

The Brotherhood of The Book  
or The Blue Barn Boys  
Reflections of “Old 73” (Psalm 73)  
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The Problem of Evil

Job: No answer from God

Philosophy: The Existence of evil is necessary for the existence of righteousness

Old Psalm 73 is a Psalm of Asaph. Asaph was one of the Levitical singers appointed by David. Some scholars think that the writer of the psalm may have been a descendent of David's Asaph.

Psalm 73  
From the Heights to the Depths and Back Again

**v.1 “Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.”**

What did Asaph know?

**v.2 “But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.”**

Can you identify with Asaph here?

**v.3 “For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”**

What was Asaph's perspective? What should it have been?  
Ever feel this way yourself?

**v.4-12 “They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. From their callous hearts comes iniquity their evil imaginations have no limits. They scoff, and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. They say, “How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?” This is what the wicked are like—always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.”**

Wow! How much truth is in Asaph's assessment?  
Is there some exaggeration here?  
Do you ever feel this way?

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

Who is Asaph thinking about? What is his perspective?  
Do you ever think, “I don’t deserve this!”?

**v. 15-16 “If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children. When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply”**

Hmmmmmm. Are you beginning to sense the beginning of a change in attitude here?  
Read on.

**v. 17 “till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.”**

Who is Asaph beginning to consider to talk to?

**v. 18-20 “Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies.”**

What perspective does Asaph now have about the wicked?

**v. 21-22 “When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.”**

Is it helpful to remember how bad attitudes and behaviors were?  
Why or why not?

**v. 23-28a “Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. 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. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge;”**

Praise the Lord! Hallelujah!

**v. 28b “I will tell of all your deeds.”**

Is there something here we can emulate?