

## *It Is Good To Be Near God*

*“1 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. 4 They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. 5 They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. 6 Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. 7 From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. 8 They scoff, and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. 9 Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. 10 Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. 11 They say, “How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?” 12 This is what the wicked are like— always free of care, they go on amassing wealth. 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. 15 If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children. 16 When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply 17 till 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! 20 They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. 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. 27 Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. 28 But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.” (Psalm 73:1-28)*

*These are the questions in the hearts of certain people: “Why God allows violence, iniquity, oppression, arrogance, and evil things to happen? If God is just, why do the wicked prosper? Why the wicked have no struggles, their bodies are healthy and strong? Why the wicked are free from burdens, not plagued by human ills and free from troubles and problems common to man?”*

We see and mingle with unrighteous and wicked people. They speak arrogantly and even defy God. Their conceited mind knows no limits. We find them scoff and seek malice against anyone. Yet they receive favor and blessings. They live and act in pride, they practice violence, but as if they are rewarded with good things and prosperity for their wickedness. Instead that people run away from them and deny all wicked practices, they turn to them or do like them. People are keen to those who are successful. They want to be involved or be linked to them in order to share with the blessings and privileges that they have.

When we focus our attention to such kind of people we are confused and we even envy wickedness. We may develop bitterness in our hearts and question God why the

unrighteous are rewarded and the righteous are dishonored. We say, *“Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence.”* We are even tempted to doubt God and ask ourselves. *“Why should I continue living in righteousness serving God and walking in His ways? I have disciplined myself to be trained in His righteousness, but I found the wicked receiving what I should have.”*

Like the writer of Psalm 73 who said, *“My feet had almost slipped, I had nearly lost my foot hold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me.”* We cannot understand and we almost cannot accept the prosperity of the wicked. But God is just and His ways are always righteous. We cannot understand and we cannot explain because He is God and we are mere men. Yet, God made a way that we can understand His precepts. The Psalmist continued, *“Till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.” (Psalm 73:17)* God may even seem silent but His words always prevail: *“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!” (Psalm 73:18-19)* Their final destiny is destruction and condemnation.

As we sit with God in prayer He reveals to us His secrets; although we find the wicked carefree and even prosperous, suddenly they would be destroyed. They would be completely swept by terrors. Praised be to God who has promised eternal life and life to the full to all who accepts the redemptive work of His Son, Jesus Christ. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)* Jesus died on the cross for our sins; He was buried and raised from the grave on the third day to give eternal life to everyone who believes. God loves everyone, but at the end there is judgement. *“Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.” (John 5:28-29)*

***My dear and beloved:*** When your heart is grieved and your spirit embittered you become senseless and ignorant. You might be discouraged of serving God and faithfully walking in His ways because you are envious when you see the prosperity of the wicked. But now you understand that the wickedness of the wicked will not remain long, and they will soon perish and be condemned. So let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise and serve Him who promised, ***“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.”***—Jesus Christ.

***My Prayer:*** *“Father God in heaven, I come before You in the name of Jesus who died on the cross to forgive my sin and to give me eternal life. Lord, I thank You for your word and your counsel. Whom have I in heaven but You? And on earth nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but You, O God, is the strength of my heart and my portion. 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 You, my God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my Refuge; I will tell all your deeds. I will praise your name forever. This is my prayer and praise in Jesus’ name, Amen.*