

## PSALM 73

**G**od is good, to Israel sure; to everyone, whose heart is pure.

- 2 But my feet, were nearly lost; my every step, to slip and fall.
- 3 I was jealous, of foolish men; when I saw the wicked, safe again.
- 4 No fetters and chains, when their death comes; twisted with power, so firm and plump.
- 5 No mischief befalls them, as other men; nor smitten and stricken, as Adam's kin.
- 6 Haughty pride, chokes their necks; violence shrouds them, like a dress.
- 7 Their eyes shoot forth, to garner the best; hearts ever imagine, never at rest.
- 8 They blaspheme and speak, of evil fraud; haughtily answer, against our God.
- 9 Their mouths to the heavens, fully unfurled; their tongues meander, throughout the world.
- 10 So tribes turn back, to previous places; full waters squeezed out, before their faces.
- 11 They ask how the Almighty, can understand such; how can the Most High, know so much?
- 12 Lo these are the wicked, secure ever on; growing in power, and wealth far beyond.
- 13 Surely I've purified, my heart in vain; my innocent hands, for no cause I bathed.
- 14 All through the day, I am smitten anew; at break of dawn, chastised and reproved.
- 15 Were I to boast, I would speak in this way; I'd deceive coming ages, of sons till that day.
- 16 When I purposed and plotted, this thing to see; my eyes were wearied, a pain unto me.
- 17 Till to the Almighty's, holy place I came; then their sad future, became oh so plain.
- 18 Surely they're set, on ground that is smooth; and fall overthrown, to destruction and doom.
- 19 Brought to their ruin, in wink of an eye; snatched up completely, in fear as they cry.
- 20 Like a dream when one awakens, Lord wake up Your eyes; beholding their figure, Lord You will despise.
- 21 My heart became heavy, soured to life; and my inner self, was pierced like a knife.

22 Brutish and stupid, unknowing was I; just as a beast, standing dumb in Your eyes.  
23 But as for me, You remain at my side; You've taken my right hand, and lifted me high.  
24 You will lead me with prudence, and show me Your plan; and take me to glory, when my days do end.  
25 Who is in heaven, besides You my God; no one on earth, but You will I laud.  
26 My fleshly heart ceases, God strength of my heart; You are my portion, forever O Lord.  
27 Behold how those far, from You are consumed; destroyed are adulterers, untrue to You.  
28 Joyfully I will, come near to my God; the Lord God my shelter, His deeds I applaud.

## Background

Psalm 73 opens the Leviticus book of the Psalms (73—89). The Old Testament book of Leviticus focuses on matters in the sanctuary: the priesthood, ceremonial laws, and feasts. Almost all of these 17 Psalms mention the sanctuary and God's relation to it. Psalm 73 shows the heartache of those who are outside God's "sanctuary" and His blessings.

Hebrews 6:20 speaks of "Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Today, born-again believers are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (I Corinthians 1:2), "washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11), and "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). We are living sacrifices (Romans 12:1), and we collectively are "an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21,22).

The title includes "A Psalm of Asaph." Psalm 50 in the "Exodus" book of the Psalms also has this title. There are 11 Psalms (73-83) with this title in the "Leviticus" book of Psalms. Regarding Asaph, **Nehemiah 7:44 speaks of** "The singers: the children of Asaph." They were responsible for worship in the Temple. For further study on Asaph, see II Kings 18:18,37; I Chronicles 6:39; 9:15; 15:17,19; 16:5,7,37; 25:1,2,6,9; 26:1; II Chronicles 5:12; 20:14; 29:13,30; 35:15; Ezra 2:41; 3:10; Nehemiah 2:8; 7:44; 11:17,22; 12:35,46; Psalms 50:1; 73:1; 74:1; 75:1; 76:1; 77:1; 78:1; 79:1; 80:1; 81:1; 82:1; 83:1; Isaiah 36:3,22.

This Psalm deals with the heartache of man. Looking without, we see that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" (II Timothy 3:13). Looking within, we see that "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 28:26). Thus man is tossed about with his emotions. But when

we look to God, through His Son Jesus Christ, we are enlightened (II Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:18). We have “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding . . . through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

### Structure

(Verse 1) God’s goodness established

(Verses 2-12) Looking without: envious of the foolish, prideful, and ungodly

(Verses 13-16) Looking within: painful to see daily challenges

(Verses 17-20) God’s perspective (from His sanctuary): the wicked destroyed

(Verses 21-26) God’s perspective (His counsel): God strengthens Messiah’s heart

(Verses 27,28) God’s justice and goodness established

### Key Scriptures

**Verse 9**—“They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.” The prideful speak against God in heaven and His Messiah upon the earth.

**Verse 17**—“Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end.” From outward appearances, people can seem to have it all together. Yet from a truly spiritual perspective, they are in “slippery places” (verse 18).

**Verses 23,24**—“Nevertheless I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.” These words would have brought great comfort to Jesus Christ when he read them. He knew that his Father would continually guide him in his ministry, and that He would raise Jesus Christ from the dead to bring him unto glory (Matthew 25:31).