

THE BEREAN

"...EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY..." (Acts 17:11)

"DON'T BE A FOOL"

BY B. G. ECHOLS

Man wishes to escape the consequences of his guilt. He makes many attempts to free his mind of the possibility of punishment. One cannot be bothered by something that does not exist. So he creates an intellectual void by saying, "There is no God." If he never admits the reality of God, he never has to be concerned. Any consequences for guilt will be only in this life. David tells us that only a fool will be an atheist. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God..." (Psalm 14:1a). A fool is not one who lacks intelligence for he may be highly intelligent and well educated. The fool that denies God has a moral problem. He does not know God, and cannot know God's will. By denying God he deliberately deprives himself of the guidance of God's promises and providence. This is not to say the atheist is unable to make plausible sounding arguments for his position, especially to those who wish to believe "There is no God." Even for a fool to say this he must have a concept of God in his mind.

To say, "There is no God," is philosophically absurd. Let us consider everything, whether it exists now or not. We can categorize everything into what is impossible, or contingent, or necessary. Something impossible would be that which is self-contradictory, such as a round square. Anything that is contingent might exist or might not. That which is necessary must exist and cannot not exist. Now let's think about God. Where does He fit? Since no one is omniscient, it cannot be said that God is impossible for what we do not know may prove that God exists. Even unbelievers admit that God is possible, they simply choose not to believe. Neither can we say that God does not exist now, but may exist in the future. Thus God is not contingent. That leaves only one category, God is necessary. If God is necessary, He exists. Think about this carefully!

Since man without God has no deep-seated reason for morality, the psalmist turns to describe the consequent depravity of man. "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good" (Psm. 14:1b). This description continues in the next two verses. "Jehovah looketh down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek after God. They are all gone aside; they are together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psm. 14:2,3). Without knowledge of God, the door to corruption is open. When men do not feel accountable, the darkest deeds of human depravity become headlines. Consider the atrocities of godless Communism. A denial of God leads to a denial of the worth of humanity. Paul's indictment of those without God makes an ugly picture (Rom. 1:18-32). Later he uses some of the words of this psalm (Rom. 3:12). God still looks down from heaven (I Pet. 3:12). To refuse God's kingdom is to enlist in Satan's. Instead of liberation, atheism produces bondage.

The psalmist turns to the consequences of sin (Psm. 14:4-6) where he asks, "Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" (Psm. 14:4). It is ironic that so many who claim to be atheists are educated. Yet to refuse the two great commandments to love God and to love man is to "have no knowledge." It is the knowledge they do not have that causes the anxiety and unease they feel as they ponder death and its aftermath. Pride keeps them chained to their unbelief even while longing for help in coping with the vicissitudes of earthly existence which they cannot find without humbling themselves before the God of creation.

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