

I. Introduction. v. 1

A. Injustice can test your faith.

B. The Psalmist begins by stating his conclusion: Surely God is good to His people. v. 1

II. Don't be shortsighted, envying the wicked. v. 2-14

A. Asaph confesses, *I nearly fell because I questioned God's goodness and justice.* v. 2-3a

1. He is brutally honest about his own failings. v. 2,21

2. Even good men can lapse into sin and error. v. 3a

3. Why did Asaph nearly fall? *He was walking by sight rather than by faith.* II Co. 5:7

B. The wicked appear to abundantly prosper. v. 3b-5

1. They have the smallest share of earthly sorrows. v. 4a,5 Gen. 3:17-19 Ecc. 1:3

a. They live long healthy lives.

b. They don't seem to have the usual troubles of mankind. Ps. 90:10 Job 1:11 5:7

2. They seem to enjoy the greatest share of outward blessings. v. 4b, 12b

C. They abuse their power over other men. v. 6-8a

1. They believe earthly blessings makes them better than others. v. 6a, 3a

2. They violently mistreat their fellow men. v. 6b

3. They live extravagantly. v. 7

4. They mock at and slander the righteous. v. 8a

D. They oppose God. v. 8b-11

1. They speak as if they are gods. v. 8b-10 Ps. 75:5 James 4:6

2. They dare to challenge God himself. v. 11 Psalm 10:4

E. It appears that God is not good and just. v. 12-14

1. The wicked, instead of being punished, are wealthy and at ease. v. 12

2. The righteous, instead of being rewarded, have all kinds of troubles. v. 14 26:6

3. It seems that it doesn't pay to be good. v. 13

4. Such thinking puts you in a precarious position.

III. See this life from God's perspective. v. 15-28

A. You need a major change in outlook. v. 15-17a Col. 3:1-3

1. If you cannot explain God's ways, remain quiet. v. 15 Ps. 39:2 Js. 1:19 Ecc. 5:2

2. There are some issues which natural understanding cannot fathom. v. 16 Is. 55:8

3. Asaph, when troubled, went to God's sanctuary. v. 17a Ps. 68:35 Isa. 8:14

4. How can you enter God's sanctuary when you are troubled?

5. What should you hope will happen there?

B. You will see the destiny of the wicked. v. 17b-20

1. While their present may be pleasant, their end will be horrible. v. 17b Pr. 5:4-5,11

a. God will avenge all evil. Ps. 37:38 Deut. 32:35 Ro. 12:19

b. He will act in His own time and in His own way. Gen. 15:16

2. God is already preparing their doom. v. 18 Ps 35:6 Deut. 32:35

3. They will be suddenly destroyed. v. 19 Luke 12:19-20 Rev. 2:27 19:21

4. They will ultimately be forgotten. v. 20 Ps. 35:23 39:6 44:23 Mt. 7:23 Dan. 12:2

5. None of us can fully comprehend how awful it is to experience God's holy wrath.

6. What will be your end?

- C. You will see the folly of your own doubts. v. 21-22
1. Asaph not only has a new perspective on the wicked, he also sees himself from the divine perspective.
 2. There was never any valid excuse for your envy and bitterness. God never, for a moment, ceased to be good and just.
 3. You were acting like a beast, living by feeling and sight, rather than acting as a child of God, walking by faith. Ps. 49:12,20 92:6
- D. You will see God's faithfulness. v. 23-24
1. God was always with you in the past, even when you were beastly. v. 23
Ps. 139:10 63:8 Isa. 41:10 Heb. 13:5-6 II Pe. 2:9 John 10:28-29
 2. God will guide you in the present. v. 24a Prov. 3:5-6
 3. God will receive you into glory in the future. v. 24b Ps. 23:3 49:15 Ex. 33:18f
- E. You will find full satisfaction in God alone. v. 25-26
1. There is nothing and no-one who can fill your soul. v. 25 Phil. 1:21a Gal. 2:20
 2. Your body and soul are frail, but God is your strength (Rock). v. 26
Psalm 18:2 119:57 16:4-6
 3. Do you desire God more than all earthly things? Ps. 42:1f Luke 14:26
 4. You envy the wicked only because you desire what they have more than you desire God.
 5. Sometimes you have to endure a great trial in order to realize your need for God.
 6. Do you know God the way the Psalmist knew him?

IV. Concluding applications: Stop doubting, and believe. v. 27-28

- A. You have no reason to envy the wicked who are unfaithful to God. v. 27 Ps. 37:20
1:6 2:12 44:23 35:23 Deut. 28:63 Pr. 23:17 24:1,19 3:31 James 4:4
- B. Your spiritual blessings as God's child make you rich. v. 28
1. God is always near you. Heb. 13:5 Rom. 8:31f
 2. He is your refuge. Ps. 46:1 Pr. 14:26 Isa. 58:2
 3. Tell of His works. v. 28b

Discussion Questions

1. What injustices test your faith?
2. What faulty conclusions could one draw from the prosperity of the wicked?
3. What was the Psalmist's real problem?
4. How did the Psalmist gain a new perspective?
5. What must you do to gain a true perspective on your problems?
6. What is the true view of the wicked?
7. What is the true view of your own doubts?
8. Why didn't Asaph fall?
9. What does it mean to find satisfaction in God alone?