

## 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**

##### **B. Part Two, Psalm 37:21-40**

### **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 37:21-40.**

- 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 second half of Psalm 37 -- Psalm 37:21-40 -- as follows:
  - 1. "The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously," Psalm 37:21.
  - 2. "Because those He [Jahweh, v. 20] blesses will inherit the land, but those He curses will be cut off," v. 22.
  - 3. "[If] Jahweh delights in the course of life of a 'male-at-the-height-of-his-powers' (*geber*, Ibid., p. 1006; H. A. W., Theol. Wrkbk. of the O. T., 1980, vol. I, p. 148-149), He establishes his steps," Psalm 37:23.
  - 4. "Because if he stumbles, he will not fall, for Jahweh upholds him with His hand," Psalm 37:24.
  - 5. "I was young, and now am old, but I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread," Psalm 37:25.
  - 6. "All day long they are generous and freely lend; their children will be blessed," Psalm 37:26.
  - 7. "Turn from evil and practice what is wholesome, and so you will settle down in the land forever," v. 27.
  - 8. "For Jahweh loves the just and will not forsake His godly ones; they will be preserved forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off," Psalm 37:28.
  - 9. "The righteous will inherit the earth, and settle down in it forever," Psalm 37:29.
  - 10. "The mouth of the righteous man utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks words of justice," Psalm 37:30.
  - 11. "The law of his Elohim is in his heart; his feet do not slip," Psalm 37:31.
  - 12. "The wicked lie in wait for the righteous, seeking their very lives," Psalm 37:32.
  - 13. "But Jahweh will not abandon them to his hand, or let them be condemned when brought to trial," v. 33.
  - 14. "Wait for Jahweh, and keep, do (*shamar*, Ibid., Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 1036f) His way, and He will exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see it," Psa. 37:34.
  - 15. "I have seen a wicked, ruthless man flourishing like a green tree;" Psalm 37:35.
  - 16. "But he passed on, and, behold, he did not exist! Though I sought for him I could not find him," Ps. 37:36.
  - 17. "Consider the blameless; observe the upright, because there is a future to the nobleman of peace!" v. 37.
  - 18. "But sinners will be all together annihilated; the future for the wicked will be cut off," Psalm 37:38.
  - 19. "The salvation of the righteous is from Jahweh; He is their Stronghold in time of narrow straits, distress (*sarah*, Ibid., p. 865)," Psalm 37:39.
  - 20. "Jahweh helps them and delivers them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them because they seek refuge in Him," Psalm 37:40.
- C. The following observations clarify how believers should handle the frustration of seeing the wicked prosper:
  - 1. There is a sharp contrast in lifestyles between (a) being upright and having enough money to give to others in need versus (b) living in sin and always borrowing and not repaying, v. 21-22, 26-28. Thus, heeding God relieves one of a lot of unwanted hardship and provides more stability in the realm of finances.
  - 2. Verses 23-26 especially apply to male heads of households whose livelihoods are at risk due to injustices they suffer, so heads of households must rely on God for livelihood security and blessings in family life.
  - 3. Placing Scripture in one's heart affects his words (v. 27-28, 30-31, 34) and brings God's reward of security in times of facing distress that are caused by the wicked. We must thus immerse our minds in Scripture.
  - 4. God in time will deliver the upright from the dangerous deeds of their wicked foes as they look to the Lord as their Stronghold in times of narrow straits and distress caused by the wicked (v. 34, 39-40).

***Lesson:*** (1) We must not fret if the wicked prosper, but trust God in time to judge them and vindicate us of charges of wrong. While waiting for God to act in our behalf, (2) may we obey Him, (3) rely on Him, (4) immerse our minds in His Word (5) and trust in God as our Stronghold from what dangerously wicked parties we face.

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