means each and every individual!
 Man cringes, taking offense when he is accused of any fault or guilt on his own
 part—because man (in his own estimation) has elevated himself and lowered
 God.

If I am in the desert without any means of comfort,
 then surely water will be good news to me.
 However, if I am in a luxury hotel with all my needs met,
 then I will scarcely realize the gracious provision of an offer of water.
 Good news is only good news
 if the people receiving it *realize* they are in a bad situation.
 The good news of salvation will not be received in a heart
 that does not believe they are deserving of God's wrath.
 Take away the need for salvation, and you no longer have good news!

It is relatively easy to get lost people saved...
 but it is next to impossible to get "good" people lost...
 (so they can be saved!)

Man hates the correct watchword of the church, which is "Repent!"
 That is why men have repeatedly tried to change that watchword. First, they
 wanted to change it to "Don't judge!" Next, they chose the maxim, "Tolerate!"
 Following their standard of deterioration, their latest guiding principle is
 "Embrace!"

Do you see the insidious lies of
 "Man is good—therefore I have no need to truly repent,"
 and "Man is good—therefore I should not be judged"?

However, despite the purposeful apostasy-driven efforts
 to erase the truth from the lips of God's saints,
 "Repent!" will always remain as the correct watchword of the true church.

Matthew 3:2

That is precisely why the forerunner to the Messiah, John the Baptist, persistently proclaimed, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!".

Matthew 4:17

That is why the Messiah, Himself, unabashedly declared, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!".

Matthew 10:7

That is why the Messiah always commanded His apostles to preach the same, "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand!".

That is why Paul preached it...

And that is why we are to do the same.

**And... we are to stay on that point—
("Repent! For the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!")
be a stickler about it, if you will until the hearer responds rightly.**

**The right response is, first and foremost, to see God for Who He is.
When you truly see God, you may, for the first time, truly see yourself.**

**Once you see both, your God and yourself,
you can connect the dots—you need to be saved from His wrath!
The only way for that to happen is for Him to save you—
there is no other way!**

**The right response continues with a fear of that wrath,
and a fear of the One Who is sending it against his or her ungodliness,
which only resolves itself through repentance before a Holy Righteous God
and a faith-filled cry to Him for salvation.**

**Those who are ashamed of the gospel
(specifically the audacity of the gospel to judge a man)
and subsequently, leave out this intrinsic part of the gospel
actually takes away the gospel's power for salvation.**

**The Kingdom of heaven is given to those who are humble,
not to those who are too haughty to believe they deserve God's wrath,
nor to those who are too arrogant to deliver God's gospel
precisely as He penned it through His saints.**

**To be ashamed to preach the whole gospel,
starting with the beginning and not leaving anything out, is unbelief at its worst—
and to preach the gospel while omitting even one part, is treachery at its worst.**

We are to spend our efforts (when giving the gospel)

helping the listener understand God and His ways
so that they might fear Him (awesome reverential respect)
and repent of their own ways.

Why?

**Because the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!
And that means the King is going to take out all usurpers in His Kingdom!**

**Knowing that the King of everyone and everything is coming,
and that He will punish all rebellion against Him,
is a great motivator to renounce your own ways
and cry out to Him for deliverance!**

**If the hearer of the gospel responds in faith
to the truth about God's wrath against him because of his sin,
then the person who is delivering the gospel
will be pleased to give the responder much more information.**

**According to Romans 1-11, that next information will be about the faith of God,
the justice of God,
the grace of God,
the sovereignty of God,
and the mercy of God—
and of course, the Son of God—Jesus, the Promised One, sent by God,
Who achieves all of this in the life of a repentant sinner
(remember—good people can't repent).**

**I thank God for His gospel, all of it.
The true gospel is the power of salvation from our sin and His wrath (and
therefore the introduction
into the beautiful intricacies of salvation described in Romans).
To give the true gospel, all of it,
will mean much rejection to the gospeler,
but to those few who are called—
it will mean the gift of God's "O, So Great Salvation"!**

**Hebrews 2:1-4
For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard,
so that we do not drift away from it.
For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable,
and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty,
how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?
After it was at the first spoken through the Lord,
it was confirmed to us by those who heard,
God also testifying with them,**

***both by signs and wonders
and by various miracles
and by gifts of the Holy Spirit
according to His own will.***

Psalm 53:4-5

What rhetorical question is asked in verse 4? (I'll give you a bit of extra room to write it out.)

Restate the question in your own words to make sure you understand God's point. (I'll give you some extra room again.)

What are the workers of wickedness doing?

Who are God's people? (Hint: Continue reading the Psalm.)

Eating bread is not necessarily a feast; instead, it is an ordinary everyday occurrence. What does this say about the workers of wickedness's daily relationship with God's people?

What have the workers of wickedness not done?

The workers of wickedness definitely acted as though they had no knowledge. They attacked God's people (and do... and will...) thinking nothing would happen to them. However, what did they begin to feel?

At first, they were not afraid to attack God's people, but now they are in great fear. Why?

Where were the workers of wickedness?

So... the workers of wickedness were encamped against God's people... Was there a battle?

How do you know?

Who fought in the battle?

1.

2.

Besides the workers of wickedness and God's people, Who else fought the battle?

How were God's people able to put those encamped against them to shame?

What did God do with the bodies of the workers of wickedness who encamped against God's people, Israel?

Psalm 53:6

What cries end this marvelous Psalm?

1.

2.

What is longed for?

Where will Israel's salvation come from?

Point of Depth

**Salvation will come...
Not out of the earthly Jerusalem...
But out of the heavenly Zion!**

What will God do when He sends salvation from Zion?

Point of Depth

**Salvation will come out of Zion,
in the person of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel.**

When Jesus returns and brings salvation for Israel, in what state will God's people be in?

Point of Depth

**God's people will indeed be captive when their Messiah comes to save them.
The nations of the world will have gathered together to destroy Jerusalem.
However, they will not succeed!
It will be a last-minute deliverance...
and it will be glorious...
Glorious, indeed!**

Isaiah 37:32

***For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.***

Revelation 19:11–18

***And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse,
and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True,
and in righteousness He judges and wages war.
His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems;
and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.
He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood,
and His name is called The Word of God.***

***And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean,
 were following Him on white horses.
 From His mouth comes a sharp sword,
 so that with it He may strike down the nations,
 and He will rule them with a rod of iron;
 and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.
 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written,
 "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice,
 saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven,
 "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,
 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders
 and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses
 and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men,
 both free men and slaves, and small and great."***

OUR GLORIOUS GOD WINS!!!

What should Jacob do?

What should Israel do?

Now? Or then?

Point of Depth

**Does verse 6 seem at all out of place in the Psalm?
 (It's not... but does it seem like it is?)**

**I've said this many times before
 (in other Observation Bible Study Guides for the Psalms)
 but we need to remember that the Psalms are very prophetic in nature.
 Once again, we need to examine the question of "When?".
 When is the time frame verse 6 refers to?**

**The answer is found in this verse itself.
 Israel will be delivered when the Lord restores His captive people—
 Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.
 The salvation of Israel will come at the end of the age
 when her Messiah comes again to deliver her.**

**Soooo... Let's think about this.
Since verse 6 is talking about the time of the end (and it certainly is),
what time frame must verses 1-5 be referring to?**

**You've got it!
The time *right before the end!***

**What is the period right before the end of time called?
The Great Tribulation.**

**Now look at the entire Psalm again thinking of the time frame of Jacob's Distress
(The Great Tribulation).
Does it make even more sense?**

**Verses 1-3
In that day (which is coming quickly), foolish mankind will have no use for God.
There will be a corrupt civilization (if it could be called civilized at that time)
that will deny the existence of God—no one will do good—no one.
Things will have gone from bad to worse to... well... unspeakable...**

**Verses 4-5
God's people are being "eaten up" by the workers of wickedness.
They act like God does not know what they are doing to His people,
but He does...**

**Although God remains silent
for a seemingly interminable time before Messiah comes,
He is actually *with* the Righteous Remnant of Israel,
and will come to deliver them in His Own perfect timing.**

**Can you hear the righteous remnant of the Jews
crying out verse 6 during the days of Jacob's Distress—
those last 3 1/2 terrible years?
They will be...**

***Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!
When the Lord restores His captive people,
Jacob will rejoice,
Israel will be glad.***

Amen... and Amen... and Amen...

God's ultimate victory over His creation is promised and, therefore, sure—it's as good as done. What then, should God's peoples' response to His eventual victory be now?

What is your response now?

Read and Reason

Psalm 53 seems to be a musical "remake" of Psalm 14. They are almost identical, and yet there appear to be three main differences.

One dissimilarity is that Psalm 14 uses two Hebrew words for God, while Psalm 53 only uses one.

Psalm 14 uses the Hebrew word *YHWH*, which means Self-existent or Eternal. It is God's memorial name to all generations. Psalm 14 also uses the Hebrew word *Elohim*, plural (of three for more) for the Supreme God, the Creator. It is often thought that the plurality refers to the Trinity.

Psalm 53 solely uses the Hebrew word *Elohim*.

The second variance between the two Psalms focuses on the refuge of the righteous (Psalm 14:5-6) versus the rejection of the unrighteous (Psalm 53:5.) This is consistent with the order of Scripture. His people are redeemed before the ultimate rejection and destruction of the wicked.

The third distinction between Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 is one of the music's genre. The traditional title for Psalm 14 is "For the choir director; a Psalm of David." The title of Psalm 53 (written later and for a different choir director) is "For the choir director, according to Mahalath, a Maskil of David."

It seems, although nearly identical in words, that the actual music was not the same. Psalm 53 was sung according to Mahalath, which means sickness or a sad tone. It is also a Maskil, which is a contemplative, didactic, or skillful psalm.

Why did God give these two almost identical psalms to David? I cannot answer that question. I know that when God says something more than once, He is most definitely emphasizing His message. Perhaps we all would do well to spend a little extra time in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 to make sure we hear what He is saying to us...

Psalm 14:1-7

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Do all the workers of wickedness not know, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon the Lord? There they are in great dread, for God is with the righteous generation. You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted, but the Lord is his refuge.

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores His captive people, Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.

Psalm 53:1-6

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God," They are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice; there is no one who does good. God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there is anyone who understands, who seeks after God. Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Have the workers of wickedness no knowledge, who eat up My people as though they ate bread and have not called upon God? There they were in great fear where no fear had been; for God scattered the bones of him who encamped against you; you put them to shame, because God had rejected them.

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores His captive people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Segment by Segment

Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.

Verses 1-3

Verses 4-5

Verse 6

Purpose of Psalm 53

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 53.
The purpose simply states, "why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm."**

Theme of Psalm 53

**Try giving Psalm 53 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states, "what the Psalm is about."**

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Eating bread is not necessarily a feast; instead, it is an ordinary everyday occurrence. What does this say about the workers of wickedness's daily relationship with God's people?

What have the workers of wickedness not done?

The workers of wickedness definitely acted as though they had no knowledge. They attacked God's people (and do... and will...) thinking nothing would happen to them. However, what did they begin to feel?

At first, they were not afraid to attack God's people, but now they are in great fear. Why?

Where were the workers of wickedness?

So... the workers of wickedness were encamped against God's people... Was there a battle?

How do you know?

Who fought in the battle?

1.

2.

Besides the workers of wickedness and God's people, Who else fought the battle?

How were God's people able to put those encamped against them to shame?

What did God do with the bodies of the workers of wickedness who encamped against God's people, Israel?

Psalm 53:6

What cries end this marvelous Psalm?

1.

2.

What is longed for?

Where will Israel's salvation come from?

Point of Depth

**Salvation will come...
Not out of the earthly Jerusalem...
But out of the heavenly Zion!**

What will God do when He sends salvation from Zion?

Point of Depth

**Salvation will come out of Zion,
in the person of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel.**

When Jesus returns and brings salvation for Israel, in what state will God's people be in?

Point of Depth

**God's people will indeed be captive when their Messiah comes to save them.
The nations of the world will have gathered together to destroy Jerusalem.
However, they will not succeed!
It will be a last-minute deliverance...
and it will be glorious...
Glorious, indeed!**

Isaiah 37:32

***For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.***

Revelation 19:11–18

***And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse,
and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True,
and in righteousness He judges and wages war.
His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems;
and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.
He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood,
and His name is called The Word of God.***

***And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean,
 were following Him on white horses.
 From His mouth comes a sharp sword,
 so that with it He may strike down the nations,
 and He will rule them with a rod of iron;
 and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.
 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written,
 "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice,
 saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven,
 "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,
 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders
 and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses
 and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men,
 both free men and slaves, and small and great."***

OUR GLORIOUS GOD WINS!!!

What should Jacob do?

What should Israel do?

Now? Or then?

Point of Depth

**Does verse 6 seem at all out of place in the Psalm?
 (It's not... but does it seem like it is?)**

**I've said this many times before
 (in other Observation Bible Study Guides for the Psalms)
 but we need to remember that the Psalms are very prophetic in nature.
 Once again, we need to examine the question of "When?".
 When is the time frame verse 6 refers to?**

**The answer is found in this verse itself.
 Israel will be delivered when the Lord restores His captive people—
 Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.
 The salvation of Israel will come at the end of the age
 when her Messiah comes again to deliver her.**

**Soooo... Let's think about this.
Since verse 6 is talking about the time of the end (and it certainly is),
what time frame must verses 1-5 be referring to?**

**You've got it!
The time *right before the end!***

**What is the period right before the end of time called?
The Great Tribulation.**

**Now look at the entire Psalm again thinking of the time frame of Jacob's Distress
(The Great Tribulation).
Does it make even more sense?**

**Verses 1-3
In that day (which is coming quickly), foolish mankind will have no use for God.
There will be a corrupt civilization (if it could be called civilized at that time)
that will deny the existence of God—no one will do good—no one.
Things will have gone from bad to worse to... well... unspeakable...**

**Verses 4-5
God's people are being "eaten up" by the workers of wickedness.
They act like God does not know what they are doing to His people,
but He does...**

**Although God remains silent
for a seemingly interminable time before Messiah comes,
He is actually *with* the Righteous Remnant of Israel,
and will come to deliver them in His Own perfect timing.**

**Can you hear the righteous remnant of the Jews
crying out verse 6 during the days of Jacob's Distress—
those last 3 1/2 terrible years?
They will be...**

***Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!
When the Lord restores His captive people,
Jacob will rejoice,
Israel will be glad.***

Amen... and Amen... and Amen...

God's ultimate victory over His creation is promised and, therefore, sure—it's as good as done. What then, should God's peoples' response to His eventual victory be now?

What is your response now?

Read and Reason

Psalm 53 seems to be a musical "remake" of Psalm 14. They are almost identical, and yet there appear to be three main differences.

One dissimilarity is that Psalm 14 uses two Hebrew words for God, while Psalm 53 only uses one.

Psalm 14 uses the Hebrew word *YHWH*, which means Self-existent or Eternal. It is God's memorial name to all generations. Psalm 14 also uses the Hebrew word *Elohim*, plural (of three for more) for the Supreme God, the Creator. It is often thought that the plurality refers to the Trinity.

Psalm 53 solely uses the Hebrew word *Elohim*.

The second variance between the two Psalms focuses on the refuge of the righteous (Psalm 14:5-6) versus the rejection of the unrighteous (Psalm 53:5.) This is consistent with the order of Scripture. His people are redeemed before the ultimate rejection and destruction of the wicked.

The third distinction between Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 is one of the music's genre. The traditional title for Psalm 14 is "For the choir director; a Psalm of David." The title of Psalm 53 (written later and for a different choir director) is "For the choir director, according to Mahalath, a Maskil of David."

It seems, although nearly identical in words, that the actual music was not the same. Psalm 53 was sung according to Mahalath, which means sickness or a sad tone. It is also a Maskil, which is a contemplative, didactic, or skillful psalm.

Why did God give these two almost identical psalms to David? I cannot answer that question. I know that when God says something more than once, He is most definitely emphasizing His message. Perhaps we all would do well to spend a little extra time in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 to make sure we hear what He is saying to us...

Psalm 14:1-7

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Do all the workers of wickedness not know, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon the Lord? There they are in great dread, for God is with the righteous generation. You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted, but the Lord is his refuge.

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores His captive people, Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad.

Psalm 53:1-6

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God," They are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice; there is no one who does good. God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there is anyone who understands, who seeks after God. Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Have the workers of wickedness no knowledge, who eat up My people as though they ate bread and have not called upon God? There they were in great fear where no fear had been; for God scattered the bones of him who encamped against you; you put them to shame, because God had rejected them.

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores His captive people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

Segment by Segment

Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.

Verses 1-3

Verses 4-5

Verse 6

Purpose of Psalm 53

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 53.
The purpose simply states, "why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm."**

Theme of Psalm 53

**Try giving Psalm 53 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states, "what the Psalm is about."**
