

Psalms  
Book 3  
We commence reading Book 3

PSALM 73

**A Psalm of Asaph.**

<sup>1</sup> Truly God *is* good to Israel,  
To such as are pure in heart.

<sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;  
My steps had nearly slipped.

<sup>3</sup> For I *was* envious of the boastful,  
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

<sup>4</sup> For *there are* no pangs in their death,  
But their strength *is* firm.

<sup>5</sup> They *are* not in trouble *as other* men,  
Nor are they plagued like *other* men.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore pride serves as their necklace;  
Violence covers them *like* a garment.

<sup>7</sup> Their eyes bulge with abundance;  
They have more than heart could wish.

<sup>8</sup> They scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression;  
They speak loftily.

<sup>9</sup> They set their mouth against the heavens,  
And their tongue walks through the earth.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore his people return here,  
And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them.

<sup>11</sup> And they say, "How does God know?  
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

<sup>12</sup> Behold, these *are* the ungodly,  
Who are always at ease;  
They increase *in* riches.

<sup>13</sup> Surely I have cleansed my heart *in* vain,  
And washed my hands in innocence.

<sup>14</sup> For all day long I have been plagued,  
And chastened every morning.

<sup>15</sup> If I had said, "I will speak thus,"  
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.

<sup>16</sup> When I thought *how* to understand this,  
It *was* too painful for me—

<sup>17</sup> Until I went into the sanctuary of God;  
*Then* I understood their end.

<sup>18</sup> Surely You set them in slippery places;  
You cast them down to destruction.

<sup>19</sup> Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment!  
They are utterly consumed with terrors.

<sup>20</sup> As a dream when *one* awakes,  
So, Lord, when You awake,  
You shall despise their image.

<sup>21</sup> Thus my heart was grieved,  
And I was vexed in my mind.

<sup>22</sup> I *was* so foolish and ignorant;  
I was *like* a beast before You.

<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I *am* continually with You;  
You hold *me* by my right hand.

<sup>24</sup> You will guide me with Your counsel,  
And afterward receive me *to* glory.

<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven *but* You?  
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.

<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart fail;  
*But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

<sup>27</sup> For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;  
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

<sup>28</sup> *But it is good for me to draw near to God;*  
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,  
That I may declare all Your works.

Psalm 73:1-28

## **ASAPH**

<sup>1</sup> *Moreover David and the captains of the army separated for the service some of the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals. And the number of the skilled men performing their service was:*

<sup>2</sup> *Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah; the sons of Asaph were under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied according to the order of the king. 1 Chronicles 25:1-2*

1. They were all from the Levitical family

2. Asaph was the head of his family

3. Ministry:

a) Music ministry

b) Prophetic ministry

## **A CANDID CONFESSION OF ASAPH OF ENVY**

1. He stumbled in faith as he looked with envy at the material advantages of the wealthy

2. Listing the things the "wicked wealthy" seem to enjoy

a) "The prosperity of the wicked"

*For I was envious of the boastful,  
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Psalm 73:3*

b) Strength even at death  
*For there are no pangs in their death,  
But their strength is firm.* *Psalm 73:4*

c) Trouble-free life  
  
*They are not in trouble as other men,  
Nor are they plagued like other men.* *Psalm 73:5*

d) Pride and Violence  
*Therefore pride serves as their necklace;  
Violence covers them like a garment.* *Psalm 73:6*

e) Abundance  
*Their eyes bulge with abundance;  
They have more than heart could wish.* *Psalm 73:7*

f) Arrogant attitude  
*They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression;  
They speak loftily.* *Psalm 73:8*

g) Blasphemous defiance  
*They set their mouth against the heavens,  
And their tongue walks through the earth.* *Psalm 73:9*

h) The ungodly rich  
  
<sup>10</sup> *Therefore his people return here,  
And waters of a full cup are drained by them.*  
  
<sup>11</sup> *And they say, "How does God know?  
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"*  
  
<sup>12</sup> *Behold, these are the ungodly,  
Who are always at ease;  
They increase in riches.* *Psalm 73:10-12*

### **A CANDID CONFESSION OF ASAPH OF "ALMOST REGRET"**

<sup>13</sup> *Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain,  
And washed my hands in innocence.*

<sup>14</sup> *For all day long I have been plagued,  
And chastened every morning.*

*<sup>15</sup> If I had said, "I will speak thus,"  
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children  
Psalm 73:13-15*

1. A life of innocence

- a) Cleansing of heart
- b) Washing of hands
- c) Were these pursuits in vain?

2. Experience of suffering

- a) Plagued
- b) Chastened

3. Tempted to "give up"

- a) To speak out loud the frustration felt
- b) But that would mean being untrue to the children of God

### **STRUGGLING TO UNDERSTAND**

*<sup>16</sup> When I thought how to understand this,  
It was too painful for me—*

*<sup>17</sup> Until I went into the sanctuary of God;  
Then I understood their end. Psalm 73:16-17*

1. It was a painful and difficult time
2. He sought the Lord in His sanctuary
3. Enlightenment was found

### **THE FATE OF THE WICKED RICH**

*<sup>18</sup> Surely You set them in slippery places;  
You cast them down to destruction.*

*<sup>19</sup> Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment!  
They are utterly consumed with terrors.*

<sup>20</sup> *As a dream when one awakes,  
So, Lord, when You awake,  
You shall despise their image.*

Psalm 73:18-20

1. They walk in slippery places
2. They will face destruction
3. They will experience desolation
4. The LORD will despise their image

### **RETURNING TO THE LORD IN HUMILITY AND FRESH APPRECIATION**

<sup>21</sup> Thus my heart was grieved,  
And I was vexed in my mind.

<sup>22</sup> I *was* so foolish and ignorant;  
I was *like* a beast before You.

<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I *am* continually with You;  
You hold *me* by my right hand.

<sup>24</sup> You will guide me with Your counsel,  
And afterward receive me *to* glory.

<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven *but* You?  
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.

<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart fail;  
*But* God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

<sup>27</sup> For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;  
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

<sup>28</sup> But *it is* good for me to draw near to God;  
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,  
That I may declare all Your works.

Psalm 73:21-28

1. Confession of foolish thinking  
Compared to "a beast"

Psalm 73:21-22

## 2. The Blessings that God has given to the righteous

- a) God's guidance Psalm 73:23
- b) God will guide us all the way to Heaven Psalm 73:24
- c) No one better, in heaven or on earth Psalm 73:25
- d) God is our strength forever Psalm 73:26
- e) What is good?
  - i) To draw near to God
  - ii) To trust in the LORD
  - iii) To declare all His works Psalm 73:28
- f) The unrighteous will perish Psalm 73:27