



## **“Turn On the Light”**

I confess, when I was a small child I was afraid of things that go bump in the night. Like many children, I was convinced that there was a murderer lurking in my bedroom closet or a creature hiding under my bed. Somehow these threatening figures were only there after the lights were turned off. I never had any fear of them when the lights were on or in the morning after the sun had risen. Light always caused the imaginary villains to vanish.

Now that I am grown, I am not afraid of monsters hiding in my bedroom. That does not mean that I never feel threatened by imaginary things. Many adults think that they are endangered by things they cannot see – things that are not real. Psalm 73 is a song about a grown man's imaginary fear. Asaph, who wrote this psalm, was a musician who served in the tabernacle when David was king in Israel. He wrote several songs of praise to God, and one psalm of testimony about his fear of things not real.

The first part of Psalm 73 details the troubled thoughts of a believer who senses somehow God is not in control in the world, and God's promises of are of no effect. He sees wicked people prospering and begins to doubt God's goodness. If God is fair, why do bad people flourish while good people suffer? If God is just, why does He not punish the wicked? Asaph's fearful thoughts are identical to thoughts many faithful Christians struggle with today.

We could add to Asaph's fears some more of our own. If the Bible is true, why does the majority not believe it? Am I wrong about creation? After all, don't most scientists say man actually evolve from lower forms of life? What about marriage and morality? The media and the government seem to say I am an unsophisticated bigot because I believe what the Bible teaches about men and women. How about eternity? If I die, will I really go to heaven? Perhaps my hope is misplaced. There are so many religions. Can I really trust Jesus, a man who lived 2000 years ago, with my life?

In his psalm, Asaph openly expresses his doubts and fears. But then he turns on the light. Midway through the psalm, Asaph says he endured painful fear and doubt “until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I perceived...” Asaph went to the place of worship, and there in the house of God the lights were turned on. The fears and doubts vanished, and he saw things as they really are.

Like Asaph three millennia ago, we live in a dark and frightening world. Sometimes things appear to contradict what God has said. Experience challenges what the Bible promises. We fear and we doubt. But it is in the presence of God that we see things as they really are. How often have I heard a troubled saint tell me as they were leaving the Sunday worship service, “I’m so glad I came today! I was so troubled, but I feel much better.” The lights were turned on, and the fear vanished.

Luke records an incident following the resurrection where Jesus joins company with two men walking to a village called Emmaus. Not recognizing the risen Lord, they confess to Him that they are deeply troubled by recent events. They had believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Redeemer. But religious leaders, who should have recognized Him, rejected Him. Then He was crucified. Now there was a rumor that He was alive again. But how could that be? They could not reconcile their faith with their experience. Were they wrong? Had their faith been misplaced? Jesus answered them by expounding what the Scriptures taught about His crucifixion and resurrection. Then the Bible says, “their eyes were open and they knew him” (Lk. 24:31). The doubts disappeared. Faith was confirmed.

Psalm 119:130 says, “The entrance of thy words giveth light...” During times of fear and doubting, the very best thing a saint can do is immerse his mind in the Word of God and attend the house of God and worship. Turn on the light. The doubts and fears that trouble you will fade away.