

How to Be Content When the Wicked Prosper

Psalm 37 (Page 407 in the BPB)

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Introduction:

A Psalm of David

Verse 25: “I have been young now I am old...”

Psalm 37 is an alphabetic acrostic psalm. Roughly each of its stanzas of double verses begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The Setting: The Prosperity of the Wicked

The word “wicked” is used 13 times in Psalm 37.

Other words used to describe the wicked are, evildoers, wrongdoers, enemies of the LORD, violent, and transgressors.

The Temptation for God’s People:

To fret - vv. 1, 7, 8; to envy – v. 1; to be angry – v. 8

See also Psalm 73

What should we do when we are tempted to envy the wicked?

1. **Do not fret** because of evil doers

Be not envious toward wrongdoers.

Proverbs 23:17-18; 24:1, **19**

Reason

2. For they will wither quickly like grass

And fade like the green herb.

Isaiah 40:6-8

James 1:9-11

1 Peter 1:23-25

Verses 9a & 10

9a. For evildoers will be cut off,

10. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more;

And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be there.

How can God's people successfully fight the temptations of envy and anger when we see the wicked prospering in their ways?

3. Trust in the LORD and do good.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Do good

Ephesians 2:8-10; Matthew 5:14-16

Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

4. Delight yourself in the LORD;

And He will give you the desires of your heart.

Matthew 6:33; John 15:7, 16

5. Commit your way to the LORD,

1 Peter 5:6-7

Trust also in Him, and He will do it.

6. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light

And your judgment as the noon day.

7. Rest/Be still in the LORD and wait patiently for Him;

Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,

Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

8. Cease from anger and forsake wrath;

James 1:19-20

Do not fret; it leads only to evil doing.

9. For evildoers will be cut off,

But those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land.

10. Yet a little while and the wicked man will be no more;

And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be there.

11. But the **humble/meek/gentle** will inherit the land

Matthew 5:5

And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity/peace.

Exhortation:

Don't let your heart give into the temptation to desire what the wicked have and to do what they do. Instead, like the wise person described in God's word, take the long view and train your heart to trust in and delight in the LORD so you will not fall victim to the lies of the devil and stray from the LORD.