

Highlights from the Psalms

Psalm 73

The Temptation of Materialism

INTRO: While the psalm is attributed to Asaph, it may be “for” Asaph as a cantor or choir leader. The psalm consists of two stanzas: verses 1-14 and verses 15-28. The psalm predominately contrasts the end of the wicked with the end of the righteous. It is a confession of the hidden temptation of envy and the ultimate victory in meditating on God’s goodness.

I. The Conclusion Sets the Stage (v.1)

- A. “Surely God is good . . .”
- B. To Israel; to those who are pure in heart!

II. The Confession of the Heart (vv.2-14)

- A. The psalmist comes very close to stumbling & betraying God (v.2)
- B. He was envious of the arrogant and the prosperity of the wicked (v.3-12)
- C. He feels as though his faith has been in vain (v.13-14)

III. Reflection (vv.15-20)

- A. He reflects upon his secret sin
- B. He realizes if he had voiced his feelings he would have betrayed the faithful
- C. It was when he came into the sanctuary that his heart was exposed & set right
How very important it is for us to assemble with other believers for worship!
- D. It is during worship that he realizes the outcome of the wicked and the blessing of the righteous

IV. Repentance (vv.21-24)

- A. He realizes his thoughts are foolish, senseless, and ignorant
- B. He now understands that God is always with him and He is his portion
- C. He will inherit glory in God’s presence

V. Praise (vv.25-27)

- A. Whom have I in heaven but You oh God?!
And besides You I desire nothing on this earth!
- B. Even in calamity and distress God is the strength of my heart
- C. Ultimately the wicked will perish and the unfaithful be destroyed

VI. Testimony (v.28)

*The nearness of my God is my good;
I have made the Lord my God my refuge
That I may tell of all Your good works.*

CONC: It is easy to be tempted to envy the rich and prosperous but remember it is also easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. God knows each one, and in the end the righteous will be eternally blessed while the wicked will be eternally cursed. We may not see judgment just now, but better to be on the right side of the eternal judgment than to pursue worldly things and lose everything in the end.