

BOOK THREE (PSALMS 73:1–89:52)

These psalms celebrate the sovereignty of God, God's hand in history, God's faithfulness, and God's covenant with David. These psalms remind us that our worship of the almighty God should be continual.

PSALM 73

Theme: The temporary prosperity of the wicked and the lasting rewards of the righteous. We should live holy lives and trust God for our future rewards.

Author: Asaph, a leader of one of the Temple choirs (see 1 Chronicles 25:1)

A psalm of Asaph

- 1 Truly God is good to Israel,
to those whose hearts are pure.
- 2 But as for me, I came so close to the edge of the cliff!
My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone.
- 3 For I envied the proud
when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.
- 4 They seem to live such a painless life;
their bodies are so healthy and strong.
- 5 They aren't troubled like other people
or plagued with problems like everyone else.
- 6 They wear pride like a jeweled necklace,
and their clothing is woven of cruelty.
- 7 These fat cats have everything
their hearts could ever wish for!
- 8 They scoff and speak only evil;
in their pride they seek to crush others.
- 9 They boast against the very heavens,
and their words strut throughout the earth.
- 10 And so the people are dismayed and confused,
drinking in all their words.
- 11 “Does God realize what is going on?” they ask.
“Is the Most High even aware of what is happening?”
- 12 Look at these arrogant people—
enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply.
- 13 Was it for nothing that I kept my heart pure
and kept myself from doing wrong?
- 14 All I get is trouble all day long;
every morning brings me pain.
- 15 If I had really spoken this way,
I would have been a traitor to your people.
- 16 So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper.
But what a difficult task it is!
- 17 Then one day I went into your sanctuary, O God,
and I thought about the destiny of the wicked.
- 18 Truly, you put them on a slippery path

- and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction.
- ¹⁹ In an instant they are destroyed,
swept away by terrors.
- ²⁰ Their present life is only a dream
that is gone when they awake.
When you arise, O Lord,
you will make them vanish from this life.
- ²¹ Then I realized how bitter I had become,
how pained I had been by all I had seen.
- ²² I was so foolish and ignorant—
I must have seemed like a senseless animal to you.
- ²³ Yet I still belong to you;
you are holding my right hand.
- ²⁴ You will keep on guiding me with your counsel,
leading me to a glorious destiny.
- ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you?
I desire you more than anything on earth.
- ²⁶ My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak,
but God remains the strength of my heart;
he is mine forever.
- ²⁷ But those who desert him will perish,
for you destroy those who abandon you.
- ²⁸ But as for me, how good it is to be near God!
I have made the Sovereign LORD my shelter,
and I will tell everyone about the wonderful things you do.