

# God Will “Take Care of” the Wicked

Jeremiah 12:1-4

# Why Do the Wicked Prosper?

- Jeremiah wanted to know if God was aware of the injustice of the prosperous, happy lives of the wicked vs the poor, miserable state of the righteous
  - Jer. 12:1-4 - “Righteous are You, O LORD, when I plead with You; Yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? 2 You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; They grow, yes, they bear fruit. You are near in their mouth But far from their mind. 3 But You, O LORD, know me; You have seen me, And You have tested my heart toward You. Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, And prepare them for the day of slaughter. 4 How long will the land mourn, And the herbs of every field wither? The beasts and birds are consumed, For the wickedness of those who dwell there, Because they said, He will not see our final end.”

# God's Answer Is In Two Parts:

- It is not up to us to correct this injustice; it is our lot to bear with it
  - Jer. 12:5 - “If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, Then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, In which you trusted, they wearied you, Then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?”

# God's Answer Is In Two Parts:

- God will deal with it according to His own wisdom in His own time
  - Jer 12:14-15 - “Thus says the LORD: Against all My evil neighbors who touch the inheritance which I have caused My people Israel to inherit—behold, I will pluck them out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. 15 Then it shall be, after I have plucked them out, that I will return and have compassion on them and bring them back, everyone to his heritage and everyone to his land.”

## Imprecatory Psalms - How Can The Righteous Pray For Harm On The Wicked?

- A. F. Kirkpatrick: “Men need to beware lest in pity for the sinner they condone the sin, or relax the struggle against evil.”
- C. S. Lewis: “The ferocious parts of the Psalms serve as a reminder that there is in the world such a thing as wickedness and that it is hateful toward God.”
- Alexander McClaren: “Perhaps, it would do modern tenderheartedness no harm to have a little more iron infused into its gentleness, and to lay to heart that the King of Peace must first be King of Righteousness.”

## Imprecatory Psalms - How Can The Righteous Pray For Harm On The Wicked?

- Walter Kaiser: “They are not statements of personal vendetta, but they are utterances of zeal for the kingdom of God and his glory. To be sure, the attacks which provoked these prayers were not from personal enemies; rather, they were rightfully seen as attacks against God and especially his representatives in the promised line of the Messiah.”

# Imprecatory Psalms - How Can The Righteous Pray For Harm On The Wicked?

- Praying for God to punish the wicked is an authorized petition.
- We pray that God's will be done, and punishing the wicked is God's will
- "But what if I am mistaken about wishing for God to punish evil persons? Am I guilty of judging them?"
- Do you pray for God to heal the sick, only to discover that He had other plans and you were mistaken in your request?
- God wants you to pray all of your heartfelt petitions and trust Him to answer according to His wisdom and will.
- Punishing evil doers is His will; He has promised to do so in His time. Praying for Him to punish them is just pleading His promises

# God Stops The Plans Of The Wicked

- Psalm 146:2-5, 7-9 - “While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. 3 Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. 4 His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, 5 Whose hope is in the LORD his God... 7 Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners. 8 The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous. 9 The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; But the way of the wicked He turns upside down.”

# God Stops The Plans Of The Wicked

- Psalm 18:26 - “With the pure You will show Yourself pure; And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.”
- No human can out-think, out-plan, or out-run God
  - Jonah
  - Haman

# God Causes The Wicked To Fear

- Psalm 53:4-5 - “Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, Who eat up my people as they eat bread, And do not call upon God? 5 There they are in great fear Where no fear was, For God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you; You have put them to shame, Because God has despised them.”
- God won't give up
  - Lev. 26:14-18, 23-24, 27-28

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- David is opposed for doing good
  - Psalm 109:1-5 - “Do not keep silent, O God of my praise! 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful Have opened against me; They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. 3 They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, And fought against me without a cause. 4 In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer. 5 Thus they have rewarded me evil for good, And hatred for my love.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- What will happen to the wicked for his unjust treatment of the righteous?
  - He will get the same kind of treatment he planned for the righteous
  - Psalm 109:6-8 - “Set a wicked man over him, And let an accuser stand at his right hand. 7 When he is judged, let him be found guilty, And let his prayer become sin. 8 Let his days be few, And let another take his office.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- He loved cursing, so it came to him; he did not delight in blessing, so he received none
  - Psalm 109:17 - “As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- He will be filled with his own sins
  - Psalm 109:18-20 - “As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, So let it enter his body like water, And like oil into his bones. 19 Let it be to him like the garment which covers him, And for a belt with which he girds himself continually. 20 Let this be the LORD'S reward to my accusers, And to those who speak evil against my person.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- He will see God bless the one he cursed
  - Psalm 109:27-29 - “That they may know that this is Your hand-That You, LORD, have done it! 28 Let them curse, but You bless; When they arise, let them be ashamed, But let Your servant rejoice. 29 Let my accusers be clothed with shame, And let them cover themselves with their own disgrace as with a mantle.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- He will see evidence of God's care for the righteous and be even more ashamed
  - Psalm 86:17 - “Show me a sign for good, That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- He will see the good works of the one he cursed and be filled with even more anger
  - Psalm 112:9-10 - “He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted with honor. 10 The wicked will see it and be grieved; He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked shall perish.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- God will clothe the wicked with dishonor
  - Psalm 35:24-26 - “Vindicate me, O LORD my God, according to Your righteousness; And let them not rejoice over me. 25 Let them not say in their hearts, ‘Ah, so we would have it!’ Let them not say, ‘We have swallowed him up.’ 26 Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion Who rejoice at my hurt; Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor Who exalt themselves against me.”

# God Turns The Way Of The Wicked Back On Them

- Eventually, God will shut their mouths
  - Psalm 107:40-43 - “He pours contempt on princes, And causes them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way; 41 Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction, And makes their families like a flock. 42 The righteous see it and rejoice, And all iniquity stops its mouth. 43 Whoever is wise will observe these things, And they will understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- They constantly stir up trouble
  - Psalm 140:2 - “Who plan evil things in their hearts; They continually gather together for war.”
- They develop traps for the righteous
  - Psalm 140:4 - “Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; Preserve me from violent men, Who have purposed to make my steps stumble.”
- They do this to gain an advantage
  - Psalm 140:8 - “Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked; Do not further his wicked scheme, Lest they be exalted.”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- Evil will return to hunt the wicked for every act of wickedness
  - Psalm 140:9-11 - “As for the head of those who surround me, Let the evil of their lips cover them; 10 Let burning coals fall upon them; Let them be cast into the fire, Into deep pits, that they rise not up again. 11 Let not a slanderer be established in the earth; Let evil hunt the violent man to overthrow him.”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- They will fall into their own snares, and the righteous will escape
  - Psalm 141:8-10 - “But my eyes are upon You, O GOD the Lord; In You I take refuge; Do not leave my soul destitute. 9 Keep me from the snares they have laid for me, And from the traps of the workers of iniquity. 10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, While I escape safely.”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- When they are too strong for the righteous, God will break the snares for them
  - Psalm 142:6-7 - “Attend to my cry, For I am brought very low; Deliver me from my persecutors, For they are stronger than I. 7 Bring my soul out of prison, That I may praise Your name; The righteous shall surround me, For You shall deal bountifully with me.”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- God will show the wicked that they are merely men
  - Psalm 9:20 - “Put them in fear, O LORD, That the nations may know themselves to be but men”

# God Uncovers The Traps Of The Wicked

- God demonstrates His power over them
  - Psalm 35:4-8, 26 - “Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor Who seek after my life; Let those be turned back and brought to confusion Who plot my hurt. 5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, And let the angel of the LORD chase them. 6 Let their way be dark and slippery, And let the angel of the LORD pursue them. 7 For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit, Which they have dug without cause for my life. 8 Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly, And let his net that he has hidden catch himself; Into that very destruction let him fall.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- They attack from concealment without fear of God
  - Psalm 64:2-4 - “Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, From the rebellion of the workers of iniquity, 3 Who sharpen their tongue like a sword, And bend their bows to shoot their arrows-bitter words, 4 That they may shoot in secret at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- They encourage one another as they talk of their plans
  - Psalm 64:5 - “They encourage themselves in an evil matter; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, Who will see them?”
- They carefully perfect their plans
  - Psalm 64:6 - “They devise iniquities: We have perfected a shrewd scheme. Both the inward thought and the heart of man are deep.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- Just when they think their evil is working, God takes it apart
  - Psalm 64:7 - “But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they shall be wounded.”
- Suddenly they are wounded and afraid, and there is no one left to listen to them brag about it
  - Psalm 64:8 - “So He will make them stumble over their own tongue; All who see them shall flee away.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- Those who see it and understand will declare it to be God's work
  - Psalm 64:9 - “All men shall fear, And shall declare the work of God; For they shall wisely consider His doing.”
- The righteous will be glad and trust in God
  - Psalm 64:10 - “The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and trust in Him. And all the upright in heart shall glory.”
- The Lord favors those who fear Him
  - Psalm 147:11 - “The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- Some of the wicked can be brought to know the truth by means of the defeat of their plans
  - Psalm 83:16-18 - “Fill their faces with shame, That they may seek Your name, O LORD. 17 Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, 18 That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, Are the Most High over all the earth.”

# God Overthrows The Secret Counsels Of The Wicked

- The wise will pay careful attention to these things
  - Psalm 64:9 - “All men shall fear, And shall declare the work of God; For they shall wisely consider His doing.”
  - Psalm 107:43 - “Whoever is wise will observe these things, And they will understand the loving kindness of the LORD”

# God Will “Take Care of” the Wicked

- “No matter how hard evil tries, it can never quite match up to the power of good, because evil is ultimately self-destructive. Evil may set out to corrupt others, but in the process corrupts itself.”  
(John Connolly)

# God Will “Take Care of” the Wicked

- Psalm 2:1-4 - “Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 ‘Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.’ 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision.”