



WHICH WAY WILL YOU CHOOSE? -- End of Psalm 1 study

The wicked/ungodly are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly will perish. (Psalm 1:4-6)

The wicked are not in any way like the righteous or the blessed man of verses 1-3 in the quality, character, or constitution of their lives. Because they do not follow God's Word, but have chosen a different path, God's evaluation of them is entirely

different. Everything true about the righteous man – stable as a tree, continual life and nourishment, fruitful, alive, and prosperous – is ***not so*** regarding the ***ungodly***. There is a huge difference between a tree and chaff.

They are like the chaff which the wind drives away: Chaff is the light “shell” around a kernel of grain, which must be stripped away before the kernel of grain can be ground into flour. Chaff is light enough that it can be separated from the grain by throwing a scoopful into the wind and letting the wind drive it away. Some ungodly people may look powerful on earth, but to God they are like dust that is quickly blown away.

Therefore the wicked/ungodly will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous: The idea seems to be derived from the act of standing up in court to be tried, or to receive a sentence. They will not be found among those who are acquitted and approved by the Great Judge who fully understands the character of all men and sees their hearts, over all the pretences they may make to their character, to their piety, no matter their rank or public reputation or worldly power. Man may be deceived in judging character, but God is not. What we see in this life is not God's final verdict. Today, too often, the wicked quite literally get away with murder. But God will have the final word because this life is not the final judgment. Many people who seem successful by worldly standards will be judged total failures by God. The only evaluation that counts is God's.

For the Lord “knows” the way of the righteous, the way a father “knows” his children, in a very personal, direct and intimate way. He watches over them with loving kindness, thinks of them constantly, and does whatever he can to help them. He knows everything about them, their strengths as well as their weaknesses and their imperfections, their way of life, and their deepest desires.

But the way of the wicked will perish. Here is the sobering reality for the wicked. In the end, their “way” will perish. All that they have lived for will disappear like mist in the morning sun. And they themselves will perish along with the works of their hands. Their “way” will come to a “dead end”.

The only truly happy people in the world are those who follow the prescription of Psalm 1. Others may be “happy” in a temporary or worldly sense, but they do not know the joy and deep satisfaction that comes from living with God's approval.

In these momentous days, when the world shakes beneath our feet, with wars and rumours of wars, tragedies, threats of many kinds, natural disasters, etc.... as one year fades and another year is starting, we cannot read this Psalm without asking ourselves, “What am I living for? Have I discovered the blessedness that comes from a God-centered life? Or am I living for temporal things, unstable, running the risk of being carried away by the wind?”