

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Thirty-Seven: God's Workshop On Avoiding Becoming Vexed By The Ungodly (Psalm 37:1-40)

I. Introduction

- A. Ephesians 4:26-27 provides a valuable warning to the upright: godly believers should not get so upset at the sinful deeds of the wicked that they become vexed and harbor that anger, Ep. 4:26. If they do, then that very harboring of anger is itself sin, and the Devil controls that angry believer by his vexation, 4:27!
- B. The question one may then ask is this: "**How** can I avoid harboring my anger when the **injustice** is so **great**, and the ungodly seems to go on **unchecked** or even seemingly **advancing** in sin?!"
- C. Psalm Thirty-Seven is a **workshop** in avoiding becoming vexed by the Acts of the ungodly:

II. God's Workshop On Avoiding Becoming Vexed By The Ungodly, Psalm 37:1-40.

- A. Psalm Thirty-Seven is an alphabetic acrostic psalm where each Hebrew letter of the alphabet begins a new segment in the psalm. This was a mnemonic device to aid in recalling information much like the idea expressed in the title "The ABC's of (something)" works for us.
- B. As such, we approach this psalm as an instructive **workshop** for those emotionally caught up in their anger at the unchecked wickedness of the ungodly (as follows):
 1. **Focus One** - The wicked has his day in the sun only briefly before being brought down where the godly may start off weak and oppressed, but always end up settled in blessing, Psalm 37:34,35-37. Thus, learn to **wait** on the Lord to reverse the current situation instead of getting **vexed**, Ps 37:1-3.
 2. **Focus Two** - The emotional end of the wicked is destructive where that of the upright is peace and joy, Ps. 37:4-6,11 versus 12-13. Thus, learn to **wait expectantly** for **God's deliverance** lest your current vexation leads **YOU** into sin and judgment, cf. Ps. 37:7-8.
 3. **Focus Three** - There is a comprehensive contrast in **material** blessing for the godly and for the ungodly, making it worthwhile waiting for the Lord to handle the wicked as follows:
 - a. The ungodly see their hopes dashed where the upright find God supplying their desires as they take what they want to God in faith for supply, Ps. 37:38 versus 37:4-5.
 - b. The ungodly face an insecure future (37:35-36) where the godly face sure blessing, 37:37.
 - c. The children of the ungodly always suffer for their ungodliness (37:28b) where the offspring of the godly are supplied goods by God, Ps. 37:25-26.
 - d. The ways of the ungodly are insecure (37:22b) where the troubles of a righteous man are only temporary, to be overcome by his God, Ps. 37:23-24.
 - e. Where the ungodly are vulnerable to defeat by enemies (Ps. 37:35-36), the godly have God as their defense against ruthless opponents, Ps. 37:32-33.
 4. **Focus Four** - God uses the evil plans and efforts of the ungodly to backfire to their own harm, Ps. 37:14-15. Thus, one is better off remaining righteous lest his vengeance for evil, which is evil, backfires and hurts himself!
 5. **Focus Five** - God is the variable that makes the difference between the failure and successes of the ungodly and godly respectively, v. 20 with v. 22-23; 37:39-40. Since God is **greater than the ungodly** (Ps. 37:17), one is better off remaining upright with a few blessings than going for great blessings in a wicked way and getting disciplined by the Lord in the end, Ps. 37:16!

Lesson: *When facing the ungodly, and tending to get vexed by him, God wants us to recall some facts that keep us in control of our anger: (1) Though the wicked may have their day in the sun now, in the end, they have no hope and God will give the godly a future of blessing; (2) the emotional end of the godless is wretched where the godly enjoy peace and joy in the end, making staying righteous in the current "down" time very valuable; (3) in the end, one is materially far better off being upright than being godless though the godless may seem to be very well off for NOW; (4) God makes the evil machinations of the ungodly against the righteous backfire to hurt themselves, so one is better off not taking vengeance or he will suffer trouble from the exercise himself! (5) God is greater than the wicked, so, stick with God's way to be blessed in the situation (1 Jn. 4:4)!*