



# Weekly Devotion

## Self Pity

Thanksgiving was a time of family gathering. Then there was the hectic period of preparation for Christmas. Presents to buy, meals to plan, decoration to arrange, a tree to set up and dozens of other affairs to attend. No time to catch one's breath during Christmas.

Then comes the big let down. The air escapes the balloon. The joy and excitement is overcome by reality. Things did not work out as planned and hoped for. Many who promised to come failed to show up. Your spouse was no help. The children were cross and unhappy. You did not get the expected present. You are left to clean up the mess alone. The weather was terrible and you have come

down with a bad cold. Your world has become a miserable place. As you look around, you notice many folk are not so distressed. This adds to your morose attitude.

If this sounds familiar, you are member of a very large group. This malaise is so prevalent this time of the year that mental health professionals have assigned it an identifying diagnosis. It's called Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. This acronym is so very appropriate. Victims are truly despondent and self absorbed.

This outbreak of depression is not a recent phenomenon. It is as old as mankind. Psalm 73 is the confession of one so afflicted. As he compared his neighbor's circumstances to his own, he com-

plained. He thought to himself that God was not fair. His neighbors seemed to enjoy all the blessings: health, wealth, happiness, success. Furthermore, they did not have any respect for God. The green eyed monster of envy captured his imagination and magnified his distress. It's a difficult trap to avoid, and none are immune.

Asaph, who wrote this poem, was the song and worship leader in the temple. He was a dedicated servant and careful in his religious responsibilities. Why was he suffering when others were not. He lamented that God would not hear his prayers nor reward his faithfulness.

Asaph then went into the sanctuary and poured out his heart. Understanding flooded

his mind. All things of this world are temporary. There is a day of reckoning and reward to come. "I was a fool." He confesses. (verse 22) The rest of the

chapter Asaph reminds himself of the benefits of a close relationship with God.

If you are overcome with despair and doubt and want to complain,

confess to God your sin and wait for the peace that comes from trusting in God's wisdom and provision. (Isaiah 26:3; Jeremiah 33:3)

**Eldridge Cloessner**

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