

# DOUBT *or* FAITH

A CHANGE *of* PERSPECTIVE

*Can Change The Whole Picture!!*

PSALM 73

# DOUBT *or* FAITH



## ■ WHO WAS ASAPH?

- First introduced as among the musicians who served in the house of the LORD (1 Chron. 6:39)
- A Levite, the son of Berachiah, descendant of Gershon the son of Levi. (1 Chron. 6:39-43)
- David made Asaph the chief Levite to minister before the ark of the LORD (1 Chron. 16:4-6)
- Is called a “seer” (prophet) (2 Chron. 29:30)

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## 12 Psalms Credited to Asaph.

Psalms 50 and 73—83

50 - God the Righteous Judge

73 - The Tragedy of the Wicked, and  
the Blessedness of Trust in God

74 - A Plea for Relief from Oppressors

75 - Thanksgiving for God's Righteous  
Judgment

76 - The Majesty of God in Judgment

77 - The Consoling Memory of God's  
Redemptive Works

78 - God's Kindness to Rebellious  
Israel

79 - A Dirge and a Prayer for Israel,  
Destroyed by Enemies

80 - Prayer for Israel's Restoration

81 - Appeal for Israel's Repentance

82 - A Plea for Justice

83 - Prayer to Frustrate Conspiracy  
Against Israel

# DOUBT *or* FAITH



- Asaph's faith was challenged by the apparent success & happiness of the wicked.
- Asaph learned "perception" is NOT necessarily reality.
- What helped Asaph change his perspective?
- How did this change of perspective strengthen his faith and commitment to the Lord?

## ASAPH'S PROBLEM — Ps 73:1-11

### Psalm 73:1–11 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Truly God *is* good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. <sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. <sup>3</sup> For I *was* envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. <sup>4</sup> For *there are* no pangs in their death, But their strength *is* firm. <sup>5</sup> They *are* not in trouble *as other* men, Nor are they plagued like *other* men. <sup>6</sup> Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them *like* a garment. <sup>7</sup> Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish. <sup>8</sup> They scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression; They speak loftily. <sup>9</sup> They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth. <sup>10</sup> Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them. <sup>11</sup> And they say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?”

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## ASAPH'S PROBLEM — Ps 73:1-11



- **He KNEW the truth** — vs. 1 — “Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.” — Mat 5:1-13; Psalm 84:10,11
- **But yet, he ALMOST LOST his faith** — vs. 2 “But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped”
- What Asaph believed to be true was NOT what he was experiencing — vs. 3-9

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## ASAPH'S PROBLEM — Ps 73:1-11



- **“I was envious of the boastful  
When I saw ... vs. 3**
- 3b the prosperity of the wicked.
- 4 ...no pangs in their death, But their strength *is* firm.
- 5 ... not in trouble ..., not plagued
- 6 proud & violent
- 7 eyes bulge with abundance; ...
- 8 scoff & speak wickedly ... loftily
- 9 set their mouth against the heavens, ...

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## ASAPH'S PROBLEM — Ps 73:1-11



Psalm 73:10–11 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them. <sup>11</sup> And they say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?”

- **“I was envious of the boastful  
When I saw ... vs. 3**
- These wicked men were popular - the people drank the waters of sinful pleasure they offered (10)
- Misled men dismissed God's omniscience. The names of God used here ('El = the mighty one; 'Elyon = supreme ruler) underscore the blasphemy of their skepticism. — God doesn't know - God will not judge (11)



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## ASAPH'S DILEMMA — Ps 73:12-16



- Asaph almost LOST his faith. (vs 2)
- Asaph wondered what the benefit was in being faithful - Because from all appearances - there were no downsides to being evil — and no upside to being righteous (12-14)

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## ASAPH'S DILEMMA — Ps 73:12-16




### Psalm 73:12–14 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Behold, these *are* the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase *in* riches. <sup>13</sup> Surely I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, And washed my hands in innocence. <sup>14</sup> For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.

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## ASAPH'S DILEMMA — Ps 73:12-16



Psalm 73:15–16 (NKJV)  
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

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- Asaph thought - “This is NOT FAIR!!!” But he also knew if he professed his thoughts he could cause others to stumble (vs. 15)
- This dilemma was beyond Asaph’s ability to reconcile with what he knew about God (vs 16)

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## ASAPH FINDS THE ANSWER — Ps 73:17-20



- 17 “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *Then* I understood their end.”
- In order to overcome doubt created by the illusions in the world - we **MUST** come to see and accept the **TRUTH**.

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## ASAPH FINDS THE ANSWER — Ps 73:17-20



### ■ **“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.

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## ASAPH FINDS THE ANSWER — Ps 73:17-20

Psalm 73:17–19 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *Then* I understood their end. <sup>18</sup>

Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. <sup>19</sup> Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

### ■ “I understood their end.”

- Asaph LEARNED the WHOLE truth in the Lord’s HOUSE (17a)
- He learns God will JUDGE the wicked in the end (17b-19)
- God allows the wicked to confidently pursue their evil ways, ending in eternal condemnation (18,19; Rom. 1:18-32; 2:5-11; 2 Thes 1:7-9; Jam 5:3; 2 Pet. 3; etc.)

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## ASAPH FINDS THE ANSWER — Ps 73:17-20



### ■ “I understood their end.”

- Asaph LEARNS the TRUTH about what will ultimately happen to the wicked and all the things they pursue in life (20; [parable of the rich fool - Luke 12:13-21; story of the rich man and Lazarus — Luke 16:19-31])
- God will AWAKE and justice will be served upon the wicked!! — Mat 25:46; 2 Thes. 1:9; Rev 14:10

Psalm 73:19–20 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. <sup>20</sup> As a dream when *one* awakes, *So, Lord,* when You awake, You shall despise their image.

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## ASAPH FINDS THE ANSWER — Ps 73:17-20



■ **“I understood their end.”**

### Galatians 6:7–8 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. <sup>8</sup> For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

### Psalm 73:19–20 (NKJV)

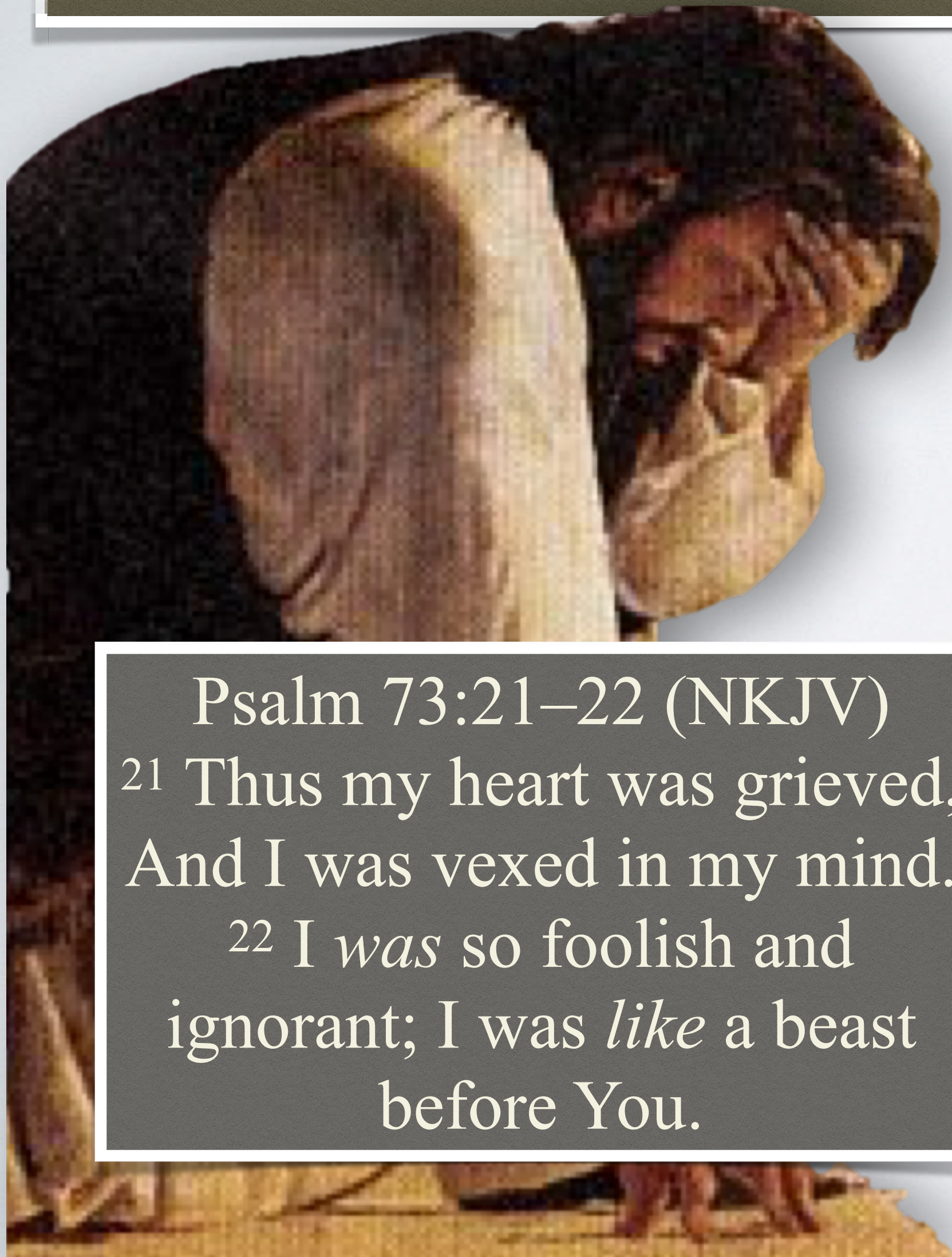
<sup>19</sup> Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. <sup>20</sup> As a dream when *one* awakes, *So*, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.



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## ASAPH'S REACTION To The TRUTH — Ps 73:21-24



- **“Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind.” — 21**
  - 🔊 Asaph suddenly shifts from self-pity & discontentment to humility and godly sorrow! (vs. 22,23)
  - 🔊 He confesses his ignorance & admits he had allowed himself to sink to the level of a beast who had no understanding or knowledge of God (vs. 22)

Psalm 73:21–22 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> Thus my heart was grieved,  
And I was vexed in my mind.

<sup>22</sup> I *was* so foolish and  
ignorant; I was *like* a beast  
before You.

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## ASAPH'S REACTION To The TRUTH — Ps 73:21-24



- **“Nevertheless I *am* continually with You; You hold *me* by my right hand” — 23**
  - 🔍 Asaph NEVER turned away from God's guidance - but RATHER turned to it for understanding - HE then found the truth! (vs. 23,24)
  - 🔍 The end of the faithful is FAR DIFFERENT from the end of the wicked — “And afterward receive me *to* glory” (24; Rom 2:7,10; 8:18)

Psalm 73:23–24 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I *am* continually with You; You hold *me* by my right hand. <sup>24</sup> You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me *to* glory.

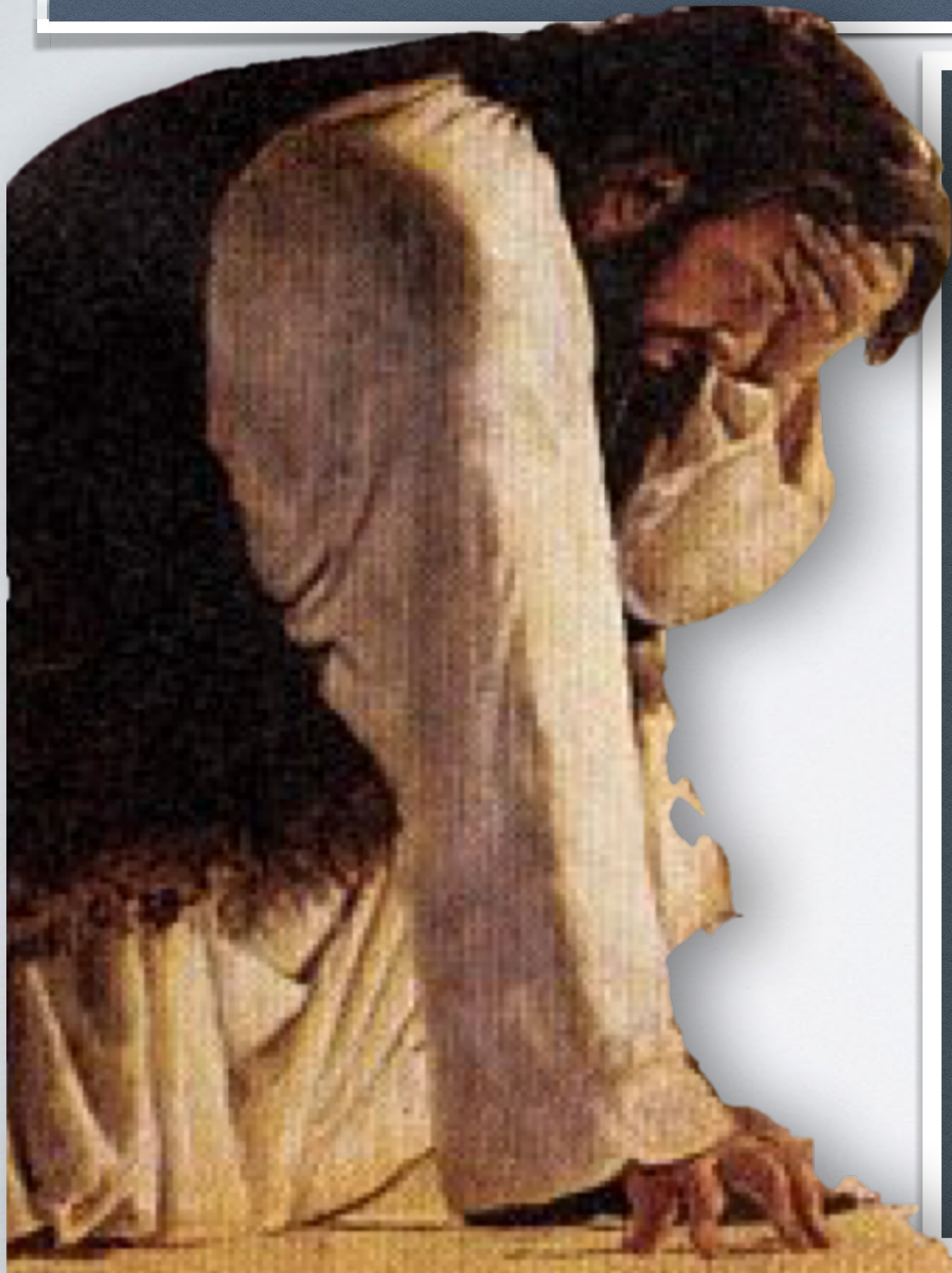
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## ASAPH'S RENEWED DEVOTION — Ps 73:25-28

### Psalm 73:25–28 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You. <sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart fail; *But God is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever. <sup>27</sup> For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. <sup>28</sup> But *it is* good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works.



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## ASAPH'S RENEWED DEVOTION — Ps 73:25-28

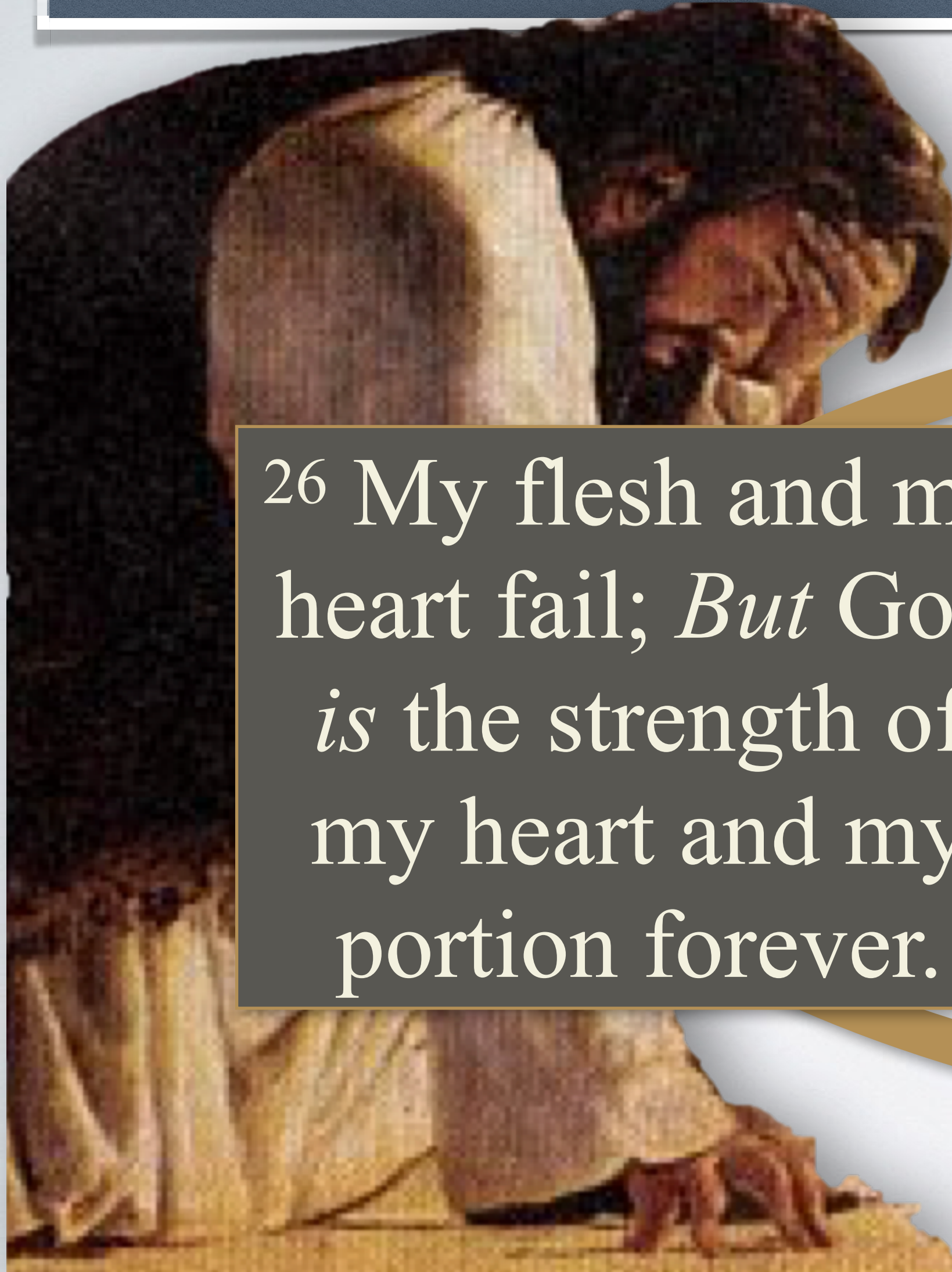


- “Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And *there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.*” — 25
- ⦿ IS GOD ALL I NEED? — Phili 3:7-11
- ⦿ IS GOD ALL I DESIRE? — Col. 3:1-3
- ⦿ IS GOD ALL I SEEK? — Mat. 6:33
- ⦿ IF SO, I WILL HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED AND ALL THAT TRULY MATTERS!!! —
- ⦿ AND I WILL HAVE IT FOR ETERNITY!
- ⦿ **NOTHING perceived with our natural senses can be kept forever!**

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## ASAPH'S RENEWED DEVOTION — Ps 73:25-28



<sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart fail; *But* God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

<sup>27</sup> For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.

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## PERCEPTION

vs. 1 — **TRULY** God is **GOOD**  
to Israel, those pure of heart

vs. 2,3 — Asaph was envious of  
the wicked

vs. 4-12 — The wicked are  
successful, prosperous & go  
unpunished ...

vs. 13-16 — **TRULY I AM  
RIGHTEOUS IN VAIN!**  
This troubles me / Contradicts  
what I perceive about God

## REALITY

vs. 25-28 — **TRULY** God is  
**GOOD** - I will **TRUST** Him

vs. 21-24 — I was ignorant and  
foolish to question **GOD!**

vs. 18-20 — In the end - the  
wicked will be destroyed - and  
they will lose it all!

vs. 17 — Until I went into the  
sanctuary of God;  
Then I understood their end.

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## From All APPEARANCES:

- The world was done for - but then there was Noah — Gen. 6; Matthew 24:37-39; 2 Peter 3:1-15
- God's promises to Abraham would fail — Gen 12; 15-17; 22; Rom 4:19-24
- Joseph's dreams were just dreams — Gen 37:28; 39,40
- Israel would not be delivered — Exo. 14:10-12
- The promised land could not be gained — Num 13,14
- Elijah was alone — 1 Kings 19:1-18
- Israel was forever gone — Ez. 37



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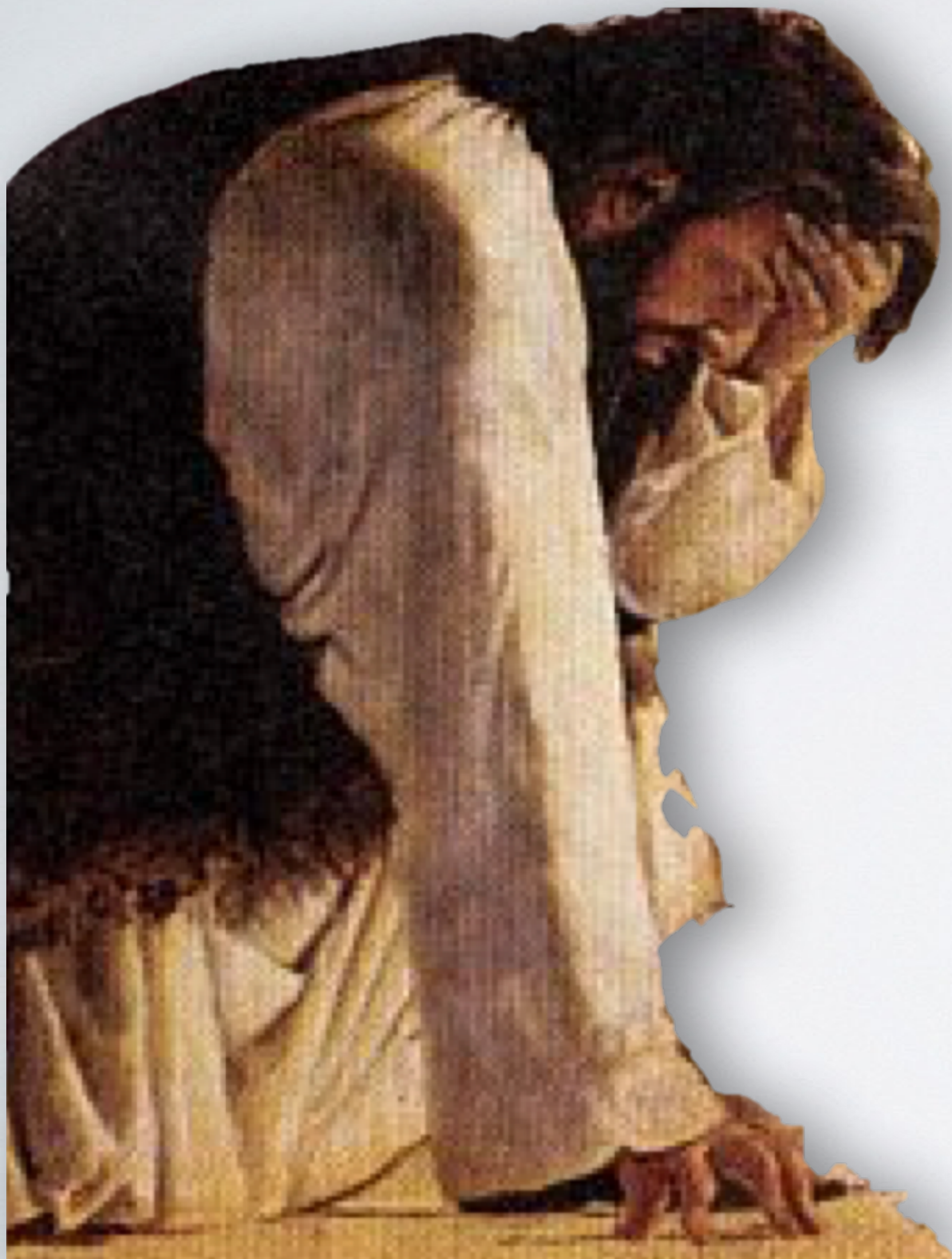
## From All APPEARANCES:

- Jesus was defeated - Mat. 27
- The apostles would suffer defeat — 2 Cor. 4:7-18
- The church would be destroyed - Revelation



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- First and foremost - in order to overcome doubt created by the illusions in the world - we **MUST** accept the **TRUTH**.
- **LET US HOLD TO THE TRUTH FOR OUR SAKES AND THOSE AROUND US!**

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## Hebrews 10:19–25 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.



# DOUBT *or* FAITH

LET US SAY WITH ASAPH

## Psalm 73:23–26 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless I *am* continually with You; You hold *me* by my right hand. <sup>24</sup> You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me *to* glory. <sup>25</sup> Whom have I in heaven *but* You? And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You. <sup>26</sup> My flesh and my heart fail; *But* God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

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PSALM 73

**WILL WE CHOOSE FAITH *or* DOUBT?**

So then faith comes by  
hearing, and hearing by  
the word of God.  
(Romans 10:17)

BELEVE - John 3:16

REPENT - Acts 17:30

CONFESS - Romans 10:9,10

BE BAPTIZED - Acts 2:38

PERSEVERE - 1 Cor. 15:58

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PSALM 73

MATTHEW 16:26

WHY WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO LOSE YOUR SOUL OVER  
SOMETHING YOU ARE CERTAIN TO LOSE ?????



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### PSALM 73

**Charts by Don McClain** / Preached APRIL 30, 2023

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# Hebrews 10:19–25 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, <sup>21</sup> and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.