

Prosperity of the Wicked

(Psalm 73)

Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

2 **But as for me**, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped.

3 For **I was envious** of the boastful, **When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.**
(A dangerous place to walk....to envy those who are not following our King)

4 For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm.

5 They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men.

6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them like a garment.

7 Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.

8 They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full cup are drained by them.

11 **And they say**, "How does God know? **And is there knowledge in the Most High?**"
(The wicked question God and His authority)

12 Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches.

13 Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

(Psalmist is comparing his circumstances to those of the wicked)

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

16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me--

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

(Acting as the wicked did was not even a remote possibility for him, and he did not understand; until he entered the sanctuary of God, that is, the presence of God.)

18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

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

20 As a dream when one awakes, So, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.

(He then sees accurately the price for their arrogance and pride)

21 Thus **my heart was grieved**, And **I was vexed in my mind**.

22 **I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast** before You.

23 Nevertheless I am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand.

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

(He feels conviction for his previous thoughts, but knows he is forgiven and accepted by God)

25 Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.

26 My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

(Psalmist again understands his own position with God and accepts it)

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

28 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.

(He reiterates the fate of the wicked, even when they look prosperous, and states his own purpose. He has concluded that he wants none of the prosperity of the wicked.)

Ps 39:5

5 Indeed, You have made my days as hand breadths,
And my age is as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.

James 4:13-17

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";

14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.