

Behold The Wicked Man

Introduction. Psalm 52 is a description of a wicked man. The superscription (heading) tells us this is about Doeg the Edomite who had betrayed Ahimelech and David, and then killed God's priests (cp. 1 Samuel 21:7; 22:9-23). Doeg thought he was something "great," but in reality, he was wicked and his deeds were offensive to God.

Most of the time in our lessons we present the opposite, i.e. "Blessed is the man" (cp. Psalm 40:4). But David, in Psalm 52:7, wanted us to know what a wicked man looks like. If we can view this "man" in general, what should we know about him? Psalm 52:7 breaks it down into three salient points.

I. Who Wouldn't Make God His Strength

- A. Behold what he says to himself (Psalm 10:11-15).
 - 1. "God has forgotten and will never see."
 - a) Man has lots of thoughts, but they don't necessarily agree with God and His righteousness.
 - (1) The scribes were incorrectly reasoning in their hearts when Jesus healed the paralytic let down through the roof (Mark 2:6-7).
 - (2) The Pharisee who had invited Jesus to his house spoke to himself when he forgave the sinful woman (Luke 7:39).
 - b) In contrast, we should pay close attention to what we are able to learn and then do it (1 Corinthians 2:11-12; Luke 11:28). Why? Because that's where true wisdom is found (Proverbs 1:7).
 - 2. "He is blind in his arrogance."
 - a) This "heart condition" isn't compatible with God. He depends on "self" (Luke 12:16-21). Pride caused God's guiding influences to leave his life.
 - b) In v. 13 he believes that God won't punish them. However, the next verse says that God will take note and punish them. Who would be so foolish?
- B. He thinks God is just like him (Psalm 50:21).
 - 1. Too often God's silence is taken as His approval. The people mistook God's patience for an inability to do anything about the evil on earth.
 - 2. They didn't understand that the Lord can't be boxed in by humans.
 - a) They were pleased with the thief and companion with adulterers. They spoke against their brother and slandered their own mother's son (vv. 18-20).
 - b) God is willing to tear the wicked to pieces, and there be none to deliver (vv. 22-23). In His own time God will judge His people openly.

II. Who Trusted In The Abundance Of His Riches

- A. This shows what he thinks of God. David already said, "The proud person depends on himself rather than on God."
- B. What causes God-guiding influences to leave his life? Trust in riches rather than God (Job 31:24-28; Psalm 62:10; Mark 10:23-25).
 - 1. While this isn't the outcome every time, it's pretty consistent that rich people turn away from full trust and devotion in God.

2. Paul didn't want people to give up their wealth, but he did want them to concentrate on using riches to accomplish good (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

III. Who Strengthened Himself In His Wickedness

- A. When transgression speaks (Psalm 36:1-4).
 1. Why do they speak this way? Because they don't fear God.
 2. They deceive themselves into thinking that God neither knows nor cares about evil in the world.
 3. They flatter themselves too much to discover and hate their sin.
- B. They rush ahead as if nothing bad will happen; not convinced that God is just and their punishment is being delayed (Ecclesiastes 8:11; Romans 12:19).
 1. Evil is their companion, even when they are in bed.
 2. They think of getting ahead, without concern for justice and righteousness.
 3. They take a firm stand (cp. 1:1) in their commitment to wrongdoing.

IV. My Responsibility Towards Enemies And Evildoers

- A. Don't be glad when he stumbles (Proverbs 24:17-18).
 1. David "lamented" over Saul and Jonathan's deaths (2 Samuel 1:11-12).
 - a) However, the nation of Edom rejoiced over Israel's defeat and was punished by God for their attitude (Obadiah 12).
 - b) What happened to the Philistines when they called for Samson the last time to play and make sport (Judges 16:25-27)?
 2. The one who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished (Proverbs 17:5). Instead of wishing evil, repay with kindness (Romans 12:20).
- B. Don't fret or be envious at his life (Proverbs 24:19-20).
 1. "Fret" means "to glow or grow warm; figurative (usually) to blaze up, of anger, zeal, jealousy; to be angry, displeased, incensed."
 2. This is where the "blessed man" passages apply (Psalm 1:1; 26:4-5; 119:115; Proverbs 13:20).

Conclusion. In concluding Psalm 52, David wrote, "But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever. I will praise You forever, Because You have done it; And in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good" (vv. 8-9).

Can you say the same about your mind and your life? Psalms contains some of the deepest, most heart-searching statements — for good reason. They direct man's heart to God, and there one can find strength and solace. How blessed it is to understand the nature of sin and what mankind looks like under its influence.