

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith**

#### **XXXVII. Handling The Frustration Of Seeing The Wicked Prosper, Psalm 37:1-40**

##### **A. Part One, Psalm 37:1-20**

###### **I. Introduction**

- A. The wicked often greatly prosper or succeed in life, and that can tempt believers to become frustrated and fret.
- B. However, fretting over the matter only afflicts him who frets, and Psalm 37 shows how to handle the problem:

###### **II. Handling The Frustration Of Seeing The Wicked Prosper, Part One, Psalm 37:1-20.**

- A. The introductory remarks in the English Bible comprise part of verse one of the Hebrew text, (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1005), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible for clarification with this lesson.
- B. We translate the first half of Psalm 37 -- Psalm 37:1-20 -- as follows:
  - 1. "Fret not yourself because of evil men; do not envy those who do acts against what is right," Psa. 37:1.
  - 2. "For like the grass they will soon wither; and like spring green grass shoots they will soon die away," v. 2.
  - 3. "Trust in Jahweh and practice what is good; settle down in the land and feed on His faithfulness," v. 3.
  - 4. "Delight yourself in Jahweh and He will give you the petitions of your heart," Psalm 37:4.
  - 5. "Commit to Jahweh your way and trust on Him and it is He (em. pron.) Who will do [them]," Psalm 37:5.
  - 6. "And He will cause your righteousness to shine like the dawn, and the justice of your cause as the noonday sun," Psalm 37:6.
  - 7. "Be still before Jahweh, and wait longingly for Him; fret not yourself when a man prospers in his way, when a nobleman practices wicked devices," Psalm 37:7.
  - 8. "Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; fret not yourself -- it leads only to evil," Psalm 37:8.
  - 9. "For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in Jahweh, they who will possess the land!" (Psa. 37:9)
  - 10. "And a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look carefully for his place, they will not be found," Psalm 37:10.
  - 11. "But the afflicted who thus look to God for fulfillment will inherit the land, and take exquisite delight in great peace," Psalm 37:11.
  - 12. "The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them," Psalm 37:12.
  - 13. "Adonai laughs at them, because He sees that their day is coming," Psalm 37:13.
  - 14. "The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the afflicted and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright," Psalm 37:14.
  - 15. "Their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken," Psalm 37:15.
  - 16. "Better is a little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked," Psalm 37:16.
  - 17. "Because the strength of the wicked will be broken, but Jahweh upholds the righteous," Psalm 37:17.
  - 18. "The days of the blameless are known of Jahweh, and their inheritance will exist forever," Psalm 37:18.
  - 19. "In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will be satisfied with plenty," Psa. 37:19.
  - 20. "For the wicked will perish: the enemies of Jahweh will be like the beauty of the fields; they will vanish -- vanish like smoke," Psalm 37:20.
- C. The following observations clarify how believers should handle the frustration of seeing the wicked prosper:
  - 1. We should not fret over the prosperity of the wicked, for it only leads us to do evil, Psalm 37:1, 7-8.
  - 2. We avoid fretting in considering that the prosperity of the wicked is transitory, Psalm 37:2, 9-10.
  - 3. We avoid fretting by focusing on delighting in the Lord and committing our way of life unto Him that He might meet our needs and vindicate our righteousness before the oppressive ungodly, Psalm 37:4-6, 11.
  - 4. We avoid fretting in realizing that a little material good of the righteous is more wholesome than the great wealth of many wicked people who prosper, all due to the eventual destiny contrasts involved, v. 16-18.
  - 5. We avoid fretting in realizing God preserves the upright in disasters though the wicked perish, v. 19-20.

***Lesson:*** *We must not fret if the wicked prosper, but trust God in time to judge sin and bless the upright. We achieve this by (1) realizing that fretting only leads us to evil that God must judge, by (2) recalling that the wealth of the wicked is temporary, by (3) delighting in God and committing our way of life to Him to meet our needs and vindicate our cause, by (4) realizing that fewer material goods in righteousness are secure where much wealth gained in wickedness is not and by (5) realizing that God preserves the upright in disasters while the wicked perish.*

***Application:*** *May we heed David's directives to overcome fretting over the prosperity of the wicked.*