

"The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." Psalm 53: 1.

The mind is a marvelous creation, and is capable of great development. It enables man to accomplish great things in the varied activities of life. It is the highest endowment that God has conferred upon man. It gives him pre-eminence above all creatures.

This wonderful mind makes man a conscious, accountable being. Its development from infancy is a slow and gradual process. At a certain age consciousness of right and wrong is revealed; no Bible reading or mental training is capable of producing this awakening—it simply comes to us; but from whence? Unquestionably from God, reminding us that we are sinners and therefore under His judgment. His grace appears unto all men. Tit. 2: 11. Fear seizes the soul in a greater or less degree, for condemnation, destruction and death are hanging over us.

Yes, but the atheist says, "I do not believe in God!" We venture the assertion that at this early period of life, and when under condemnation there are no atheists—all believe there is a God. Just so little as one can deny that they have felt the conviction of sin at a certain age, so little can they deny that there is a God; for this is conclusive evidence that a supreme intelligence and power is exerting its influence upon the mind.

How then can any rational, intelligent man or woman conceive the idea that there is no God? It is possible. By frustrating the grace of God and hardening the heart one's conscience may become seared, and carnal reason may sway the mind and pervert the understanding. A reprobate mind is the final result. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Rom. 1: 28. God does not reprobate men by making them wicked, but by not granting them the benefits of His gratuitous mercy. In this condition Satan can lead such persons at his will, and even induce them to believe that there is no God.

Strange to say that the development of the mind, the attainment of knowledge and worldly wisdom does not improve this condition, but rather strengthens it; for it seems the deeper man delves into science and philosophy the further he gets away from God. Many of the greatest scientists and worldly-wise have

been unbelievers. Therefore the Apostle says: "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. 1: 20, 21. It shows with what gross darkness the human mind may be enshrouded when God's grace is rejected.

No God? Whence came these wondrous works which we behold? All nature shows a wonderful design, wisdom and almighty power in the formation and in the operation of fixed governing laws! When we behold the multiplicity of animal, vegetable and insect life, the almost infinite variety of kinds and species, all of which are adapted to some end and purpose, we cannot fail to recognize a *first cause*, a creative power.

When we consider the solar system, the glorious sun, with the earth and the planets revolving around it with such precision and harmony, we cannot fail to be impressed with the supreme intelligence and unlimited power displayed. When we gaze into the heavens at night and behold myriads of stars, many of which astronomers say are mighty suns, with systems revolving around them, and as the powerful telescope brings into view yet many more stars and nebulae in the vast expanse of the infinitude of space, we can well say with the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth His handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge." The multitude of stars cannot be numbered by man, yet God "telleteth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names."

The finite mind is bewildered in contemplating the wisdom of God and His wondrous works in the heavens and on the earth. We can well exclaim with the Revelator: "Great and marvelous are Thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy ways Thou King of saints." No God? Who then or what power accomplished these great works? They surely have had a beginning! They have not been formed by chance! Surely there must be a primal cause, a creative energy back of it all! And what could this be but an all-wise, omnipotent Creator—God!

The atheist denies the God who gave him life and being and a soul that is immortal, yet he knows he must meet

temporal death, and judgment must follow. In that great day he must face the God he contemned: the Spirit in Revelation saith: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Also: "As I live saith the Lord every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Rom. 14: 11.

We hope, however, the atheist may see his folly, recant and repent before judgment is pronounced against him. Some atheists in history, though very bold and confident in confessing their unbelief while in health and the vigor of life, were stricken with fear and dread when disease seized upon them, and when confronted with death. A few recanted and called upon Jesus in their extremity. One confessed he was "taking a leap into the dark." Truly dark and foreboding would be the prospect beyond, if God and the hope of immortality were shut out of this life's experience.

Though the condition of the atheist is singled out by mankind in general, as a hopeless and abandoned one to be avoided and shunned, yet we do not consider him a sinner above all others. When Jesus was told of the sinful Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices; and of the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, He said, "Think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell ye, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13.

Since all unrighteousness and disobedience is sin, if not repented of we are no better off than the impenitent atheist and shall inevitably perish with him. O the terrible doom of impenitent and ungodly! May we not only believe there is a God, but may we accept His blessed Son as our Savior, obey His commands, "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" then by faith we can "look for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.