

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

I praise you today for your mercy and goodness. Jesus said of you, “He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt 5:45). How wonderful you are! You love the wicked in spite of their rejection of you. They presume on the riches of your kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that your kindness is meant to lead them to repentance (Rom 2:4). I bow in worship to “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth” (Exod 34:6 NASB).

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me about Zophar’s second speech to Job. Zophar was insulted and upset by Job’s words, and he expanded on his previous comments by claiming that the wicked may prosper for a short time, but God quickly destroys them (Job 20:5–7). Job sighed in frustration. His friends couldn’t see the fallacy of thinking that because sin can cause suffering, suffering therefore proves sin. Job asked: If the triumph of the wicked is short, then why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power? He then gave example after example of how the wicked are rich, powerful and long-lived. Job’s observations come close to being a preface for Ecclesiastes—the prosperous and the poor both suffer the same fate (cf. Ecc 2:14–17).

### *Reflection*

Reading Job’s speech today reminded me how easy it is to become envious of the prosperity of the wicked (Ps 73:3–12). Like Asaph, I too have wondered, “Did I keep my heart pure for nothing? Did I keep myself innocent for no reason?” (Ps 73:13 NLT).

### *Request*

Father, help me today to realize that you have set the wicked in “slippery places; you make them fall into ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!” (Ps 73:18–19). This means that although the wicked may enjoy a life of ease on this earth, they are storing up wrath for themselves on the day of wrath when your righteous judgment will be revealed, and you will render to each one according to his works (Rom 2:5–6).

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for your great love with which you loved me, that even when I was dead in sin, you made me alive in Jesus Christ (Eph 2:4–5).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn:* [\*“There’s a Great Day Coming”\*](#) by Will L. Thompson.

*Meditation Verse:* Job 21:22.