

Psalm 73

The Easy, Envable Life of the Wicked Contrasted with The Destiny of the Wicked and the Righteous

A Psalm of Asaph

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A1 THE EASY, ENVIABLE LIFE OF THE WICKED 73:1-14

B1 Introduction: The Struggle of the Psalmist 73:1-3

- C1 The goodness of God: Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart! 73:1
- C2 The near disaster of the Psalmist: But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling; my steps had almost slipped. 73:2
- C3 The envy of the Psalmist: For I was envious of the arrogant, 73:3a

B2 The Well-Being of the Wicked 73:3b-5, 7a

- C1 Their **prosperity**: As I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 73:3b
- C2 Their **painless death**: For there are no pains in their death 73:4
- C3 Their life of **plenty**: And their body is fat.
- C4 Their **untroubled life**: They are not in trouble as *other* men; Nor are they plagued like mankind. 73:5
- C5 Their life of **plenty**: Their eye bulges from fatness 73:7a

B3 Their Pursuit of Evil 73:6-9

- C1 Their **conceit**: Therefore pride is their necklace; 73:6
- C2 Their **violence**: The garment of violence covers them.
- C3 Their **lack of restraint**: The imaginations of *their* heart run riot. 73:7b
- C4 Their **advocacy of evil** 73:8-9
 - D1 Their **mockery** of good: They mock, 73:8
 - D2 Their **tyranny**: and wickedly speak of oppression; They speak from on high

D3 Their **blasphemy**: They have set their mouth against the heavens,
73:9

D4 Their **arrogance**: And their tongue parades through the earth

B4 The Envy of the Righteous 73:10-14

C1 The **apostasy** of the righteous 73:10

D1 Their emulation of the wicked: Therefore his people return to this
place

D2 The success of the apostate righteous: And waters of abundance
are drunk by them.

C2 The **cynical conclusion** of the backsliders 73:11-12

D1 About God's ignorance

E1 And they say, "How does God know?"

E2 And is there knowledge with the Most High?

D2 About the success of the wicked: Behold, these are the wicked;
73:12

E1 Their ease: And always at ease,

E2 Their luxury: they have increased *in* wealth.

C3 Asaph's **wavering** 73:13-14

D1 Because of his **unrewarded holiness** 73:13

E1 Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure,

E2 And washed my hands in innocence;

D2 Because of his **difficult life** 73:14

E1 For I have been stricken all day long,

E2 And chastened every morning.

A2 THE DESTINY OF THE WICKED AND THE RIGHTEOUS: In the long view, only God pays! 73:15-28

B1 Asaph's Gaining a Godly Perspective 73:15-17

- C1 His awareness of his faith-sabotaging thoughts: If I had said, "I will speak thus," behold, I should have betrayed the generation of Thy children. 73:15
- C2 His human inability to understand: When I pondered to understand this, it was troublesome in my sight 73:16
- C3 His Divinely-guided meditation 73:17
 - D1 Divine perspective: Until I came into the sanctuary of God
 - D2 Human perception: *Then* I perceived their end.¹

B2 Asaph's Realization of the Destructive Destiny of the Wicked 73:18-20

- C1 **Human insecurity:** Surely You set them in slippery places; 73:18
- C2 **Divine destruction:** You cast them down to destruction. 73:18
- C3 **Sudden destruction:** How they are destroyed in a moment! 73:19
- C4 **Complete destruction:** They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors!
- C5 **Illusion-shattering destruction:** Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when aroused, You will despise their form. 73:20

B3 Asaph's Analysis of His Past Shallow Thinking 73:21-22

- C1 **His deep-seated bitterness:** When my heart was embittered, and I was pierced within (lit., in my kidneys), 73:21
- C2 **His senseless thinking:** Then I was senseless and ignorant; I was *like* a beast before You. 73:22

B4 Asaph's Recognition of His Present Dependence on God 73:23-28

- C1 **For companionship:** Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. 73:23
- C2 **For safe conduct into eternity 73:24**
 - D1 With present guidance: With Your counsel You will guide me,
 - D2 Toward future glory: And afterward receive me to glory.

¹ Unaided by God's Spirit, our frail human spirits cannot obtain ultimate reality. We view things on earth as from the perspective of an ant rather than an eagle. We need God's thoughts to perceive ultimate realities.

C3 **For ultimate meaning** 73:25

D1 In heaven: Whom have I in heaven *but You?*

D2 On earth: And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

C4 **For strength** 73:26

D1 Human impotence: My flesh and my heart may fail,

D2 Eternal power: But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

C5 **For judgment:** For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You. 73:27

C6 **For ultimate good:** But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; 73:28

C7 **For praise:** I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all Your works. 73:28

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF PSALM 73

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