

“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and **my portion forever.**” Psalm 73:25,26

A portion is your inheritance. It's your wealth, your security. For him to say, “God is my portion,” he's comparing his portion to theirs. And, if God is your portion, if God is the thing you're living for, nobody can take that away from you.

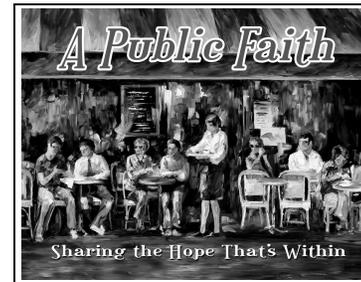
3. Asaph expands his view of God

(When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, 22 I was senseless and ignorant; **I was a brute beast** before you. 23 Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. **vs.21-23**)

Because of Jesus life, death and resurrection we have a much larger view of God then Asaph ever could have had. Yet he was able to say:

You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Psalm 73:24-26



Dan Wilvers Part 3 Sierra Community Church
July 3rd, 2016
Happy Independence Day!

Facing Doubt?

Psalm 73
A Psalm of Asaph

Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. 3 For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

...13 Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. 14 All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments.

...16 When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply 17 until I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. 18 Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. 19 How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!

21 When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, 22 I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. 23 Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. 24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

The Word of the Lord

1. What is doubt?

But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.

Psalm 73:2

Asaph's foothold is a metaphor for uncertainty.

The most famous place in the Bible that talks about doubt is Doubting Thomas.

"I will not believe unless I see the nail prints still in his hands and I can put my fingers in the nail prints." John 20:25

"Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God." "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:27-29

Jesus gives Thomas what he asked for, which in turn leads Thomas into a greater affirmation of faith. I think that's a good example of our role in the world of skeptics.

2. What causes Asaph's doubt?

Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

Psalm 73:1

For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Psalm 73:3

"They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills.... they clothe themselves with violence. ... with arrogance they threaten oppression. ... 11 They say, 'How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?' " Psalm 73:4-11

What Asaph is saying is "Why would a supposedly good God who's in charge of this world allow that kind of injustice, allow the powerful to oppress the poor and the marginalized?"

Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. 14 All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments. Psalm 73:13,14

When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply.

Psalm 73:16

3. What changed Asaph's doubts?

Until I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Psalm 73:17

1st thing Asaph does is he comes back to God presence

(Until I entered the sanctuary of God;)

2nd thing Asaph does is he readjusts his thinking.

(then I understood their final destiny.)

The Three Ways Asaph Adjust His Thoughts:

1. Asaph is willing to admit his bad motives.

(For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. **vs.3**)

2. He comes to see that doubts take faith too.

(Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! **vs 18,19**)

What was the metaphor that Asaph used for his doubt?

His foot was slipping. So here God causes the unbelievers foot to slip. Your footing is where you place your faith. They have chosen a slippery footing.

When Asaph is describing these oppressive people, he says, ("They say, 'How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?' " **vs.11**)

What that means is they're assuming either God is not there or God does not care.