

Study 3: Psalm 73

This Psalm is not written by David but rather by Asaph. This is the second Psalm ascribed to Asaph, and the first of eleven consecutive Psalms bearing the name of this singer. Some writers are not sure that Asaph wrote them, but believe that David was the author, and Asaph is the person to whom they were dedicated. This is so he might sing them when he became the chief musician. In spite of this we observe in 2Ch 29:30 that Hezekiah commanded the Levites to sing "the words of David and of Asaph the seer" and, also, in Ne 12:46, David and Asaph are mentioned together. They are distinct from "the chief of the singers, "and therefore they are both authors of the psalms; though not all of the Psalms. So we conclude that Asaph is the author of this Psalm and the others ascribed to him.

His opening statement: Verse 1 – The Psalm begins: **"Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart."** It is clear from reading this Psalm that Asaph begins with this powerful and confident statement about God because he knows what he is going to write about. He probably is thinking especially about the things that he first observed and drew faulty conclusions from. He will take his readers down the path he went on but he wants them to first know that God is truly good to all who by His grace are pure in heart.

His initial observations and conclusions: Verses 2-14 – After verse 1 he jumps to **"But as for me..."** suggesting that for a time as he observed life he was not "pure in heart." His feet had almost slipped, and he had nearly lost his food hold. Why? He drew conclusions about reality from looking around him at how things appeared to him.

What did he see?

What did he conclude from what he saw?

In verses 7-9 Asaph lists all the things they do from their hearts, their minds and with their mouths in this apparent "privileged position".

Again list what he observed about them:

What can we learn about perception?

His subsequent experience: Verses 15-17 – Thankfully for us his observations and conclusions did not stop there. What happens to him in verses 15-17?

What is meant by the phrase **"the sanctuary of God"**?

His final observations and conclusions: Verses 18-28 – Having come close to God his whole perspective changed and he changes his observations about the wicked and their destiny. What does he now know about the wicked (vs 18-22)?

He also changes what he believes about pursuing intimacy with God. What does he know about himself (and all others who like him come near to God)? See verses 23-28

What is the final outcome of all this? That is, what will he do from the end of verse 28?