



**Life isn't Fair, and God Doesn't Promise It Will Be Either
When We are Overwhelmed and can't make Sense of it all, How do we Pray?
Psalm 73**

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Contrary to popular opinion, Psalm 73 was not written by Eeyore. But it does sound like him. It also sounds like Scar from the Lion King but what all those cartoons' characters do is reflect the reality that all of us learn very early in life. Life isn't fair.

We know that someday life will indeed be fair, but Jesus Christ will be the King of the Earth that day, until then, we look forward to it.

Deep down, we know and desire it to be fair, so did Asaph.



Rodney Cooper tells us that “Usually when people say, “Life is not fair,” they mean they are not getting what they want or they are being forced to do something they do not want to do.

Actually, life is not fair. If anyone would say “Amen” to this, it would be a Christian. Life certainly was not fair in Jesus’ case. One of his closest friends betrayed him. The “chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders” made up the Sanhedrin, the supreme religious and legal court in Judea. Yet, instead of giving Jesus a fair hearing, they plotted to seize Jesus secretly and to drag him off to an illegal trial. The same court tried to manufacture evidence against Jesus. When Jesus affirmed his deity, he was condemned, even though the law called for a full day between conviction and sentencing in capital cases. There was nothing fair about the trial and conviction of Jesus.” (Cooper 2000, 245-246) And here is the really good news for us.

John 15:20

“Remember what I told you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they obeyed my word, they will obey yours too.” (NET 2nd ed.)

This brings us to a topic that has been discussed ever since Genesis 3, “why do bad things happen to good people?” Good question, it is one that Asaph is asking here in this psalm and it is one that has been asked for thousands of years. The term, theodicy, per Mark Scott, “denotes the attempt to explain or make sense of suffering. In short, theodicy seeks to “justify the ways of God to men.” It does not simply refute the accusation of injustice, it demonstrates God’s justice: “A theodicy is not simply an attempt to meet the charge that God’s ways are unjust: it is an attempt to exhibit the justice of his ways.” Theodicy tells a “story” about how God and evil logically coexist.” (Scott 2015, 14)

Theodicy is an attempt, by feeble mortal man, to explain what it is that the eternal God is doing as a result of the fall, as if we actually do understand it. In other words, this is a real popular topic among those who want to philosophize on everything. Theologians also like to wax poetic on this topic as well. But the root is this, bad things do indeed happen to good people because the world and universe we live in is fallen and currently pretty much under the realm of Satan.

As followers of Christ, we have rejected that paradigm and now have citizenship in heaven, yet we are, well, still here.

I do not want to turn this into a theology discussion.

The reality is that Asaph, as he works through his issues in this psalm, is the one bringing this up. Asaph was a Levite musician appointed by David and he was also later considered to be a prophet just as David was (2 Chronicles 29:30). The name wound up becoming popular for little boys and we do see it pop up here and there in the text of the Bible.

Asaph looks at the world around him and is tempted. Unlike some today, he does not give in.

Psalm 73:title–28

“A Psalm of Asaph. **God certainly is good to Israel, To those who are pure in heart! But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling, My steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant As I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pains in their death, And their belly is fat. They are not in trouble like other people, Nor are they tormented together with the rest of mankind. Therefore arrogance is their necklace; The garment of violence covers them. Their eye bulges from fatness; The imaginations of their heart overflow. They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; They speak from on high. They have set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue parades through the earth. Therefore his people return here, And abundant waters are drunk by them. They say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?”**



Behold, these are the wicked; And always at ease, they have increased in wealth. Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure And washed my hands in innocence; For I have been stricken all day long, And punished every morning. If I had said, "I will speak this way," Behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. **When I thought of understanding this, It was troublesome in my sight Until I entered the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end. You indeed put them on slippery ground; You dropped them into ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors! Like a dream when one awakes, Lord, when stirred, You will despise their image. When my heart was embittered And I was pierced within, Then I was stupid and ignorant; I was like an animal before You. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. You will guide me with Your plan, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.** For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You. But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, So that I may tell of all Your works." (NASB 2020)

Life is not fair. Asaph, who is a musician just as David, has noticed that fact. He has had some issue understanding it and it is a source of concern and temptation for Him. But even Solomon noticed this as an observation of his in Ecclesiastes.

Ecclesiastes 9:11

"I have observed something else under the sun. The fastest runner doesn't always win the race, and the strongest warrior doesn't always win the battle. The wise sometimes go hungry, and the skillful are not necessarily wealthy. And those who are educated don't always lead successful lives. It is all decided by chance, by being in the right place at the right time." (NLT)

The problem is very basic. We were created to be God's imagers. But a problem got in the way of that, the fall. The lie, you can be like God, was bought into and when that happened, fairness, at least as God sees fairness, ended for mankind.

This is one of those things the Got Questions team answered. "Fairness, properly defined, is "freedom from bias, dishonesty, or injustice." To be fair is to be just; that is, to be "guided by truth, reason, and justice." Whatever our outward circumstances, we can always choose to treat others fairly and thus make life a little more fair for those around us. The basic reason that life is not fair—that is, life is not guided by truth, reason, and justice—is that we live in a sinful world occupied by sinful people." (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

Asaph will walk us through how he deals with this and as he begins, he wants us to know how good, God is to His own people.

Psalms 73:1

"God certainly is good to Israel, To those who are pure in heart!" (NASB 2020)

Stop though and think about reading that verse after returning to rebuild the Temple, after the Babylonian exile. How about after arriving in Tel Aviv from Auschwitz. Consider the same today as literally the entire planet is now moving to a last days Satanically inspired antisemitism. But the statement does not cease to be true.

God is indeed good to His people, and when everything is going well, that statement is just as true as when everything is not going well. Jesus though attests to this attribute.

Luke 18:19

"But Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone." (NASB 2020)



When we understand that God is good, that He is always good, and we look around us at this fallen world, we see the massive disconnect that took place in Genesis 3. Wayne Grudem gives us the definition.

The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and all that God is and does is worthy of approval. (Grudem 2020, 236)

As you and I grow in Christ, becoming more like Him, we are in the process of beginning to reflect that good to the world. When you and I begin to evaluate things the way God does, when we look at circumstances the way that God does, when we approve what He approves and reject what He rejects, then we are truly beginning to image this aspect of His character.

Case in point. When we talk about believers becoming more like Jesus, developing a Biblical world view and learning to reject that world view we used to hold, the one that comes from Satan, then this is indeed what we are talking about. Biblical alignment. How Biblically aligned are we?

Research coming from the American Worldview Inventory 2026 is reflecting just how far down the church here in the US has gone. The researchers have discovered that “Biblical worldview alignment is strikingly low across all eight worldview categories among American adults, with scores ranging from a high of just 19% in Purpose and Calling to a low of 5% in Family and the Value of Life—meaning that in every category, the overwhelming majority of U.S. adults lack basic biblical alignment between their beliefs and behaviors and biblical principles. (Cultural Research Center 2026)

And when you look at just those who say they have been born again, the fact that there are very few today who teach the word, pops up hard. “The fact that only one out of eight born-again adults holds a biblical worldview highlights the extensive decline of core Christian principles in America in recent years. Born-again adults currently constitute one-third of the national adult population (34%). (Cultural Research Center 2026)

Why no revival? Obviously, because those who say they love the Lord, love other things more. Perhaps they are struggling with the same things that Asaph begins to talk about.

We live in a culture that lionizes evil and demonizes good. The US is the classic example of a nation that has gone all in on Isaiah 5:20 as something to emulate rather than stay away from.

Isaiah 5:20

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (NASB 2020)

Asaph was also watching others in the world.

Psalms 73:2–3

“But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling, My steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant As I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” (NASB 2020)

Being a Kardashian doesn’t look all that bad. Right. Reality television does not provide the whole picture. We struggle like Asaph.

We know that the way the Lord is guiding us to do life is superior to anything we could do on our own but look at their lifestyle and look at the cars and the travel and the money. About all of that.



1 Corinthians 6:15–20

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (ESV)

What is worse is when we see a “nominal Christian,” read Christian in name only, succeeding in life and living however they want to live. You just have not seen the crash and burn yet.

We have entire churches today filled with folks who believe they can live anyway they want and God will give them a pass.

Revelation 3:14–22

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ” (NKJV)

All the other churches are addressed as being in the community they are in, but Laodicea is addressed as being “of Laodicea.”

The very first point being made is God is no longer in the house, and Jesus is outside looking in. This is the characteristic of churches all around us today because they do and say the same thing. First of all, they are not interested in the Great Commission, but they are interested in entertaining those who show up with food, music, a collection and then a Ted Talk from the “pastor” just to make you feel especially religious today.

And how do they live, why is it Asaph would be tempted or why would anyone be tempted.

Revelation 3:17

“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—” (NKJV)

Stop and consider this, here we have a church in name only, that has told the Lord, we don’t need you at all because we have money and are doing just fine without you, thank you very much.

There are whole denominations that have gone this direction, and most are in the process of dying. But there are also those “churches” who put on a show and look really good to the outside world, but they are dead. God’s word is referenced, not taught.



Let's be real about this, why are so many churches today not teaching the word of God? God's word challenges and points out the need to repent and follow Jesus. The world doesn't like that so those "churches" who have aligned with the world, not teach Bible light. Love, relationships, good works, but Jesus is no longer in the house.

This is what happens when the church ceases impacting the world with the gospel and instead, has embraced the world and become a sycophant for the world's various causes. That means going soft on sin and affirming lifestyles God calls an abomination.

The world does tempt as well though, and for the follower of Jesus, or for the recently fallen pastor or song leader who have decided they want life their way. Perhaps, envy? Asaph thought so too, at least initially.

Psalms 73:3–5

"For I was envious of the arrogant As I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pains in their death, And their belly is fat. They are not in trouble like other people, Nor are they tormented together with the rest of mankind." (NASB 2020)

Some who are listening to me have started doing the math and like Asaph, are beginning to wonder if it is worth it. It is by the way.

Even though these folks were arrogantly throwing away their lives, divorcing their wife and getting rid of the kids and also "freeing" themselves of the burden of making a show of being a believer all of the time. Now they are, they think, free and able to make all kinds of money and experience true prosperity for the first time in their life. Paul dealt with someone like that, and in the Lord, he was not gentle.

1 Corinthians 5:3–5

"For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, **I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.**" (ESV)

Welcome to real church discipline. All because, just like Asaph, they bought the lie that the wicked die peacefully, are blessed physically with good looks and a long life, actually do well in business and life while carrying the pride they are. Pain, they have no pain even though there is that failed marriage and children who now want nothing to do with you for the rest of your life. They will enjoy prosperity.

Psalms 73:4–9

"For there are no pains in their death, And their belly is fat. They are not in trouble like other people, Nor are they tormented together with the rest of mankind. Therefore arrogance is their necklace; The garment of violence covers them. Their eye bulges from fatness; The imaginations of their heart overflow. They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; They speak from on high. They have set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue parades through the earth." (NASB 2020)

No lingering long drawn-out death watches here, they keel over and are gone. And their family, most likely glad they are now gone.

Asaph sees this and he is struggling. Life isn't fair. Why can't I have this? These are folks who eat well, they are not in trouble all of the time like others are who follow the Lord. At least that is what they and Satan want you to believe. They are busy doing life on their terms rather than the Lords. The real problem though is way that those who have run of away from the Lord also turn towards cruelty as a means to



take what they want from others who they believe are no longer entitled to it. This is done these days with court proceedings designed to destroy the other person and rob them of life.

The arrogance is worn proudly like a necklace and some even turn to getting what they want no matter who gets hurt.

In the background we see churches drowning in debt, lawsuits and legal actions being thrown out just to drain the pocketbooks of folks who have done nothing wrong. That is also called oppression.

There are many former church leaders who has gone down this path and before they go down, they leave a trail of bodies, a turnover ratio that is outrageously high for a church, non-disclosure agreements across the landscape and ruined lives and ministry everywhere. And the name of Christ, that was never their concern. All in the name of what is the primary temptation here that Asaph is discussing. The good life and ALL that means.

As it says in verse 8 those who are the doers of this mock others. Many times those they once loved or served or worked with, they now mock and brag about how they have oppressed them. "I took them to court and and see, no child support." Oppression.

Why do people do this? Why do they turn from the Lord to copy those who are lost and are simply doing life Satan's way. They think based on their observations and the lies of Satan, that in the end, they will win.

Women who decide they want this and use their bodies to get it and the man they want, steal him in the process from a wife and kids.

But what happens when he runs across someone who is better looking? What if you get sick and the looks disappear? How much botox can you really withstand before it isn't enough anymore?

Psalm 73:7

"Their eye bulges from fatness; The imaginations of their heart overflow." (NASB 2020)

Every single follower of Jesus Christ that I have ever seen or met who chose this path has ended in disaster, every single one unless they repent.

Here is the thing, the man you just stole, threw away a family, it is now not that big of a deal for him to do it again. And again. And again.

But the imaginations of the heart overflow. Too many fairy tales. There is no happily ever after for the one chasing sin. Remember, life isn't fair. Even in this lost world. For anyone. Especially a believer who has decided to chase the flesh, has a Godly church praying down discipline on them and thinks life will be wonderful. Look at the progression.

Psalm 73:8-9

"They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; They speak from on high. They have set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue parades through the earth." (NASB 2020)

At some point, unless they repent, the fallen believer will go the same way as the world and go all in on oppression.

Today that would look like everything the culture says is good and right, but really isn't. It looks like Progressive Christianity and the overthrow of morality in favor of freedom. But the reality, it is the



oppression of sin, the slavery of sin, once again, this time though, you knew better. Just as the world then speaks against God, so will the one who has fallen for the lies of Satan and decided to take the bait. The difficulty though is when the temptation first hits, Asaph decided to evaluate and make a good decision. There are many today though, so into the lie of the culture that I deserve this, that they do very little evaluation.

Right up front, Asaph told us that his view of the wicked and possibly emulating them was enticing, tempting. Dr. Rosscup tells us "This man passionate for God's will almost did a flip-flop to give up the godly life as useless. His spiritual feet nearly stumbled, lost their footing. He was close to going down in a terrible crash." (Rosscup 2008, 919)

Not everyone crashes and burns. Not everyone gives in and loses everything making national news in the process.

You see, those who make the same decision as Asaph did, we tend not to hear about. Satan though does lie about those who seem to be doing okay as they chase a wicked lifestyle or run away from the Lord. Rosscup continues, "God seemed indifferent as these self-sufficient people even let their tongues wag against Him, strutting in celebration of having their own way. God permitted them to drink up life as if there would be no accountability, even to question how His knowledge could cut in on their style." (Rosscup 2008, 920)

But for those who do not give into the temptation and remain faithful, no news, nothing to emulate. But if we look closer, what we see is what everyone wants. Parents who love each other and their kids and stay together no matter what. Pastors who remain faithful to their calling faithfully teaching the word of God for decades. Derek Leman talks about this.

"The family can be a great blessing when its interrelationships are based on righteousness and wisdom. Family includes husband, wife, and children, but it also encompasses brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Thus, almost everyone has a family. Single adults have parents, siblings, grandparents, and aunts and uncles. Even those who are without parents usually have adoptive parents or others who serve as family in their lives. But it is certainly true that not everyone who has a family has a blessing. Family is a blessing if properly understood and related to. The right attitude makes family a blessing. (Leman 1999, 93)

As with many wisdom principles, we are confronted here with a choice between an easy way and a hard way. The easy and peaceful path is that of love and family joy. This is easy in the sense that it makes our lives easier, not easy in the sense that family love and joy is simple to obtain. The hard path is that of the loner. Ignoring spouse, parents, siblings, and grandparents, the loner tries to make his or her way as an island in the world. (Leman 1999, 94)

Those who make the right decision though may feel like they are a minority and that may indeed be a true statement. Even Jesus said so.

Matthew 7:13–14

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (NKJV)

As we remain faithful, even being mocked by the world as we do so, we come back to that place where we worship the Lord with others.



Psalm 73:10–11

“Therefore his people return here, And abundant waters are drunk by them. They say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?”” (NASB 2020)

What is it we as followers of Jesus do when we see others mocking us and our Lord as they parade their so-called influential lifestyle in our faces? We return to the Lord. We have decided along with Asaph that the price is too high. The desire is to take part again in the Spirit, the abundant living waters of the Holy Spirit. When this type of issue invades the church though, it impacts everyone and those who are seeking the Lord discover that the ones who left are trying to destroy that too.

Psalm 73:11

“They say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?”” (NASB 2020)

Not only have they destroyed their relationship with the Lord, they also want you and me to question ours as well. Satan wants to plant seeds of doubt into the church and this is one of those places he does. All it takes is just a few believers who wander off. Or even the pastor softening down the message and those who are faithful wind up being punished for it. Get with the new program or get gone. Been there.

Psalm 73:12

“Behold, these are the wicked; And always at ease, they have increased in wealth.” (NASB 2020)

First, we need to realize that the wicked are the wicked. We are not to emulate or copy them no matter how tempting it is. Those who have given into the temptation have also decided they want the goodies of the world at the expense of their own soul. I am not saying that if they were saved, they have now lost that salvation, but they will be empty inside as the Lord begins the discipline process with them and unless they repent, their life will become a serious downward spiral.

But why is that from the outside looking in, it appears they are at ease and are increasing in wealth at the same time. The news media will spin it in the favor of Satan, so will Hollywood and the tabloids. They will even go as far as to put on the public image online that this new life they have chosen is another reason why they are now succeeding in life.

But are they, really.

Hosea 8:7

“**“They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind.** The stalk has no bud; It shall never produce meal. If it should produce, Aliens would swallow it up.” (NKJV)

Paul saw this happening in the church in Philippi. Followers of Jesus suddenly turning and walking away giving in to the temptations being discussed here by Asaph.

Philippians 3:17–21

“Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. **For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth. But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.** He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.” (NLT)



We forget the lies and schemes of the devil. He wants to present those who have strayed to use as model citizens. The wicked are already presented to us as examples to follow, thank to reality television. The goal of the enemy is to have what Asaph vocalizes, as something we are also considering.

Psalm 73:13–14

“Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure And washed my hands in innocence; For I have been stricken all day long, And punished every morning.” (NASB 2020)

When you or I are going through a trial, and that is when Satan will want to parade his option by you, it is hard to react honestly.

Asaph knows he has this problem and he talks about it. VanGemeran says this.

First, he confesses that he doubted the value of his concern with sanctification. Keeping his heart “pure” was an expression of concern for justice and righteousness. He had not been guilty of bloodshed or oppressive activities; so he could say that his hands were washed “in innocence”. Second, the psalmist confesses the turmoil of his own experiences. His emotions express self-doubt and envy. (VanGemeran 2008, 563)

He is tempted, this is a test, and he is telling the Lord he is being tempted and looking to the Lord for help to get through this. He is going through a trial or suffering and not real clear on the reasons. But here he is talking about it. James will later say this.

James 1:12–15

“Happy is the one who endures testing, because when he has proven to be genuine, he will receive the crown of life that God promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each one is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desires. Then when desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is full grown, it gives birth to death.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Do not fall into the trap when dealing with temptation that you need to be tough on your own and master this thing in front of you. No, talk to the Lord and let Him empower you and strengthen you. For Joseph, the answer, was run and run now (Genesis 39:12-13).

Make the decision before you must make the decision in real time. Decide now that you will live a holy life.

And here is a not original thought. Jesus encouraged, as part of His model prayer, us to pray to be led away from temptation.

Luke 11:4

“and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.” (ESV)

And also realize this, many times, we are at our weakest, when we think we aren't. Oh, and don't think what you are going through is unique, it isn't. He has indeed provided a way of escape for us and at times, it really is better to run.

1 Corinthians 10:12–14

“Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with



the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” (ESV)

Asaph is being up front and honest as to what he, as a leader of worship in the Temple, is going through. And if he is encountering temptation, so are all who are busy about serving the Lord. Tom Yeakley though points out that for many, the fall is not sudden.

“Many spiritual leaders who fall into moral collapse started down a path of ruin long before they gave in to temptation. The root cause was frequently a lack of a vital growing love relationship with the Lord. This in turn led to a spiritual shallowness, a lack of spiritual sensitivity, and a hardening of their hearts. Eventually this allowed opportunity to give in to temptation with the resulting ruinous consequences.

Leaders who lack personal purity fear exposure to others. They spend much energy maintaining a duplicitous life that outwardly appears “clean” but secretly is full of sin. They compromise their convictions; rather than seeing how far they can stay from sin, they adopt an attitude of seeing how close they can get without giving in.” (Yeakley 2011, 99)

Accountability is vitally important. Especially for those in leadership. I know of those leaders who are incredibly transparent and open and if they have a struggle, they invite others to pray with them. Then there are those who have gone into the fortress mentality and want nothing to do with others. Yep, I have seen them go down in flames.

The unfortunate thing, they do not mentor those who do ministry with them and as a result there seems to be this never-ending line of disclosures and moral failures taking place all around them, most of which would have been caught or cut short if the leader, actually loved and cared for his flock as well as his staff. The turnover ratio is the warning sign, and when one who has left fails morally elsewhere, it is most likely nothing more than something they had already been doing before they even left.

Psalm 73:15–17

“If I had said, “I will speak this way,” Behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought of understanding this, It was troublesome in my sight Until I entered the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end.” (NASB 2020)

Asaph forgot the same thing many of us also forget about those who are wicked, or those who have strayed away from the Lord and seem to get away with it. They are not getting away with it. He was fearful for almost going there, giving in to sin and as a result betraying the next generation. Who suffers the most when moral failure occurs, the next generation. The kids.

Asaph is wrestling with how God actually works. He did not bring it out with others, if he had, the doubt would have impacted the young. He sees that. Platt tells us “He shows us how to ask questions and how to struggle in our faith while not pulling other people away from God. Again we can identify with the psalmist. There is much to wrestle with in a world where sex traffickers are flourishing, godless leaders are ruling, and sinners are succeeding. Why does God allow all this? Is he not powerful enough to stop this? If he is just, then why doesn’t he put an end to this wickedness?” (Platt, Mason and Shaddix 2020, 215)

The answer is right at the end of verse 17, judgment, oh yeah, that is still a real thing.

Psalm 73:18–20

“You indeed put them on slippery ground; You dropped them into ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors! Like a dream when one awakes, Lord, when stirred, You will despise their image.” (NASB 2020)



I find the classic example of one who falls on that slippery ground to be Haman. Haman was an official in the court of the Persian Emperor.

He was a descendant of Agag, who was supposed to be executed by Saul but wasn't (1 Samuel 15), and now the results of that sin centuries earlier comes to roost. Haman hated the Jewish people and connived his way to getting a genocidal edict signed by the Emperor. But for Mordecai and Queen Esther things turned out very different than Haman wanted. He wanted the pleasure of personally executing Mordecai on a 50-cubit gallows. However, things went south for Haman and through a series of events at a dinner, he became the example Asaph talks about.

Esther 7:9–10

"Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Moreover, the gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, is standing at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the wrath of the king abated." (ESV)

Destroyed in a moment. The judgment of God tends to work that way. Asaph says, "God will despise their image." Judgment in hell, the second death, is eternal separation from God. "And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" (Matthew 7:23, ESV)

Psalms 73:21–23

"When my heart was embittered And I was pierced within, Then I was stupid and ignorant; I was like an animal before You. Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand." (NASB 2020)

When we take our eyes off of the Lord looking at our own situation and then marinate in our own stew of discontent that we are the victims of life not being fair, which it isn't by the way, then we become embittered, angry with God. And being angry, embittered with God, it is indeed a painful place to be since we are not placing ourselves over God and replacing Him with ourselves on the throne.

John Goldingay tells us, "The verbs express the paradox that our embitteredness and pain is both something that comes upon us and also something we are responsible for." (Goldingay 2006, 412)

I hate that about myself. This is simply being foolish, I completely agree with Asaph.

Psalms 73:22

"Then I was stupid and ignorant; I was like an animal before You." (NASB 2020)

The problem all of us have, as we are wallowing about in our own self-pity because we want "that life" we see being extolled by the media, God is standing very patiently right next to us with His absolute best for us in the other hand. I remember being upset as a child over no cookies for dessert, I wanted cookies. But mom had baked a pie and dad made ice cream. Talk about feeling stupid really fast. I did not see the best sitting there, but I foolishly wanted second best.

Asaph was there.

Psalms 73:23–28

"Nevertheless I am continually with You; **You have taken hold of my right hand. You will guide me with Your plan, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom do I have in heaven but You? And with You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.** For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all



those who are unfaithful to You. **But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, So that I may tell of all Your works.**" (NASB 2020)

Repentance over the attitude is where he goes. The Satan filtered lie has now been exposed exactly as that and now he sees reality.

Repenting and seeing reality brings rejoicing.

I love how Dr. McGee sums up the psalm for us.

You have to stay close to God today, friend, or you will become bitter and cynical as you see the injustice in the world. Asaph found his answer in the sanctuary. I don't know the answer to your question because I don't know the answer to mine, but I know Someone who does. He didn't say He would tell me right now. He said, "You trust Me. I've got the answer." Someday in His presence He is going to explain it all to us. Also I know that He is going to show me that what He did was best. I don't understand that either, but that is what He is going to do. (McGee 1997, 794)

Psalms 73:28

"But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, So that I may tell of all Your works." (NASB 2020)

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