

# Why is Life So Unfair?

## Psalm 73

### Introduction:

1. A young lady has a baby. She loves the child and she wants to bring the child up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Why does God allow that young mother to be in the hospital with cancer? There are other young ladies with young children, who have no concern for spiritual things and don't take their children to SS and church and they don't have cancer. I don't understand that?
2. How can a godly Christian man start a business with a goal to glorify God and make a living for his family. He wants to treat people right and do everything in a way that would please God. He either goes broke or stays on the verge of going broke all the time. Some other guy who has no concern for spiritual things, he lies and cheats people, he does things that are illegal and his business prospers and he brings in more money than he knows what to do with. I don't understand that.
3. A young mother with 3 children has her husband called up for military duty. He will be sent to Iraq for a year. At least she has her father nearby. The day the husband leaves for Iraq, the father dies of a heart attack. I don't understand that.
4. Asaph was the minister of music during David's reign
  - a. Twelve psalms are attributed to Asaph – Psalms 50, 73-83
  - b. He led worship in the sanctuary
  - c. But he had questions about what he saw
5. "Why is life so unfair?"
  - a. Why do the righteous seem to have difficulties while the wicked seem to prosper?
  - b. Why do bad things happen to good people?
6. Sometimes it is ok to question God
  - a. It is not ok to question His goodness, his power, His faithfulness
  - b. It is ok to ask God why – with the right attitude
  - c. "Why is this going on in my life?"
  - d. "Why am I having to go through this?"
7. Note five stages in his experience.

## I. The Believer – Standing – vs 1

1 Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

1. This is one truth that you have to stand on.
  - a) *Asaph is going to talk about his dilemma, but before that he gives us the primary truth*
  - b) *“Truly” = after all is said and done, in the final analysis, the bottom line*
  - c) *“God is good” – this is the foundation*
2. When things don't seem fair – don't forget that foundational stmt
3. When you don't know why things are happening to you – remember the foundational statement
4. If you ever doubt that God is good, then look to Calvary and see the price that He paid so that we could be reconciled to Him
5. If the devil can get you to doubt that God is good – then he has you
  - a) *Nothing will ever make sense*
  - b) *Nothing will fall into place*
  - c) *You will be bitter for the rest of your life*
6. The phrase "a clean [pure] heart" means, not sinlessness, but total commitment to the Lord, the opposite of [vs 27](#).
7. This first verse marked both the beginning and the end of his meditations. He came full circle.
8. Note that he used "surely" or "truly" in vs 1, 13, 18
9. "heart" is used six times in the psalm (vs 1, 7, 13, 21, 26).
10. When pondering the mysteries of life, hold on to what you know for sure, and never doubt in the darkness what God has taught you in the light.

## II. The Doubter: Slipping – vs 2-3

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

### A. He Was Slipping

1. The Hebrew word translated "but" in [verses 2](#) and [28](#), and "nevertheless" (yet) in [verse 28](#), indicates a sharp contrast.
2. In [vs 2](#), the more he measured his situation against that of the ungodly, the more he began to slip from his firm foundation.
3. There is a difference between doubt and unbelief.
  - a) *Doubt comes from a struggling mind, while unbelief comes from a stubborn will that refuses surrender to God ([v. 7](#)).*
  - b) *The unbelieving person will not believe, while the doubting person struggles to believe but cannot.*
  - c) *His faith began to falter*
  - d) *He began to lose sight of the goodness of God and the plan of God for his life*
4. Illustration of child slipping into a tidal river

## **B. He Was Envyng**

3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

1. Asaph is tormented when he sees the ungodly prospering
  - a) *He loves the Lord and he is not doing as well*
  - b) *They do not love the Lord and it seems that they are doing pretty well*
2. Asaph began to compare himself to the ungodly
  - a) *Anytime you begin to compare yourself with others you will be in trouble*
  - b) *2Co 10:12b ...but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

## **III. The Wrestler: Struggling – vs 4-14**

- He has stated the dilemma – now he begins to dissect it and study it
- “Here’s what bothers me...”

### **A. Prosperity of the Ungodly – vs 3-5**

3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. 5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

1. Prosperity = be in peaceful circum, good health, have plenty
2. They don’t have any struggles
3. They seem to die in peace – have no fear of death
4. They are not in trouble like most others – they are not afflicted
5. As far as Asaph was concerned, the ungodly had it made

### **B. Pride of the Ungodly – vs 6-9**

6 Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. 7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. 8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. 9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

1. There doesn’t seem to be a cloud in their sky
2. They give God no glory – they take it all for themselves
3. In their pride, they don’t even believe that they need God
4. They wear their pride like a gold chain around their neck
5. Their eyes bulge with abundance – vs 8
6. They gloat over their fraud – vs 8
7. They scoff at God and spiritual things – vs 9

### **C. Popularity of the Ungodly – vs 10-12**

10 Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. 11 And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? 12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

1. The world runs after the ungodly
2. The world admires their wealth and power
3. They wring out the last drop of pleasure in life
4. God doesn't know what is going on – blind, deaf, powerless
5. People seem to drink up everything the ungodly say
6. Picture crowds of fans standing along side the red carpet. The Hollywood movie stars walk the red carpet and the fans yell and scream. Some hold out papers hoping for an autograph. Interviews are done by Entertainment Tonight. The dress cost \$6,000 and the Versacci handbag cost \$1800 etc.
7. See some professional athletes, no concern for spiritual things. He signs a contract for \$60 million for 5 yrs. His job is to hit a little white ball out of the ball park. Or throw a ball through a hoop. Or throw a pigskin for a touchdown.
8. "We are doing all this without God's help – we don't need God."

### **D. Pain Caused by the Ungodly – vs 13-16**

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. 14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. 15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. 16 When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

1. As Asaph considers the wicked, ungodly of his day who were prospering – it was too painful for him
2. They wake up with plenty / prosperity, I wake up with chastisement

## **IV. The Worshiper: Seeing the Bigger Picture – vs 17-22**

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. 18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. 19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. 20 As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. 21 Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. 22 So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.

### **A. Asaph Went to Church**

1. Comfort does not come in knowing all the answers
2. Comfort comes in knowing the One who has the answers
3. God didn't change Asaph's circumstances - changed his perspective

## **B. Asaph Began to See Things from God's Perspective**

1. Your perspective determines your conclusion
2. Asaph began seeing things a little differently
3. He sees just a little part of the lives of the ungodly – not the whole picture
4. Asaph now sees their end
  - a) *Their success was but a mirage, a dream, not real success at all*
  - b) *When troubles and trials come in your life and you begin to envy the wicked, don't drop out of church. This is the place where you will get the proper perspective on things.*
  - c) *In the end they will be confused with terrors*
5. When you feel your feet slipping, you need to go into God's presence real quick
6. Even in this life being a celebrity is not all that it is cracked up to be
  - a) *Just look at Jack Whittaker*
  - b) *William Randolph Hearst – illustration ←*
7. Vs 17 tells us that the ungodly live in a dream world and one day their dreams are going to turn into nightmares
8. Asaph understood their end – vs 17
  - a) *Destruction – vs 18*
  - b) *Desolation – vs 19 - Utterly consumed*
9. Vs 21-22 – Asaph grieves that he has ever doubted God
  - a) *"I acted more like an animal than a child of God"*
  - b) *He grieves over his lack of trust in God*
10. The first part of the solution is to realize that this world is not it

## **V. The Conqueror: Rejoicing over God's Goodness – vs 23-**

### **A. God's Presence – vs 23**

**23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.**

1. While Asaph was questioning God, God was holding his hand
2. When his feet began to slip, God had hold of Asaph
3. Here is the picture of teaching a little child how to walk
  - a) *He grabs hold of your finger with his little hand*
  - b) *He begins to fall and the first thing he does is let go*
  - c) *You then hold on to him*
4. God has hold of you
  - a) *He won't let you go till you get to the other side*
  - b) *You may get all bent out of shape because of the prosperity of the wicked*
  - c) *You stumble, but he will be there to lift you up and brush you off*

### **B. God's Protection – vs 24**

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

1. He said, "I'll never leave you or forsake you." – Heb 13:5
2. God is guiding us even when we don't sense it
3. He will escort us all the way to the portals of glory
4. Nothing in your life catches God by surprise.
  - a) *He never says, "Uh-oh how did that happen?"*
  - b) *He know what you are going through.*

### **C. God's Person – vs 25**

25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

1. When you compare yourself with the ungodly, just remember that there is one thing you have that they don't – you have God
2. C.S. Lewis said, "He who has God and everything, has no more than he who has God alone."
3. God is enough – He is my all in all
4. No matter what the ungodly person has, he doesn't have God
  - a) *He will one day perish*
  - b) *He will be separated from God forever*
5. The ungodly may be having a good time now on the road of life, but they are on the wrong road.
  - a) *They are headed for a precipice*
  - b) *They are like the people sitting on the deck chairs eating caviar on the deck of the Titanic – headed for destruction*

### **D. God's Provision – vs 26**

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

1. When my strength fails, I have God's strength
2. "My grace is sufficient for you."

Conclusion – vs 27-28 ←

1. The end will be bad for the ungodly
2. The end will be good for God's children
3. Asaph is satisfied now – No, he doesn't know all the details, but he doesn't need to know them
4. Know this – God is sufficient – He is sovereign – He has a plan

William Randolph Hearst was a pioneer in the newspaper industry. He was so rich that he built himself a castle. He filled this castle with expensive artwork. He had a warehouse filled with art. He was rich beyond your wildest dreams. But William Randolph Hearst had a rule in the castle that applied to servants and butlers as well as visitors. You must never mention the word “death” in his presence. Hearst feared going to sleep every night as he was tormented by the fear of death. You have something that William Randolph Hearst didn’t have – you have peace. You know that when you are absent from this body you will be present with the Lord.

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. 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 thy works.