

Part 4 – It Is Good to Draw Near to God

In part 3 we learned that the Psalmist *finally* understood the ‘*seeming* contradiction’ that he struggled with; which was that it *appeared* the wicked got away with their vile sins, despite God’s promising to punish them - while he was chastened, even though he was trying to clean his heart. And the Psalmist only began to understand this when he *finally* went into the Sanctuary; which means that he finally stopped thinking carnally, and being distracted by the wicked ones *seeming* success; and instead, *moved closer* to our Heavenly Father, *spiritually*, by focusing on His Word, which is the *truth* (reality). And when he did ‘go into the Sanctuary’ (cast of his carnal way of thinking and moved closer to God by focusing in His Word, the truth) then he realized that he had just not been patient. For the wicked are indeed punished, but it’s often not as quick as we’d like it to be. Thus, he realized that the Lord *would* cause their evil ways to be quite slippery, so that they would be ‘cast down’ to destruction and that their desolations would be *very* quick, once God finally judged (and punished) them. And this is truly how it’ll be at the end of this earth age, when Jesus Christ finally returns to depose the wicked and reward His faithful servants. His return will be quick *and* powerful, and quite surprising (like a thief in the night) because most people will be worshiping Satan as though he is the Savior – so they will be quite surprised (and afraid) when the *true* Jesus Christ returns! And this is essentially where we pick up with in the Psalm...

Psalm 73

20 As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

So, in the early part of this chapter, the Psalmist was explaining the *seeming* success of the wicked. He said they didn’t seem to have troubles like other men, or even bad health, and their wicked ways seemed to make them quite prosperous. And this made them extremely arrogant; so much so that they despised others and didn’t think even God Himself could stop them from prospering from their wickedness. And the Psalmist was envious at them for this, *until* he went ‘into the Sanctuary’ by drawing closer to our Heavenly Father. And when he did, our Heavenly Father helped him see that, while the wicked *seem* to prosper, their latter end would be quite terrible. As Prov 14:12 and Prov 16:25 both testify to: *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but **the end thereof are the ways of death**.*

And so, what the Psalmist is now saying is that, the wicked men were essentially living in a ‘fantasy’ (dream) of their own making. That ‘fantasy’ (or dream) was that they could do evil *and get away with it*. And not only get away with evil, but flourish and prosper *greatly* due to it. But, they were ‘living in a dream world’ (fantasy) because that’s just not reality. And so, the Psalmist now asks that the Lord (which should show as *Yehovah*, #3068, as apx 32 explains) would ‘wake them up’ from that dream by ‘despising’ (disesteem, #959) the ‘image’ of themselves that they

had created in their own heart and mind (fantasy/dream world). The word ‘**image**’ here means a *phantom*, i.e. (figuratively) ***illusion, resemblance***; hence, ***a representative figure***, especially ***an idol*** (#6754). The *Companion Bible* also explains (in the notes on this verse) that the word ‘awaketh’ (when referring to the Lord) is a figure of speech (*Anthropopatheia*, apx 6) which is ascribing to God what belongs to humans, creatures or even inanimate objects. Thus, the word ‘awaketh’ is being used here instead of simply asking the Lord (YHVH) to ***arise*** – so, the Psalmist is asking God to arise (get up) *for judgment!* **In other words, he's saying that the wicked are living in a ‘dream’ (fantasy) and asks the Lord to rise up and ‘wake them up’ from their delusional dream by judging – and punishing - them!** In Isaiah 29, our Heavenly Father also uses the thought of delusion being like a ‘dream’ to explain how the wicked think they can fight (and win) against Him. Even today we use this terminology for people who simply don’t want to face reality.

So, the reality (truth) is that: their ‘dream world’ (fantasy) doesn’t work out well for them, in the end - and truly, it *never* does. In 2 Thess 2 Paul also speaks of ‘strong delusion’ that God will send to those who hate the truth (vs 11). That strong delusion IS Satan’s lies and deception that he will spew out of his filthy mouth (like a flood, Rev 12:15, 13:5-6). And all those who want to live in that sinful ‘dream’ (worshipping Satan as though he were God) *will be damned* (judged) *because they didn’t believe the truth*, but rather, *had pleasure in unrighteousness* (vs 12). We can choose to live a lie (fantasy/dream world) if we want to, but sooner or later we will *have to* awake from it. And reality is quite painful when you’ve been living in a dream world (fantasy) of delusion (deception), because sin does not pay well. As Rom 6:23 says, ***the wages of sin is death***; *but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Psalms 73

21 *Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.*
22 *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.*

The Psalmist is now speaking of how much his former thoughts and feelings (being envious at the wicked because he thought they were getting away with sin) pained him. It really grieved his heart (emotions, feelings) that he was so foolish to think such a thing – so much so that he likens it to tasting something sour (#2556). In other words, truth of how foolish (#1198 stupid) he had been *really* pricked (pierced #8150) deeply into his inner man (mind #3629). And he likens how foolish (stupid) he was to a beast (a *dumb* beast #929). And, the *reason* he was envious at the wicked was because *he was thinking with his carnal mind, which is how animals think!* Thus, he didn’t have the foresight to see the ‘latter end’ of the wicked *when* he was ‘outside the Sanctuary’ (which again, means he was thinking *carnally*). And it was only by drawing close to our Heavenly Father (going *into* the Sanctuary) that he was then able to see the truth (think with his spiritual mind, and not carnally, Rom 8:5-8).

So again, his stupidity at thinking the wicked really got away with their evil sins (and doubting God's righteousness to punish them) really pained him *deeply*. And we *need* this kind of piercing in our inner man to bring us to a good repentance, so we can have the deep conviction to do what's right, regardless of appearances - because we know God's Word is true and thus, the wicked *will* get the punishments they deserve, eventually. And what this also means is that: the Psalmist realized *how close* he had come to slipping into rebellion against God. For being envious at the wicked causes *many* people to cast off their faith in our Heavenly Father and follow the evil ways of the wicked ones. So, the Psalmist realized what a huge mistake it was to think the wicked get ahead, because that mindset is what causes us to sin *if* we continue to entertain it, and don't repent, as this Psalmist did.

Thus, it's not good for us to become too consumed with other people's apparent success in life. If we think more about that more than (or rather than) what God's Word tells us, *our mindset will be carnal instead of spiritual*, which is what leads us to sin and that leads us to death, eventually. Thinking with your carnal mind (like a dumb animal) is what causes us to not be able to understand the truth; and that's why so many people struggle with understanding the Word of God. They are not willing to face themselves (awake from their dream world/fantasy) and see the truth. Which also means they don't want to stop sinning, because they are too foolish to realize how much it hurts them. So, until we're ready to give up our carnal desires (which are seductive yet terribly destructive) we are not going to be able to wake out of our self-delusional dream that we've made for ourselves. This Psalmist is essentially grieving at how close he came to being in a delusional dream himself...

Psalm 73

23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.

Even though the Psalmist had almost 'slipped' into rebellious and habitual sin himself, the Lord (YHWH) had pulled him out of his temptation *because* he drew near to our Heavenly Father by going 'into the Sanctuary'. Truth (light) always dispels darkness. And so, the Psalmist says that, while he *almost* fell to sin, he *didn't* actually fall, nor was he 'cast down' (as the wicked will be). And this because our Heavenly Father helped him. The word '**continually**' means *continuance* (as indefinite extension), *constant* (or *constantly*) and can even mean *the regular (daily) sacrifice* (#8548) because it was to be made *continually*. And the word '**holden**' means *to seize*, often with the accessory idea of *holding in possession* (#270). And the word '**right**' (referring to the hand) refers to *the stronger, and more dexterous hand* (#3225), and the word '**hand**' itself means an open hand which indicates (symbolizes) *power, means* and *direction* (#3027).

So, even though the Psalmist was *tempted* to join the habitual sinners (rebels against God Almighty) – and almost fell to that temptation – he was 'held up' by God's strong hand *because* he had been a faithful follower his entire life (continually was with God). 1 Cor 10:13 tells us

that *there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but **God is faithful**, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; **but** will with the temptation also make a way to escape, **that ye may be able to bear it**. So, whenever we are tempted to sin (as this Psalmist was), IF we turn to our Heavenly Father (as the Psalmist did) and ‘go into the Sanctuary) – by studying His Word and thinking upon it sincerely – then our Heavenly Father *won’t let us fall to sin*. He’ll show us how to resist and reject it, and how to overcome any difficulties that arise out of our refusing to sin. As Ps 37:23-24 also says: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for **the LORD upholdeth him with his hand***.*

Though we all will ‘fall short’ and sin at times in our life (Rom 2:23), if we continue to draw near to God (study His Word, strive to obey it, examine our inner man and repent for the sins we see) then our Heavenly Father will *always* give us the strength, and understanding, we need to overcome any temptation (or trial) that comes to us. And always remember that God does not ever tempt anyone to sin. He will *allow* us to be tempted – and even *test* us Himself - but He Himself does not *tempt* us to sin. Temptation is a result of the lusts of our carnal mind (heart), which we all have (James 1:13-15). But, through the grace of God (Rom 3:24), Jesus Christ (who is our intercessor) will always help us resist temptations to sin, and endure the trials that come from serving Him in life, even when we are weak (Rom 8:26-34), as this Psalmist was when he was envious at the wicked. So long as we don’t forsake our Heavenly Father, He’ll *never* forsake us...

Psalm 73

25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

The *Companion Bible* notes that the phrase “*whom have I in heaven but thee?*” is ‘ever the cry of God’s saints’ and it’s actually a figure of speech (*Eroesis*, apx 6) that is the asking of a question – not for an answer or for information – but to make a point. And the point is that *there is no one else, but our Heavenly Father*, that can help us like He can. There’s also *no one else* who can give us more peace of mind or joy in our heart than he. This first part of the verse “*whom have I in heaven but thee*” is also much like the expression “*who is like unto thee*” used in numerous Scriptures to glorify and praise God (Ex 15:11, Detu 33:26-27, 1 Sam 2:2, 1 Chron 17:20, Ps 35:10, 71:10, 86:8, 89:6,8, 113:5). And the word ‘**desire**’ here means *to incline to*; by implication (literally but rarely) *to bend*; figuratively, *to be pleased with*, **desire** (#2654). In other words, only a sincere and intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father can make us truly happy. There’s nothing else (in heaven or on earth) that can fill that void (hole) deep down in our soul but His Word (truth) and Holy Spirit. And if we want to be close to Him, we must make (and keep) HIM as the desire of our heart, *always*! As Peter said, in 1 Peter 2:1-2, we should *put aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings* and - as newborn babes - *desire the sincere milk of **the word**, that ye may grow thereby*. We should desire

God's Word (first and foremost in life) and *that's* what should motivate us to study it, for ourself, each and every day (2 Tim 2:15). And if we do so - diligently and sincerely - He will help us to grow mature, help us to resist all temptations to sin (which will come), as well as give us the strength (and understanding) to endure all trials and tribulations...

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

*2 That he **no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.***

1 Peter 4:1-2

So, we should live our life for God's will, not to fulfill our lusts. Because lusts only lead us to death (Rom 6:23, James 1:13-15) but making God the 'desire of our heart' leads to eternal life!

Psalm 73

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

After proclaiming how the Lord (YHVH) kept the Psalmist from falling to his temptation to sin – and that God alone is the desire of the Psalmist's heart - he now asks the Lord to continue to guide him by His '**counsel**' which means *advice* or, by implication, *a plan* and also *prudence* (#6098). And our Heavenly Father has given us His 'counsel' – and 'plan' – through His Written Word. In John 6:63, Jesus told us that: *It is the spirit that quickeneth* (makes us spiritually alive); *the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak** unto you, they **are spirit**, and they **are life***. Of course, Jesus Christ's 'words' are also God's Words, as John 1:1, 14 tells us. So, Jesus didn't teach us *anything* that was not from God Himself (John 7:16). But the point is, our Heavenly Father has given us His Word *to guide us*. And He also tells us of His plans *for the future* in His Written Word. So, we should not seek anything but *that which is written in His Word* **IF** we truly want God's 'counsel'. The Psalmist knew this; after all, it was God's 'counsel' that had taught him the 'latter end' of the wicked (which is ultimately destruction if they don't repent).

So, he asks for God to continue to guide him by continuing to give him counsel so that 'afterward' he can be 'received' to 'glory'. What does this mean? The word '**afterward**' means *the hind part* as well as *after* (#310) and '**receive**' means *to take* (#3947) while the word '**glory**' means *weight* (but only figuratively in a good sense), *splendor* or *copiousness* [i.e. prosperity] (#3519) and has been translated as: glorious (-ly), glory, honour (-able). In other words, he's simply asking that the Lord (YHVH) would continue to guide him so he could receive God's *blessings* that *always* come from our *diligently* seeking (and striving to obey) Him (Heb 11:6). And Deut 4:27-31; Jer 29:10-14; 1 Chron 28:9 all promise us that **IF we seek our Heavenly Father (through His Written Word) then we WILL find Him, so long as we're seeking with**

all our heart (desires, emotions), mind (thought process) and even strength (will), as Jesus also pointed out in Mth 12:30. As Jesus also told us...

*9 And I say unto you, **Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you.*

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

*13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: **how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?***

Luke 11:9-13

Jesus makes a very good point. When we have children, we enjoy giving them ‘good gifts’. And our Heavenly Father loves to do so to us, as well. But, He’s not going to give us something we ask for if it will hurt us. For example, having a lot of money might very well corrupt our spirit (1 Tim 6) so, unless we can handle it (and will use it for His will, not our lusts) then He won’t give us a lot of money. But, Jesus also told us that we should ‘ask’, ‘seek’, and ‘knock’ as well. As verse 8 says: *For every one that asketh **receiveth**; and he that seeketh **findeth**; and to him that knocketh it shall be **opened***. This means, we should not only be asking Him in prayer but also seeking the answers *through His Word*. And **if** we do *diligently* study His Word to find the answers (2 Tim 2:15) and we still don’t have an answer, then we should ‘knock’ and ‘it shall be opened’. But, what does that mean? The word ‘**knock**’ in the Greek means **to rap** (#2925). And while we usually think of this in terms of rapping on a door with our hand, the word ‘rap’ actually has a quite insightful (yet less known) meaning: as a transitive verb it can mean **to talk freely and frankly to someone**. And to be ‘frank’ with someone means to speak with *free, forthright, and sincere* expression. So, to be able to ‘knock’ on our Heavenly Father’s heart – i.e. to get Him to open His heart to us and help us – we must speak freely, honestly, sincerely and without guile, as well as humbly. And Jesus also gave us another parable to explain how ‘men ought always to pray, and not to faint’ in Luke 18:1-8. Our prayers are not usually answered overnight. So, we must learn to *be patient* and willing to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say. In other words, make sure you do not have any preconceived ideas, or desires, about what response think the Lord *should* give you. Be open to what He *really* has to say and then you will get a response, even if it’s only to comfort you while you patiently endure the hard times. As 2 Thess 3:3 says, *the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil*. And eventually, He will also bless you for faithfully seeking Him and trying sincerely to obey (serve) Him, as well...

Psalm 73

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

In Matt 26:41, Jesus told us: *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*. Indeed, our flesh body **is** weak, and so is our heart (carnal mind; where our desires, emotions, intentions, motivations are). And if we let our flesh body and heart (carnal mind) *control us*, we *won't* be able to obey our Heavenly Father. But, **if** we continue to seek God (by studying His Word sincerely, diligently and consistently) then He *will* strengthen our heart. The word '**strengthen**' here means **a rock** or even **a refuge** (#6697). And that simply means that the Word of God strengthens our heart (desires, emotions) and mind (thought process) so that we are able to control our carnal body, and inclinations, so we *can* obey Him, sincerely. As Paul explained...

*24 For **we are saved by hope**: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

*26 **Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities**: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but **the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**.*

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

*28 And we know that **all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose**.*

Rom 8:24-28

When we are weak, and call to our Heavenly Father for help, He will give us the inner strength (will power) and understanding to endure the hard times and resist the temptations... just as he did for this Psalmist, when he was tempted to sin, when he thought the wicked ones were 'getting away with it'. And *that* is a promise from God, as 1 Cor 10:11 also states. And that's why God ('**Elohiym**' (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*) is the strength of our heart *and* our '**portion**' forever - which means God is our **allotment** (#2506). For, just as the Levites were not to have any physical inheritance in the Promise Land (Num 18:20) so too are those in the Body of Christ not to have any inheritance, *because* God IS our inheritance (as Ezek 44:28 and Rev 20:4-6 also states). And what that boils down to is this: our Heavenly Father is our Creator and thus *He owns everything* (Rev 4:11). And if He is our inheritance, that also means we inherit whatever He has. Paul also explained this in his letter to the Romans...

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

*13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: **but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live**.*

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, **that we are the children of God:**

17 And **if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.**

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rom 8:12-18

So, God being our ‘portion’ (our allotment, i.e. inheritance) means that we inherit *what He has*. And this means we will be given eternal life, just as Jesus Christ has (Phil 3:21) *and* we’ll also be given authority to rule the world (and heaven), under the guidance (and leadership) of Jesus Christ, when He returns to the earth and takes over *everything* on earth *and* in heaven. And truly, there is no better inheritance than *that*! David expressed it so beautifully in Ps 16:5-6 when he wrote: *the LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* And, at the end of this chapter, he explains the impact of that, in verse 11: *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* And how true this is! So, if you keep your heart and mind *firmly* planted on God’s Word (our ‘Rock’) then *you won’t fall to sin*. And that means you’ll inherit the world when Jesus Christ returns. *No one* can take your faith away from you *if* you bind your heart and mind *tightly* to our Heavenly Father *through faith and trust in His Word...*

Psalm 73

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

While the Psalmist explained earlier what his ‘portion’ was for drawing close to God (God’s strengthening his heart because he studied God Word and sincerely strove to obey it), he’s now warning what happens to those *who do not*. And it’s an *important* point he makes here: the only reason people will ‘perish’ is because they are *far* from our Heavenly Father. The word ‘**far**’ here means **remote** (#7369) and comes from a word that means to **recede** or **remove** (#7368). And the word ‘**perish**’ means **to wander away**, i.e. **lose oneself**; by implication **to perish** (causative, **destroy**) (#6). And this is actually the prime root of one of the names given to Satan in Rev 9:11 (Greek #3 *Abaddon*). Now, the Psalmist is not speaking of being physically far away from God, but *spiritually* far away from Him. And, those who rebel against God are far away from Him, *spiritually, because* - when we rebel against our Heavenly Father we *willfully* sin and we thus *willingly refuse to know Him* (His righteous ways). As He said in Jer 9:6, **through deceit they refuse to know me.** And in Isa 59:1-2 we’re told that, *the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated*

between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. So, when we believe lies, we refuse to know Him. And that's what causes us to sin (rebelliously), which is what causes us to be 'far from' our Heavenly Father, spiritually. While we all fall short and sin at times (Rom 3:23), there's a big difference between those who are seeking our Heavenly Father (through His Word) and believe in Him (Jesus Christ) verses those who are not seeking Him and don't believe in Him (Jesus Christ). Those who are not seeking Him don't believe in Him and thus they willingly sin, without caring that they are sinning (i.e. they are rebelling against God). They are *habitual* sinners; sin is *a way of life* to them. And that's actually *rebellion against God*. As the prophet Samuel told the first king of Israel, Saul...

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

*23 For **rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft**, and **stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry**. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

1 Sam 15:22-23

Rebellion against God - and being so stubborn as to refuse to repent and turn back to our Heavenly Father - is as the sins of witchcraft, iniquity and idolatry! And *that's why* those who rebel against God – and stubbornly refuse to repent for their sins – are far from God. They *refuse* to know our Heavenly Father *because they refuse the truth* and instead *love lies*. And that means they follow Satan, because he is the 'father' (creator) of lies (John 8:44). 2 Thess 2:10-12 also tells us that *this* (loving lies) is their downfall. Which is why the Psalmist then says that *thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee*. The word '**destroyed**' here means to **extirpate** (#6789), which means to destroy completely or to wipe out. And the word '**whoring**' not only means **to commit adultery** but also, figuratively, **to commit idolatry** (#2181). And that's because God considered Himself married to Israel *because* they had agreed to a national covenant with Him (Ex 19-20). However, they broke that 'marriage contract' (i.e. national covenant) because they when 'whoring' after other gods and idols *instead of* remaining true to Him *by obeying* His Laws, from the heart (Jer 3). What this boils down to is that they refused to obey His righteous laws and instead obeyed other law) that were *very* unrighteous and even evil. Learn more in the special study on **No Other Gods** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1015>].

Further, we as Christians are also 'married' to God *when* we accept the 'New Testament' (the Gospel of Jesus Christ) through our faith in Jesus Christ. But, it's not a physical marriage; it is a *spiritual* marriage between *your* soul and spirit and *God's* Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes *into your heart and mind*, He is dwelling *in you* – which is why Paul says we are the Temple of God when His Holy Spirit *is in us* (1 Cor 3:16-18, 1 Cor 6:15-20, 2 Cor 6:14-18). And just as a man 'goes into a woman' to consummate the marriage, in like manner does God's Holy Spirit go into *your* heart and mind *to spiritually marry you*, when you believe in Jesus Christ. As

Jer 31:33 prophesied: *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, **I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;** and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* And, as Paul taught us in Gal 3 (among many other places) it's not just Israel who can be spiritually married to God, through faith in Jesus Christ. It is *anyone* of any race who believes upon Jesus Christ. And the purpose of this 'spiritual marriage' to God (through faith in Jesus Christ) is to *give you the truth, and protect you, so you can obey Him from the heart.* We have to **know** God's Word (in our mind) and **want** to obey it (in our heart) in order for us to *faithfully* obey Him. That truly is what our Heavenly Father has wanted from us all along; for He created all things (even all His children) for His pleasure. But, rebelling against Him doesn't give Him any pleasure, because we hurt His children and His creation! That's why Jesus said if we love God, we *must* also love His children (John 13:34) *by obeying His Word* (God's Word, John 14:15). And, when we do so, *that's* what unites our heart with His (in a spiritual marriage) – *because* our believing in, and obeying Jesus Christ (the Word of God) *is what gives us the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit* (John 14:16-18).

The *Companion Bible* also has an enlighten note explaining that this term 'whoring from' is a figure of speech (*Ellipsis*, apx 6) which means that 'whoring from' is like saying 'departing from' God. And this refers *spiritually* to idolatry, which is anything that takes us away from God. Anything that you put in your heart (desire more than being spiritually close to God) is an idol to you. And you've got to get rid of it if you want to be spiritually close to our Heavenly Father, and enjoy the blessings, protection and peace of mind that He so gracious gives those who love, obey and follow Him. And we should also remember that, when we rebel against God, we are truly destroying ourselves. For we cannot live without our Heavenly Father because He is our Creator; thus, *He's also the source of our life*, both physically and (more important) spiritually. As Jesus Christ so forthrightly said in John 17:3: ***this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*** So, the only way to obtain eternal life is to know God and His Son, Jesus Christ. And if we do not know Him, we're on the path to spiritual death, whether we realize it or not (Rom 6:23). Jesus also told us, in John 6:63, that *it is the spirit that quickeneth* [makes us alive]; *the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.* In John 17:17 Jesus also told us that God's Word *is the truth* and *that's* what sanctifies (cleanses) us spiritually.

So, the truth – which is God's Word – *is vital to our very existence.* If we refuse the truth, *we can't live forever.* And that's the 'bottom line'. And that's also why it's so very important for us to study God's Word (for ourselves) sincerely, diligently and consistently (daily) so that we can learn to know our Heavenly Father and thus, learn to *obey* Him. For all those who don't do so will eventually perish in the 'lake of fire' at the end of the Millennium. All those who go a whoring from Him (by departing from the truth) will be destroyed – again, in the lake of fire *after* the Millennium. And even though no one (not even Satan) will be spiritually killed before the Great White Throne Judgment (at the end of the Millennium), there will still be many

sorrowful people when Jesus Christ returns – especially people who claim to be Christians. For, if we go a whoring after Satan – and worship him as God – when he’s kicked out of heaven and comes to earth (with his fallen angels), then we will not make the first resurrection, which means we won’t be given eternal life when Jesus Christ finally returns, as so many Christians are looking forward to. As Jesus warned in Mth 7:21-23, there will be many who claim they serve Him when He returns but He will reject them (not give them eternal life nor allow them to serve in His government) *because they are truly* ‘workers of iniquity’!

So, the ‘latter end’ of the wicked ones (yea, all who refuse to know God by refusing the truth) is that they will perish and be destroyed in the lake of fire, as Rev 20 us. And this means they’ll be totally blotted out of existence, never to exist again. Ps 37:20 likens it to the way that smoke goes up and *dissipates into nothing*; that’s what the very body, soul and spirit of those who (without repentance) depart from God, which means they whore after another god(s) and idols!

Psalm 73

28 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 thy works.

Since those who are far from our Heavenly Father perish (as was stated in vs 27), then obviously, it *is* good for us to draw close to God! And remember, Jesus explained that *knowing* our Heavenly Father (*and* Jesus Christ) **is** what gives us *eternal* life (John 17:3). And you *have* to ‘draw near’ to God (*spiritually*) to get to know Him. And that’s *exactly* what the Psalmist did when he went ‘into the Sanctuary’ (vs 17). Again, *that’s* why it’s *so vital* to study God’s Word daily, diligently and sincerely; because His Word is His Holy Spirit and *that’s* how we draw near (and stay near) to Him, *spiritually*. But, that (drawing close to God) is also what strengthened his (and our) faith in the Lord (YHVH) as well, which is why he then said he put his trust in the Lord God. Now, the word ‘**good**’ here not only means *good* but can also mean **a good thing** (#2896) and the word ‘**near**’ means **to approach** (#7132). And then the word ‘**God**’ here is **‘Elohiym**’ (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*. The *Companion Bible* (again) has a helpful note on this verse. It says that the Hebrew accent (*pasek*) emphasizes the Pronoun “me” - which means that the Psalmist is essentially saying that: Others may go ‘far from Thee’ (vs 27) but “as for me, I will draw near to Thee” (vs 23). The “good” is thus seen in the twofold result: (1) I find a refuge in Him; (2) I tell forth His praises.

Thus, when we draw near to our Heavenly Father *we find refuge in Him*. And what that means is that we, not only obtain His protection in a physical sense, but also *spiritually*. For when we draw near to Him *we are seeking truth*. And it is the truth (our faith in it) that protects us *spiritually* from lies. That’s why faith is a shield (Eph 6:16) that protects our heart and mind from deception that causes us to fall to sin, as the Psalmist struggled with (as he recounted to us in this Psalm). As Ps 91:5 says, when we seek the truth (God’s Word) and believe in it, our Heavenly

Father shall spiritually *cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: **his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*** Truth protects us from lies and deception, which is what keeps (guards) us from falling to temptations to sin.

Now, then the Psalmist also calls our Heavenly Father the ‘Lord God’. The word ‘**Lord**’ is ‘**Adonay**’ (#136), which does mean Lord. And the word “**God**” is **Yehovih** (#3069), which is a variation of God’s Sacred name, **Yehovah** (#3068) – check out apx 4 VIII 2 and II for more information on this name for our Heavenly Father. And then the word ‘**declare**’ means *to score with a mark as a tally or record*, i.e. (by implication) *to inscribe*, and also *enumerate*; intensively, *to recount*, i.e. *celebrate* (#5608) while the word ‘**works**’ means *deputyship*, i.e. *ministry*; generally, *employment* (never servile) or *work* (abstractly or concretely); also, *property* (as the result of labor) (#4399).

So, it is very good for us to draw near to God, which means to seek Him *sincerely*, by seeking the truth *through His Written Word*. And when we do that, He will help us to understand the truth. And it is the truth that we must trust in. And one of the main truths we trust in – that guards us from falling to sin – is the ‘timeless truth’ we’ve learned of here in this Psalm. That is: the wicked do not truly get away with sin. While it may *seem* like they are prospering now, their ‘latter end’ is to be punished, and even destroyed if they continue to rebel and prove themselves to be incorrigible rebels. So, while they continue to sin, without repentance, they are truly digging their own graves; for they *will* be judged (by Jesus Christ, and then by God at the White Throne Judgment – 2 Cor 5:10, Rev 20:10-15) by their own words and works. And, without the blood of Jesus Christ atoning for their sins (because they refuse Him) they will have no atonement for their sins. That means they are still accountable for them. And *they will pay*.

And this vital truth – God’s faithfulness to save us through Jesus Christ *and* also to punish the wicked (Ps 145:20) - *is* what causes those of us who do draw near to God (through Jesus Christ, the Word of God, John 1:1, 14) to not only trust in Him, *rejoice* in Him but also *want* to declare (share) His ‘works’, which his essentially sharing God’s Word, the truth. When we receive the blessed forgiveness from Jesus Christ – and experience the *amazing* peace of mind and joy in our heart from that forgiveness – it’s natural for us to want to share the truth with others, because you don’t want *anyone* to be in bondage to sin and lies anymore. But, as the Scriptures tell us, we must use discernment when sharing the truth, because some people are not ready for it. As Col 4:5-6 advises us, we should *walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time*. And *let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*. Peter also advises us to *sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear* (1 Peter 3:15).

So, when we draw near to our Heavenly Father (by studying His Word and thinking upon it), trust in Him (the truth, His Word) and share His truth (declare His works) He will continue to guide, protect and strengthen us both physically and spiritually. After all, when we follow Jesus Christ (God's Word) we are *His* servants. And God *always* protects and strengthens those who serve Him. That's another promise we should *not* forget. As verse 1 said, God is good to those who have a clean heart! So, even though you may have thoughts and feelings similar to this Psalmist every now and then, *don't entertain them*. Kick them out quickly and remember this Psalm (and Psalms 37), because it reminds us how terrible the 'latter end' of the wicked truly is (utter destruction). And we don't want to have any part of that...

*11 Let us **labour therefore to enter into that rest**, lest any man fall after the same example of **unbelief**.*

*12 For the word of God is **quick**, and **powerful**, and **sharper than any twoedged sword**, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and **is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**.*

*13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but **all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do**.*

*14 Seeing then that **we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession**.*

*15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, **yet without sin**.*

*16 Let us therefore **come boldly unto the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Heb 4:11-16

AMEN.