

Psalms 73:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

Analysis

The summary 'these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches' restates the problem: wicked people succeed materially. This observation challenged covenant theology that promised blessing for obedience. The psalmist's temptation was concluding that righteousness is futile if wickedness produces prosperity. Yet temporal wealth is fleeting (1 Timothy 6:17), while righteousness produces eternal reward (Matthew 6:19-20). The issue is time-horizon: short-term versus eternal perspective.

Historical Context

Israel's exile intensified this problem—pagan nations prospered while God's people suffered. This tested faith in God's justice and covenant faithfulness, requiring deeper understanding of eternal realities beyond temporal circumstances.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you maintain eternal perspective when ungodly people prosper materially?
2. What is the relationship between worldly success and divine favor—or lack thereof?
3. How can you measure true prosperity by spiritual rather than material standards?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּה	אֵלָּה	רְשָׁעִים	וְשֹׁלֵי יָדָם	עוֹלָם
H2009	H428	Behold these are the ungodly	who prosper	in the world
		H7563	H7961	H5769
הִשְׁגוּ	חֵילָם			
they increase	in riches			
H7685	H2428			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 52:7 (References God): Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.