

## WHEN FACING JEALOUSY, CONFUSION, OR DISCOURAGEMENT OVER INJUSTICE (PSALM 73)

### Psalm 73

A Psalm of Asaph.

1 Surely God is good to Israel,  
To those who are pure in heart!  
2 But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling,  
My steps had almost slipped.  
3 For I was envious of the arrogant  
As I saw the prosperity of the wicked.  
4 For there are no pains in their death,  
And their body is fat.  
5 They are not in trouble as other men,  
Nor are they plagued like mankind.  
6 Therefore pride is their necklace;  
The garment of violence covers them.  
7 Their eye bulges from fatness;  
The imaginations of their heart run riot.  
8 They mock and wickedly speak of oppression;  
They speak from on high.  
9 They have set their mouth against the heavens,  
And their tongue parades through the earth.  
10 Therefore his people return to this place,  
And waters of abundance are drunk by them.  
11 They say, "How does God know?  
And is there knowledge with the Most High?"  
12 Behold, these are the wicked;  
And always at ease, they have increased in wealth.  
13 Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure  
And washed my hands in innocence;  
14 For I have been stricken all day long  
And chastened every morning.

15 If I had said, "I will speak thus,"  
Behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children.  
16 When I pondered to understand this,  
It was troublesome in my sight  
17 Until I came into the sanctuary of God;  
Then I perceived their end.  
18 Surely You set them in slippery places;  
You cast them down to destruction.  
19 How they are destroyed in a moment!  
They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors!  
20 Like a dream when one awakes,  
O Lord, when aroused, You will despise their form.  
21 When my heart was embittered  
And I was pierced within,  
22 Then I was senseless and ignorant;  
I was like a beast before You.  
23 Nevertheless I am continually with You;  
You have taken hold of my right hand.  
24 With Your counsel You will guide me,  
And afterward receive me to glory.  
25 **Whom have I in heaven but You?  
And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.**  
26 **My flesh and my heart may fail,  
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**  
27 For, behold, those who are far from You will perish;  
You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You.  
28 But as for me, the nearness of God is my good;  
I have made the Lord GOD my refuge,  
That I may tell of all Your works.

### Instructions

Memory Verse: *Psalm 73:25–26*

#### Observation

- First, read the entire passage, marking things you have said to yourself before. Be honest!
- Take a pen and mark all references you find to 1) **knowing, heart,** and **desire**, (including similar words referencing the *internal* man) 2) **seeing and speaking** (observe who speaks and the content of their speech).
- Asaph (the Psalmist) confesses he came close to *slipping* in his faith. Look at the passage and **list the observations** Asaph made which disturbed him.
- How are the godless described? What actions do they do? What things do they say?
- Why did he think his righteous behavior might have been "in vain" (worthless, futile) (see 73:13)?
- List all the benefits of living as a child of God (especially 73:21–28).

#### Interpretation

Why do you think the "sanctuary of God" provided such relief to Asaph? What clues does he give you about this in Psalm 73?

#### Application

Asaph confessed that he came close to "slipping." Have you ever felt this way? What led to it? What sins do you need to confess to the Lord?

What happens when we allow our hearts to be bitter about these things (73:21–22)?

What was Asaph's solution to these runaway thoughts of despair and discouragement? How can you do the same thing?