

# OVERCOMING INJUSTICE

Psalm 37: 1-9

**INTRO:** Please turn with me to Psalm 37. I can't speak for you of course, but when I'm sad or depressed, when I'm hurting inside, and feel alone or scared, nothing seems to touch my heart more than a good song. There's just something about music that God uses to reach into a person's soul. And so, we have the book of Psalms. This Hebrew Hymnal. A collection of songs that speak to the truth of most every situation you and I will face in our lives. Psalm 37 was written by King David when he was an old man. In this Psalm, David addresses a question that has plagued the people of God since the dawn of time. That question is: Why do the wicked seem to prosper while the righteous suffer?

To bring this thought into our current situation, we could rightly ask, "Why do the wicked get by with their continued evil ways, while those seeking good, and the good of others, are demeaned, persecuted and slandered?"

That seems to be where we are today. We have two extremes on the right and left that are living in the limelight of influence, as they scream vile hatred at one another over the heads of the rest of us. The vast majority of people aren't represented by either of these extremes. Most people, the majority of people, live somewhere on the broad spectrum between the two extremes. Most people care about one another and want to do the right thing to help their neighbor and society. But our voices can't be heard above those screaming profanities. The extremes seems to be those receiving all the press, seem to be the ones influencing policy. And if any of us on the spectrum between these two sides, dare to speak as to our belief, we are mocked and ridiculed, belittled and attacked.

**Why do the wicked seem to prosper while the righteous suffer?**

In this corrupt and sinful world, in which we live, it is true, that the wicked often prosper while the godly suffer. We do well to remember, that for the child of God, our earthly existence is as close to Hell as we will ever get. For the wicked, however, their few days of pleasure will be short lived. Their future, will be one lived in separation from God. In fact, this world is as close to Heaven as they will ever be!

Since we are told not to fret when we see the wicked prosper and get their way, how then are we supposed to deal with the problems associated with cohabitating with those who are evil? Well, in this 37th Psalm, David offers us some good and godly counsel. There are some guidelines offered here, that if followed, will enable us to find peace of mind, even during the most trying times of our lives. Let's read the WORD of GOD together...

**Psalm 37: 1-9** *"Do not fret over those who do evil; do not envy those who do wrong. 2 For they wither quickly like grass and wilt like tender plants. 3 Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will do it. 6 He will bring forth your righteousness like the dawn, your justice like the noon-day sun. 7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when men prosper in their ways, when they carry out wicked schemes. 8 Refrain from anger and abandon wrath; do not fret—it can only bring harm. 9 For the evildoers will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land."* NOTICE...

**I) CONFRONT YOUR WORRIES:** vv 1-3 The emphasis of these verses is for the believer to FOCUS on living a life that is pleasing to the Lord. And NOT to concern themselves with the injustice or evil that is prevailing around them. When this is accomplished, the result will be the Lord's smile upon that life.

## I) CONFRONT YOUR WORRIES: vv 1-3 Let's look at what it says, Notice...

### A. The Command: God declares a fourfold command for us to live by.

1. Fret Not: v 1a *"Do not fret over those who do evil;"* Fret comes from a Hebrew word that means "intense Heat". It's that feeling that wells up inside you when you, or someone you love, has been mistreated. The phrase, "that just burns me up!", gives us a good sense of what is meant here.

We are not supposed to let the evil around us take our emotions to a place of anger and outrage, to the point, we find no rest, or we act out in those emotions. And this is a command! And when we break God's commands we sin.

2. Envy Not: v 1b *"do not envy those who do wrong."* Envy here, is the Hebrew word "qana". It has two meanings. The first is "to envy, or to be jealous, and specifically, to the point of anger". The second meaning is to "provoke to jealousy, or anger". And since this command is in the negative, we are told to NOT provoke the wicked ones in this world. Oh my what a lesson if we could learn it. That is why it's condemned by scripture, and useless, to get caught up in the screaming matches that take place by feuding sides.

Then in verse 2 God gives understanding to His command... v 2 *"For they wither quickly like grass and wilt like tender plants."* God is saying, I've got this.

3. Trust God: v 3a *"Trust in the LORD..."* That is, walk by faith and not by sight. We must remember that things are never as they appear to our human vision. Even when it looks like things are going totally wrong, God is still working out His eternal purposes in us, Romans. 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."* Therefore, we must learn to trust the Lord in all of life!

There are times when God's way is difficult to figure out. During those times, when you cannot trace God's hand in a given situation, learn to trust God's heart. Remember what Romans 1:17 tells us, *"The just shall live by faith."* Hebrews 11:6 states, *"without faith it is impossible to please God."*

4. Do Good: v 3b *"Trust in the LORD and do good;..."* this is a command to holy living! God expects His people to live a life that is honoring to His name! If God's people could ever learn that God is pleased when we live for Him, we would see Him bless us in great ways. The formula for success in the Christian life is found in Matthew 6:33 *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."* It is as simple as trusting in the Lord and living for Him!

**B. The Comfort: v 3c** *"Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness."* When we do God's will, There is a growth in our relationship with Him. As our relationship betters, our faith grows. And as a direct result of our faithfulness, God comforts us and cares for us. How well David knew this! He was an old man who had seen the Lord allow him to sit on his enemies thrones. He knew that serving God always paid off!

## **I) CONFRONT YOUR WORRIES:** vv 1-3

**II) CONDITION YOUR WILL:** v 4 *"Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart."* "Delight" yourself in the Lord! This word means to "take exquisite delight in, to make merry over".

When life goes bad, we tend to focus on the problems that arise around us. When this happens, we become defeated and depressed and fall into sorrow. However, at all times of life, we are challenged to let the Lord be the focus of our attention! If we can focus on Who He is to us, what He has done for us, where He is taking us, and how much He loves us, even the darkest times of our lives can be endured, because we know something better awaits us down the road!

When we are lost in Him, then our will and our desires will be lost in Him as well. When this happens, He will lift us out of our sadness and fill us with His glory! But this victory only comes as we condition our wills to conform to His. And if we do, the latter portion of this verse is a promise we can claim! When the Lord is our delight, we will only want the things which bring Him glory and which please Him. When we arrive at that place, God will open the windows of Heaven and give us every desire of our hearts!

**III) COMMIT YOUR WAY:** vv 5-7 *"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, and He will do it. 6 He will bring forth your righteousness like the dawn, your justice like the noonday sun. 7 Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when men prosper in their ways, when they carry out wicked schemes."* "Commit" your way unto the Lord. This word means to "roll onto". The idea here is that we are "roll" the burdens of life over onto the Lord. The Lord never asked His children to carry burdens too heavy for them. He tells us to bring them to Him, **Matthew 11:28** *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

v 7 To commit our lives to God, means to wait patiently for Him to act on our behalf. If we can't manage to WAIT on Him, we never really committed our lives to Him.

Then He says again, "do not fret over the wicked". Don't get all ablaze, or heated up over what's not in your control. Our duty during the difficult days of life is to be patient and silent while the Lord works out His purposes in our lives. **ARE YOU COMMITTED?**

**IV) CONTROL YOUR WRATH:** vv 8-9 *"Refrain from anger and abandon wrath; do not fret—it can only bring harm. 9 For the evildoers will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land."*

**CONCLUSION:** All of this sounds difficult. If you misinterpret these verses, It may sound like, we are to just lay back and allow life to happen and deal with the consequences. However, the truth is, that the commands in these verse are a call to action! Trust, Delight, Commit, Wait, Cease! God is calling us to take control of ourselves as we yield to Him. He is calling us to be involved in the process! You see, I may not can control what happens in my life, but I can control how I respond to what happens! I am the master of what I do in these areas of life. Let us determine that we will faithfully carry out the Lord's commands for us as we make our way through this world.