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The Appearance of Prosperity

David gives us a message as an old man to say: Don't fret when you see the prosperity of the wicked, don't let it destroy your spirit. What we do not see is the results – the bitter end of a wicked man's life.

❖ **Faith or frustration**

❖ **Favor or forsaken**

❖ **Freedom or fatality**

Ps 37

1 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret — it only causes harm.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

12 The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth.

13 The Lord laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn the sword And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay those who are of upright conduct.

15 Their sword shall enter their own heart, And their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the LORD upholds the righteous.

18 The LORD knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the LORD, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away.

21 The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives.

22 For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.

23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.
25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.
26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed.
27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore.
28 For the LORD loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
29 The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.
30 The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice.
31 The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.
32 The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him.
33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged.
34 Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.
35 I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree.
36 Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.
37 Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace.
38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off.
39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in the time of trouble.
40 And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.
NKJV

“Why do the wicked prosper, when the Righteous are Afflicted?”

❖ Faith or frustration

Faith is the cure for frustration, 1-8

The faithful man will:

- ◆ Trust in the Lord
- ◆ Delight himself in the Lord
- ◆ Commit his way to the Lord
- ◆ Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him
- ◆ Cease from anger, and forsake wrath

“Why do the wicked prosper, when the Righteous are Afflicted?”

❖ **Favor or forsaken—9-32**
Compassion and being cut off

The righteous finds favor with God and is blessed. The wicked works contrary to God’s standard and is forsaken at the end.

Ps 37:25

**25 I have been young, and now am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.**

“Why do the wicked prosper, when the Righteous are Afflicted?”

❖ **Favor or forsaken**

1. The wicked will be missing in action, 9-10
2. The meek is not weak, 11-

3. The wicked will not have the last laugh, 12-15
4. Little is much when God is in it, 16-17
5. The Lord protects the righteous, but the wicked shall perish, 18-20
6. The wicked have not intentions of repaying what he borrows, 21-22
7. The Lord always blesses the righteous, 23-31

❖ Freedom or fatality—32-40

**39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in the time of trouble.
40 And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.**

1. A righteous life is a reproach to the wicked, 32
2. God never leaves the righteous, 33
3. Security awaits the one who waits on the Lord, 34
4. The wicked may flourish only to be cut off, 34-36
5. The righteous will be delivered, 37-40