



Daily Verse and Comment

Psalm 73:15-25

(15) If I had said, “I will speak thus,”
Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children.
(16) When I thought *how* to understand this,
It *was* too painful for me—
(17) Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their end. (18) Surely You set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.
(19) Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment!
They are utterly consumed with terrors.
(20) As a dream when *one* awakes,
So, Lord, when You awake,
You shall despise their image. (21) Thus my heart was grieved,
And I was vexed in my mind.
(22) I *was* so foolish and ignorant;
I was *like* a beast before You.
(23) Nevertheless I *am* continually with You;
You hold *me* by my right hand.
(24) You will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me *to* glory. (25) Whom have I in heaven *but* You?

And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.

New King James Version

Putting the picture together correctly, we can grasp the thread of the psalmist's thoughts as his trial proceeded. The psalmist was in grave spiritual danger of misjudging his suffering as punishment for [sin](#). In reality, he was harshly judging [God](#), accusing Him of unfairly overdoing a painful correction. Is it even possible to find God being unjust? Earlier in the psalm, the psalmist was indeed guilty of a sin: He clearly perceived his envy of the

wicked. However, his grasp of the real problem was late in coming: that he was filled with fear and lacked [faith](#) that God was truly always with him, overseeing his life, his best interests, and therefore his spiritual development.

His lack of faith and its resulting fear drove his envy, twisting his mind into perceiving the wicked as better off. The issue clarified when he went into the sanctuary and began to see through prayer that God was fully justified and not picking on him unfairly. By the term “sanctuary,” he may have literally meant the Tabernacle or Temple, but we can understand that it does not have to be a literal building but a place of private prayer in communion with God where He enabled him to think correctly. Verses 21-24 clarify this.

Thus, the psalmist immediately began a four-step program:

1. He continued on by faith, enduring the suffering.
2. He prayed fervently for God's solution to take effect.
3. He firmly rejected any attempt to solve the problem on the basis of his own spiritual righteousness.
4. He was thoughtfully careful that he did not misjudge his circumstances any further.

The truth expressed in [II Timothy 1:6-7](#) is helpful. “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of [love](#) and of a sound mind.” God's gift of His Spirit enables us to confront our fears and make sound spiritual judgments in alignment with His will. It leads us to understand that, once we are called and converted, these trials, though sometimes very difficult, are rarely punishments. They are exercises in learning good judgment regarding faith, love, and fear.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Ecclesiastes and Christian Living \(Part Twelve\): Paradox, Conclusion](#)

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