

## PSALM 37

## A SONG OF TRUST IN THE LORD

This Psalm, in its pithy conciseness, reminds us very much of the Book of Proverbs. It does not contain any prayer, nor any direct allusion to David's own circumstances of persecution or distress. Rather, it is the utterance of sound practical wisdom and Godliness from the lips of experience and age – such as we might hear from a father of a family as he sits with his wife and children gathered around him, listening to his earnest and affectionate admonitions.

This is a Psalm of consolation, which exhorts us to have patience in this world; it teaches us that we should not be angry with nor mutter against God when we perceive that things are going well with evil people, and not-so-well with the righteous. This is indeed a troublesome question, which especially plagues the minds of the weaker ones among the Lord's children. In Scripture, we even find persons like the prophet Habakkuk wrestling with this thought. For when the saints think that all things turn out prosperously and successfully for the wicked, and adversely and unsuccessfully for those who fear God; they appear, in a worldly perspective, to be unjustly dealt with indeed.

Alas! It is only too true that we do see an infinity of malice and ingratitude in the world, an extreme contempt of the Gospel of Jesus, a despising of all good learning, and a hatred of all real virtue and honesty. In our times, we have more than enough examples to illustrate this sorrowful fact. Everywhere around us, we see the powerful and the noble of this world, and also the common citizens and the peasants; and they all wish to have the liberty of doing exactly what suits their own pleasure, without a moment's reflection about the effect that it may have on anyone else. To these impious despisers of the Word of God, all things seem to turn out prosperously. They abound in riches, and they are raised to honors; and in the meantime, those who fear and love the Lord are afflicted with hunger and poverty, and they are despised and derided and destroyed. Moreover, they endure the most bitter hatred of the devil and the world – all for the

**Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:**

*The great riddle of the prosperity of the wicked and the affliction of the righteous – which has perplexed so many – is here dealt with in the light of the future, and fretfulness and repining are most impressively forbidden. This is a Psalm in which the Lord hushes most sweetly the too-common repinings of His people; He calms their minds as to His present dealings with His own chosen flock, and with the wolves by whom they are surrounded. It contains eight great precepts, it is twice illustrated by autobiographical statements, and it abounds in remarkable contrasts.*

*The Psalm can scarcely be divided into considerable sections. It resembles a chapter of the Book of Proverbs, with most of the verses being complete in themselves. It is an alphabetical Psalm; for, in somewhat broken order, the first letters of the verses follow the Hebrew alphabet. This may have been not only a poetical invention, but also a help to the memory.*

sake of their equally-hated Master and His Holy Scriptures. They can scarcely breathe under their afflictions, and they are often bound with chains and imprisoned. When we are in such trying circumstances, it is indeed very difficult to not give way to anger and indignation. Truly, it requires a wisdom beyond all that is human, and a wisdom that is entirely spiritual and Divine, to prevent us from becoming epicureans and denying the Lord under such difficulties.



As we look around us and see the world full of evildoers who flourish and live in ease, we must remember that this is no new sight; therefore, let us not marvel at the matter. We are tempted to fret at this, and to think that such persons are the only happy people; and then this leads us to the temptation to go and imitate their actions – but here we are warned against that! (verse 1) Outward prosperity is fading. When we look forward with an eye of faith, we shall see no reason at all to envy the wicked. Their weeping and wailing will come upon them at last, and it will be everlasting (verse 2). The life of true religion is a believing trust in the Lord (verse 3), with diligent care to serve Him according to His will. A person's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses, but God's children are assured that they shall be fed; and truly, in light of our naturally sinful state, this is more than we deserve! But there is more: "Delight thyself also in the Lord," says the Psalmist; "and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (verse 4). To delight in God is as much a privilege as a duty. He has not promised to gratify the lustful appetites of our natural bodies, nor the changing whims and humors of our wandering imaginations; but He does promise to fulfill the desires of the renewed, sanctified soul. And just what is the chief desire of the heart of such a person? It is to know, love, and serve God! We are also reminded here (verse 5) to commit our ways unto the Lord – that is, to roll them upon Him. What a relief it is that we may cast our burdens and cares upon Him, and roll them off ourselves! We do not need to afflict and perplex ourselves with thoughts about future events, for we may refer them all to our God. By prayer, spread your case and your cares before the Lord, and trust in Him. We must do our duty, and then leave the outcome with God. The promise is very sweet: "He shall bring it to pass" – that is, whatever we have committed to Him. And we may be satisfied with the assurance that He will make all things work for good to us. His servants possess blessings which are better than any kind of wealth which this world offers – namely, peace of mind, peace with God, and then peace in God. This is peace which the world cannot give, and which the world cannot have.

*Thank You, Lord, for guiding Your children's steps so that even though they may sometimes fall, yet they shall not be utterly cast down. We look to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, for grace so that we may not grow discouraged! Amen.*