

Psalms 73:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. This verse represents the summit of Asaph's transformed perspective—and one of the most profound expressions of devotion in Scripture. Having seen the wicked's ultimate destruction (verses 18-20), Asaph now declares what he has gained: God Himself.

"Whom have I in heaven but thee?" (מִי־לִי בְּשָׁמָיִם, mi-li vashamayim) is a rhetorical question expecting the answer "no one." In the heavenly realm—the sphere of divine beings, angels, and cosmic powers—Asaph has no one but Yahweh. This excludes any competing spiritual loyalty or refuge.

"There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee" (וְאַיִלְלָה לֹא־חָפַצְתִּי בָּאָרֶץ) extends the declaration to the earthly realm. The verb chafetz (חָפֵץ) means to delight in, desire, take pleasure in. With God, Asaph desires nothing else on earth—not the prosperity that once made him envious, not any earthly possession or relationship. God has become his all-sufficient portion.

The verse moves from cosmic scope (heaven) to personal experience (earth), encompassing all reality. It answers the envy of verse 3 with something far greater than the wicked's shalom: God Himself. This is not stoic resignation but joyful satisfaction. Asaph has discovered that God is better than any gift God might give.

Historical Context

This verse echoes and intensifies similar expressions throughout Scripture. Moses prayed: "shew me thy glory" (Exodus 33:18). David wrote: "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life" (Psalm 27:4). The Levites received no land inheritance because "the LORD is their inheritance" (Deuteronomy 18:2).

For Asaph, a Levite and worship leader, this declaration had special resonance. His tribe had no territorial portion in the Promised Land—God was their portion (Numbers 18:20). What was true of Levites physically became spiritually true for Asaph personally: God Himself was his inheritance, his satisfaction, his all.

Church fathers and mystics throughout history have treasured this verse. Augustine's famous confession—"our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee"—echoes Asaph's discovery. The verse became a touchstone for spiritual writers exploring the soul's satisfaction in God alone.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What would it mean for you to say honestly, 'There is none upon earth that I desire beside thee'?
2. How does this verse answer the envy Asaph expressed earlier in the psalm?
3. What is the difference between desiring God's gifts and desiring God Himself?
4. How might this verse reshape your prayers and your definition of blessing?

Interlinear Text

לְיִמְיוֹן

H4310

H0

בְּשַׁמְּךָ יְמִינָה

Whom have I in heaven

H8064

סְפִּירָה לֹא יְנַצְּבָה

H5973

H3808

סְפִּירָה לֹא יְנַצְּבָה

that I desire

H2654

בְּאֶרֶץ:

but thee and there is none upon earth

H776

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 3:8 (Parallel theme): Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

Psalms 16:2 (Parallel theme): O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee;

Psalms 63:3 (Parallel theme): Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

Psalms 16:5 (Parallel theme): The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

Psalms 104:34 (Parallel theme): My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.

Psalms 37:4 (Parallel theme): Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Matthew 10:37 (Parallel theme): He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Psalms 89:6 (Parallel theme): For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

Psalms 43:4 (Parallel theme): Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.

Psalms 16:11 (Parallel theme): Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

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