

Why Do Evil Men Prosper?

by Anton Bosch

The prosperity of evil men does not prove that God is blessing them, but rather that God's judgment is waiting until the Day of Judgment.

Scripture: Job 21:7, Psalm 37:1, Psalm 73:1, Hebrews 11:37, Hebrews 12:6

Topics: "Gods Justice", "Righteous Suffering"

Description

Anton Bosch addresses the common struggle of believers who question why the wicked prosper while the righteous suffer, citing biblical figures like Job, Asaph, David, and Jeremiah who grappled with the same dilemma. He emphasizes that prosperity and survival do not necessarily indicate God's blessing, pointing out that true prophets are often unpopular and persecuted. Bosch highlights the biblical truth that God will ultimately judge the wicked and vindicate the righteous, urging believers to trust in the Lord's justice and not be discouraged by the apparent success of evildoers.

Transcript

This question plagues every believer who is trying to live a godly life and finds life hard while others who are evil and ungodly seem to prosper and have a good life. Sometimes we look at false prophets and wolves in sheep's clothing who fleece the sheep, lead many to destruction and wreak havoc in the church and wonder why the Lord does not just strike them with a plague or death, as He did in the Old Testament.

If these questions worry you, then you are not alone. Down through the centuries many greater people than you and I have struggled with the same questions. Job asked: "Why do the wicked live and become old, yes, become mighty in power? Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God upon them" (Job 21:7,9). Asaph said: "I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, nor are they plagued like other men" (Psalm 73:1-5). David said "Lord, how long will the wicked... triumph they break in pieces Your people, O Lord, And afflict Your heritage" (Psalm 94:3,5). Jeremiah said: "Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously?" (Jeremiah 12:1).

One of the first things we need to understand is that there is no connection between prosperity, health, and life and the blessing or the judgment of the Lord. Rabbi Gamaliel's advice in Acts 5:38-40 is often misapplied to make a connection between the survival of people and organizations as indicative of a work of God. This is simply not true. Islam is not a work of God (in the good sense) and yet it has survived and prospered over 1400 years. The Roman church is a bit older than that and is very powerful and

prosperous but it represents the apostate church. Mormonism is one of the fastest growing groups but it is a cult. So survival, growth and prosperity do not prove anything. In fact, if a preacher or church is popular, then they are very likely not the genuine article.

On the other hand, the true church has always been small and the true prophets have always been unpopular, hunted and killed. The road has always been narrow and the Lord's chastening hand is heavy on those whom He loves. (Hebrews 12:6). Thus problems, persecution and being despised are not signs of failure but could well be signs of acceptance and of being on the narrow way. Obviously this does not mean that all people who are troubled are even saved, we know that is not true, so trouble in itself does not prove that we are right. On the other hand the absence of trouble is clearly a sign of not being a legitimate child of God (Hebrews 12:8).

The fact is that the wicked often prosper and die a natural death without any sign of God's judgment against them while the righteous are often "destitute, afflicted, (and) tormented" (Hebrews 11:37). So let us not be discouraged and faint because these things have been so from the beginning when righteous Abel was killed while Cain continued to live a long life. It seems almost unfair that Genesis 4 records Cain's descendants while it seems that Abel never produced offspring. The same can be said of the false prophets of the Old Testament who lived in luxury and received the honor of the kings while the true prophets were hated and killed.

There were times when God's hand seemed to come straight out of heaven to judge the wicked and they were swallowed up by the earth, others died strange deaths and yet others suddenly contracted some terrible disease. This even happened a few times in the New Testament. But it is generally God's purpose to wait until the Day of Judgment to judge men. Jesus taught this through the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matthew 13).

It is very hard to have to endure unrighteousness year after year and to not see God's vindication. Jesus was also tempted to seek immediate revenge and to bring fire from heaven and destroy those who were crucifying, mocking and abusing Him. But rather "...when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1Peter 2:23).

God is righteous and He will judge and He will repay. Over and over the Bible assures us that God will vindicate injustice. Hebrews 10:30 says "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord." When Job wrestled with this issue he concluded that "the wicked are reserved for the day of doom; they shall be brought out on the day of wrath" (Job 21:30).

We can be absolutely assured that God sees everything. Nothing is hidden from Him and every righteous deed and every unrighteous act is recorded in the books of heaven. Sometimes we feel that God is not aware of our distress and of the prosperity of the wicked, but He is aware. Not only does He see everything, He remembers everything. Thus we do not need to fret that some injustice has gone unnoticed and neither do we need to keep score since His records are perfect, not just recording the actions but also the attitudes.

God sees, He remembers and He will repay. We can be assured of that. Look at what Asaph says:

"Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good... 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. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret - it only causes harm. For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the Lord, They shall inherit the earth. 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. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth. The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that his day is coming. 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. Their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous. The Lord knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. 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." (Psalm 37:1-20, selected verses)

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