

## ASAPH'S PROVERB

TEXT: (Proverbs 24:1-2, NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Do not envy the wicked, do not desire their company; <sup>2</sup> for their hearts plot violence, and their lips talk about making trouble.

### INTRODUCTION

1. "The musicians Heman, Asaph and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals" (I Chronicles 15:19, NIV).
2. "But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (Psalm 73:2-3, NIV).

### I. WHAT THE ENVIOUS SEE

1. "They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills....  
This is what the wicked are like—always free of care, they go on amassing wealth" (Psalm 73:4-5, 12, NIV).
2. "What's going on here? Is God out to lunch? Nobody's tending the store. The wicked get by with everything; they have it made, piling up riches. I've been stupid to play by the rules; what has it gotten me? A long run of bad luck, that's what—a slap in the face every time I walk out the door" (Psalm 73:11-14, MSG).

#### A. Seeming Prosperity of the Wicked

1. "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, KJV).
2. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, KJV).

#### B. Their Hearts Plot

1. "Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed" (James 1:14, NIV).
2. "Guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23, NIV).
3. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34, KJV).
4. "Their hearts plot violence" (Proverbs 24:2, NIV).

#### C. Their Lips Talk

1. "Their lips talk about making trouble" (Proverbs 24:2, NIV).
2. "They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows" (Psalm 64:3, NIV).
3. "They shoot from ambush at the innocent; they shoot suddenly, without fear" (Psalm 64:3, NIV).
4. "Do not envy the wicked, do not desire their company" (Proverbs 24:1, NIV).

### II. A VISIT TO THE SANCTUARY

#### A. Going to God

1. "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not" (Genesis 28:16, KJV).

B. Getting an Answer

1. "In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, 'Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.' So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it drift away" (Acts 27:30-32, NIV).
2. "And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near" (Hebrews 10:25, NLT).

C. Understanding the Wicked

1. "If I'd have given in and talked like this, I would have betrayed your dear children. Still, when I tried to figure it out, all I got was a splitting headache ... Until I entered the sanctuary of God. Then I saw the whole picture: The slippery road you've put them on, with a final crash in a ditch of delusions. In the blink of an eye, disaster! A blind curve in the dark, and—nightmare! We wake up and rub our eyes.... Nothing. There's nothing to them. And there never was" (Psalm 73:15-20, MSG).

C. The Lord Never Promised You a Rose Garden

1. "Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also" (John 15:20, NIV).

III. VALUE OF TRUSTING IN GOD

A. Need to Look Beyond the Moment

1. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:24-26, KJV).

B. Need to Turn to God

1. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14, KJV).

CONCLUSION

1. "Do not envy the wicked, do not desire their company" (Proverbs 24:1, NIV)
2. "For their hearts plot violence, and their lips talk about making trouble" (Proverbs 24:2, NIV).
3. "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14, NIV).
4. "To present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5:27, NIV).