

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith**

#### **LXXIII: God's Answer To The Prosperity Of The Wicked**

**(Psalm 73:1-28)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. God generally blesses the upright and not sinners, especially so under the Mosaic Covenant, Deuteronomy 28.
- B. However, even under the Law, the wicked often prospered while the upright lacked such rewarding prosperity, and Psalm 73:1-28 addresses this troubling problem and solves it for our edification and insight (as follows):

#### **II. God's Answer To The Prosperity Of The Wicked, Psalm 73:1-28.**

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm are part of the first verse (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1038), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 73:1-28 as follows: (1) "Surely Elohim is good to Israel, to those who are clean of heart." (2) "But as for me (emph. pron.), my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold." (3) "Because I envied the boastful when I viewed the prosperity of the wicked." (4) "For they have no oppressive pangs; their bodies are sound and sleek (A. R. Hurst, O. T. Trans. Prblms., 1960, p. 108 -- a different word division in the Hebrew from the KJV form; cf. NIV also)." (5) "They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills." (6) "Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with injurious words and/or acts (*hamam*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 329)." (7) "From their callous hearts comes iniquity; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits." (8) "They scoff, and they speak with malice; in their 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 waters of abundance are drained out for them. (People cater to them to avoid their further oppression.)" (11) "They say, 'How can Elohim know? Does the Most High have knowledge?'" (12) "Behold! This is what the wicked are like -- always carefree, they increase in wealth." (13) "Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure; in vain I have washed my hands in innocence." (14) "All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning." (15) "If I had said, 'I will speak (these words) thus,' I would have betrayed your (God's) children." (16) "When I pondered to understand this (concern), it was oppressive to me . . ." (17) "(That is), until I entered the sanctuary of Elohim; 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) "As a dream when one awakens, so when You arise, O Adonai, You will despise them as fantasies." (21) "For when my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered." (22) "Then I myself (emph. pron.) was senseless and ignorant; I was being a brute beast before You." (23) "But I myself (emph. pron.) am always with You; You hold me by my right hand." (24) "You guide me with Your counsel, and afterward you will take me to 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 Elohim is the Rock Cliff of defense, support of my heart, and Elohim is my Portion (of inherited land)." (27) "For behold! Those who are far from You will perish; You destroy all who go whoring from You." (28) "But as for me (emph. pron.), it is good to be near Elohim. I have made Adonai Jahweh out to be my Refuge; I will rehearse all of Your deeds of craftsmanship!"
- C. We note significant observations and applications of this psalm (as follows):
  - 1. The answer as to why the wicked prosper while the upright languish in this world's estimation is found in evaluating their destinies (v. 17-20): the **current** states of the wicked and the upright are then **reversed!**
  - 2. However, even **far greater**, the upright find spiritual fulfillment in fellowship with God that blesses in ways the world cannot begin to offer (v. 23-28), so the upright are infinitely more blessed than the wicked!

***Lesson:*** *The answer to the question as to why the wicked prosper versus many upright who lack such provisions is found in considering the eternal destiny of both, and in considering how God richly blesses the upright by His fellowship with them even in this life in contrast to the lack of that fellowship in the case of the wicked!*

***Application:*** *May we handle the troubling question of the prosperity of the wicked versus the lack of the upright by considering the eternal destiny of both, and noting how even in the current lack as the world measures lack, God still provides for the upright in ways of spiritual fellowship with Him that the world cannot begin to offer. May we thus live by faith in God as taught in Hebrews 11, enjoying fellowship with Him now and looking forward to our destiny of eternal blessing with Him!*