

# Psalm 37:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

## Analysis

**I have seen the wicked in great power** (רָאִיתִי רָשָׁע עַרְצִי) — Aratz means terrifying, ruthless, tyrannical. **And spreading himself like a green bay tree** (וְמִתְעַרְתָּה כְּאֶזְרָח בְּעַנְנָה) — Ezrach is a native-born tree, deeply rooted; ra'an means green, luxuriant, thriving.

David uses vivid natural imagery for the wicked's apparent success. The spreading tree suggests unchallenged growth, deep roots, vibrant health—everything seeming permanent. This creates dramatic tension: how can we trust God's justice when evil so obviously prospers? David names reality honestly, but verse 36 will reveal shocking impermanence.

## Historical Context

Ancient Israel witnessed powerful tyrants—Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar—whose empires seemed unshakeable. David himself watched Saul's royal power for years. Roman power appeared eternal in Jesus's day. Yet every earthly empire mentioned in Scripture has fallen, confirming this wisdom.

## Related Passages

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

---

1. Which contemporary prospering evildoers most challenge your faith in divine justice?
2. How does this verse validate honest questioning about why the wicked prosper temporarily?
3. What does it mean to see temporal success clearly without letting it define ultimate reality?

## Interlinear Text

---

כִּי-זֶה כִּי מִתְּפַרְּחַ הַעֲרָבָה בְּאַיִתִי  
I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading bay tree  
H7200 H7563 H6184 H6168 H249

כִּי-זֶה:

himself like a green

H7488

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Job 5:3** (Parallel theme): I have seen the foolish taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.

**Ezekiel 31:18** (Parallel theme): To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

**Esther 5:11** (Parallel theme): And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)