

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XXXVII. Overcoming The Lure To Fret About Evils
(Psalm 37:1-40)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face the temptation to fret over the many wicked people in power who are committing harmful evils today:

(1) A letter by Frederick Townsend of Wolcott to the Republican-American, August 24, 2022, p. 7A, acknowledged, “I am very worried about the fate of lower income and middle-income families due to the forty-year high in inflation” with “people unable to pay their rent increases, or maintain homes” and with the “doubling of prices in popular [food] items” and “(g)asoline . . . (T)he White House, and the Connecticut government are using increased taxes . . . and spending bills that will reduce the standard of living for lower income and middle-income families.”

Christopher Rugaber’s story (“Powell: Fed’s inflation fight could bring ‘pain,’ job losses” (Ibid., August 27, 2022, p. 8B) added, “Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell” predicted “more sharp interest rate hikes” to come that “will likely cause pain for Americans” with “a weaker economy and job losses . . . and stocks tumbled in response.”

Many economists blame excess government spending as a key cause for the inflation that fuels all this trouble!

(2) Karol Markowicz’s August 14 New York Post story, “Too little, too late: Disband the CDC now” (Ibid., “Quotable”) noted, ““Cities . . . fired teachers, firefighters, health care staffers, police officers, sanitation workers and so many others” for refusing “to get vaccinated. Many . . . had worked through the early days of the pandemic – and contracted COVID many times over . . . Now the CDC acknowledges this was the wrong thing to do. Whoopsie!”

(3) A letter by Mark Godburn of Norfolk (Ibid., August 25, 2022, p. 6A) protested, “Every heat wave, blizzard, flood, and drought is held up as proof of climate Armageddon. Experts like Al Gore keep giving us point-of-no-return deadlines, and after we pass each deadline, they just give us new ones . . . We are constantly bombarded with extreme absolutist pronouncements in other areas, too,” like the “shout that ‘systemic racism’ still permeates everything, and that there’s no such thing as gender.”

(4) In an afternoon briefing before President Biden’s Thursday night speech, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre had claimed that he would “talk about uniting the people of this country who believe in equality and democracy.” (Steven Nelson, “Biden: It’s Maga-lomania!”, New York Post, September 2, 2022, p. 4-5) However, he “cast aside that pretense” to assert, “MAGA Republicans . . . embrace anger. They thrive on chaos. They live not in the light of truth, but in the shadow of lies.” (Ibid, p. 4) Hours earlier, “House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy” had complained that “Joe Biden and Big Tech colluded to silence your freedom of speech . . . on the largest communication platforms in the world,” that “his Department of Justice” labeled “concerned parents who speak at school-board meetings as domestic terrorists,” that he “unilaterally” rewrote “immigration laws” in “defying Congress and the Constitution,” that he shielded “his family and his administration from accountability of abuses of power and foreign dealings of his son for personal gain,” and that he used a “politicized Department of Justice” to launch “a raid on the home of his top political rival, Donald Trump,” what McCarthy charged were all assaults on democracy, Ibid.

John Podhoretz (“Trolling Trump – & Trumpers,” Ibid., p. 5) claims Biden’s speech was meant to inflame Trump and his people to yell back, inflaming Biden supporters to increase chances for Democratic wins in November.

Need: So, we ask, “*How can we avoid fretting over harmful evils being committed by wicked people in power?!*”

- I. **Psalm 37:1-40 is a long psalm that often repeats its directives to teach those who are being tempted to fret over the deeds of evil people how to respond productively to the problem.**
- II. **We thus summarize the psalm’s directives with their resulting divine blessings (as follows):**
 - A. If we do not fret over the harmful evils being committed by wicked people in power, God will punish such wicked parties, suddenly causing them to lose their vitality and influence, Psalm 37:1-2.
 - B. If we trust in God, if we do good, if we settle down in a stable life, if we “feed [on] faithfulness” (*re’eh ‘emunah*, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1005; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 944-945; 53), that is, live faithfully for God, if we delight ourselves in Him, God will grant us the petitions we have in our heart, v. 3-4.
 - C. If we commit our way of life over to the Lord, He will provide the direction we need in our lives and cause our righteousness and justice to become publicly realized even before our wicked foes, Psalm 37:5-6.
 - D. If we quiet ourselves and wait for God to deliver us from trouble (Psalm 37:7), in disastrous times we will not be ashamed, and in famine we will “be satisfied; have our fill” (*saba*’, Ibid., p. 959), Psalm 37:19 ESV.

E. If God then delights in our path in life, He will confirm the steps we take in that path, making us secure, Psalm 37:23. Even if we stumble in our path, we will not fall, for God will uphold us with His hand, Psalm 37:2.

Lesson: *We overcome the temptation to fret over harmful evils by wicked people in power if we commit ourselves to immerse our way of life in the Lord's interests for us, for in doing this, God will deliver and richly bless us.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we avoid the lure to fret over harmful evils by wicked people in power by immersing our thoughts and actions in the Lord's interests for us.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

Scripture guides us on **how** to “do good,” “settle down in a stable life,” “live faithfully for the Lord,” “quiet ourselves,” and “wait on God to deliver us” as Psalm 37 teaches regarding the issues in our introduction (as follows):

(1) On inflation that raises housing, food, gasoline, and tax costs, (a) we should avoid debt since the Federal Reserve is raising interest rates to bring inflation down, and rising interest rates increases certain debt costs (Proverbs 22:7). (b) We can frugally save our resources (John 6:12) and (c) stick to a budget for purchases (Luke 14:28-30). (d) As interest rate hikes weaken the economy and lead to more job losses and stock market drops, (e) we can make ourselves more essential to our employers by increasing our job training (Proverbs 1:5; 3:13-16). Also, (f) if we can do our work as independently as we can, we enhance our job security and profit (1 Thessalonians 4:11b, 12b). Finally, (g) the current down market in stocks amid inflation is a great opportunity for investing in stocks, stock mutual funds and ETFs **if** we have the money to do so, for (i) stocks will likely not be this cheap again. (ii) Also, stocks are a proven hedge against inflation for the long-term. (Ecclesiastes 11:1 with Liz Weston, “How to win the long game against inflation,” Sunday Republican, “Nerdwallet” column, August 14, 2022, p. 1C. Liz Weston claimed that according to Michelle Gessner, a certified financial planner in Houston, stocks in the long-term beat investing in gold, commodities, and real estate [due to practical hassles in owning local real estate, unless one invests in real estate investment trusts through mutual funds or exchange-traded funds].)

(2) As for the incompetence of the Centers for Disease Control regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, (a) we should care for our health as independently as we can from government agencies and the health industry (1 Timothy 5:23 with 1 Thessalonians 4:11b, 12b). (b) Preventative measures for maintaining good health in **God's** view include (i) revering the Lord (Proverbs 3:7-8), (ii) heeding the words of the wise (Proverbs 12:18), (iii) exposing our minds to those who use pleasant words (Proverbs 16:24), (iv) and heeding Scripture's words. (Proverbs 4:20-22)

(3) On our exposure to alarmists who often warn of crises to manipulate us, Proverbs 3:21-26 claims that ***if we heed God's Word***, we need not fear sudden fears, for God will be our Confidence and will keep our feet from being caught in a snare (*leked*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 1158; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 480) by such foes.

In specific application, (a) on climate change alarmism, Genesis 8:22 foretold that the earth would face both hot and cold, what it has occurred for thousands of years, but that man will **always** have a **moderate enough** climate for sowing and harvesting crops for his livelihood until the earth passes away after all people on the earth are removed from it 1,007 years after we in the Church are raptured. (Revelation 4:1-20:11) (b) As for “systemic racism” **allegedly still** permeating society, Daniel 2:43 foretold that in our era as in the Revived Roman Empire of the Great Tribulation, people groups will not stick together like clay and iron do not stick together. Such a condition is being **created** and **promoted TODAY** by **Marxists** who **try** to **divide** people into different groups so as to **pit** them against one another to **upset** the **social order** for a **Marxist takeover!** (FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in his testimony on February 16, 1967, before the House Appropriations Committee, p. 619 as cited by Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 178-179) So, even after the rapture in the Revived Roman Empire, Marxists **still** will **not** have gained the control they seek, for that empire will **still** be **divided** in its people groups due to an apparent “push back” against Marxism. Thus, the alleged “systemic racism” permeating society is a **false Marxist narrative promoted to keep people groups divided!** (c) On the “no such thing as gender” claim, Genesis 1-2 reveals that God made a male man and a female woman of one flesh and told them to be fruitful and multiply. Marriage is thus an **actual, known** union of an adult-male-at-birth-man and an adult-female-at-birth-woman in a heterosexual, monogamous, permanent union!

(4) With regard to President Biden's Thursday speech that David Harsanyi termed “a smear of 70 million people” (Ibid., Nelson, p. 4), 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 urges us to make it our ambition to live a quiet life, to mind our own affairs so as to live rightly before the world, not needlessly provoking powerful entities in a troubled world.

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we avoid fretting over the evil by wicked people in power by heeding Psalm 37:1-40.