

Psalms 73:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

Analysis

But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

Having stated the truth in verse 1, Asaph now confesses how close he came to abandoning it. The Hebrew construction *va'ani* (וָאֲנִי, "but as for me") creates a sharp contrast with the theological affirmation just made. The emphatic personal pronoun highlights the tension between objective truth and subjective experience.

"My feet were almost gone" (*kim'at natyu raglai*, כִּמְאֵט נָטְיוֹ רַגְלָי) uses the verb *natah*, meaning to stretch out, extend, or turn aside. His feet nearly deviated from the path of faith. "My steps had well nigh slipped" (*k'ayin shuppeku ashurai*, כְּאֵין שֻׁפְּעֻקָּו אֲשֻׁרָי) employs *shaphak*, meaning to pour out or spill—his steps were nearly poured out like water, losing all stability and direction.

The imagery of slipping feet appears throughout the Psalter (Psalms 17:5, 38:16, 66:9, 94:18, 121:3). Walking represents the whole course of life, and slipping signifies moral or spiritual failure. Asaph's confession is strikingly honest: he nearly fell. The "almost" and "well nigh" indicate how close he came to complete spiritual collapse. This vulnerability establishes credibility and invites readers who have experienced similar struggles to continue with the psalm.

Historical Context

The metaphor of walking and slipping was particularly vivid in ancient Palestine's rocky, uneven terrain. Travelers on mountain paths faced genuine danger from

loose stones and steep drops. The image would have resonated with pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem on treacherous roads.

Wisdom literature frequently employs the "two ways" motif—the path of righteousness versus the path of wickedness (Psalm 1, Proverbs 4:18-19). Asaph's near-slipping represents potential departure from the righteous path toward the way of the wicked whose prosperity he envied. The confession anticipates similar language in Proverbs 4:19: "The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble."

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What circumstances in your life have brought you to the point where your spiritual footing felt unstable?
2. Why is Asaph's honest confession of near-failure important for the psalm's message?
3. How does the imagery of slipping feet capture the gradual nature of spiritual drift?
4. What kept Asaph from completely falling, and what might keep us from falling in similar circumstances?

Interlinear Text

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|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------|
| וְאֲנִי | כִּי מְעַט | נָטָה וַיִּ | רַגְלִי | כִּי אֵין | שָׁפָךְ הִ |
| H589 | were almost | gone | But as for me my feet | had well nigh | slipped |
| | H4592 | H5186 | H7272 | H369 | H8210 |
| אַשְׁרִי: | | | | | |
| my steps | | | | | |
| H838 | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 94:18 (Parallel theme): When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

1 Samuel 2:9 (Parallel theme): He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

Psalms 116:8 (Parallel theme): For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

Psalms 38:16 (Parallel theme): For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me.

Psalms 17:5 (Parallel theme): Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Psalms 17:15 (Parallel theme): As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.