

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 45 Psalm 37

by Keith Simons

The sermon teaches that trusting in the Lord and doing good will lead to a life of peace and prosperity, while the wicked will be cut off and punished.

Duration: 35:20

Scripture: Psalm 37:1-4, Psalm 37:7, Psalm 37:9, Psalm 37:11, Psalm 37:16, Psalm 37:23-26, Psalm 37:28, Psalm 37:39-40

Topics: "KJV Bible", "Trust in God", "Righteousness vs. Wickedness"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 37, emphasizing David's reflections on the fate of the righteous versus the wicked. He encourages believers not to fret over evildoers, as their prosperity is temporary and will ultimately lead to their downfall. Instead, he urges trust in the Lord, highlighting that God will provide for the righteous and uphold them through trials. Simons reassures that the meek will inherit the earth and that God's judgment will prevail, ensuring justice for His people. He concludes with a reminder of God's faithfulness, stating he has never seen the righteous forsaken.

Transcript

Welcome. David wrote in Psalm 37, I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. So today's subject is Psalm 37.

My name is Keith Symons. I'm a Bible teacher from England and Psalm 37 begins with a simple heading, A Psalm of David, to show us that David was the author of it. And as we've just seen from the verses I've just read, this seems to have been written by David in his old age.

This is what he learnt by experience. Verse 1, Threat not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. So this first word, threat, in English today that means to worry, don't worry because of evildoers.

But the Hebrew meaning is don't be hot with anger against them. Don't allow your anger to be so disturbed that you can't control it. And that second part, neither be envious, well that means really like James and John in the Gospels when they got so zealous, so stirred up against people who refused to accept Jesus that they proposed to call down fire from heaven to come and to kill them.

So the evildoers are of course the same as the workers of iniquity. Iniquity means evil deeds. So the verse as a whole means do not be hot with anger against evildoers.

Do not be so zealous, so excited that you want to call down fire from heaven against those who work iniquity, those sinners. Well why shouldn't you be so angry as that? Why shouldn't you be so disturbed by what they are doing that you want to act in anger against them? David replies in verse 2, because of God's judgment against them. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb.

Oh yes, the grass seems to grow well in the field, it does grow well, it grows luxuriously and prosperously just as those evil people look to have such great prosperity and such great success. But their success will end in a moment as the grass is cut down and just withers and dies. That's what's going to happen to them when God's judgment is against them.

So David advises and warns in verse 3, what should you do? You should trust in the Lord and do good, do what's right. Don't be stirred up in anger, don't allow their evil deeds to cause you to do evil deeds, because when you trust in the Lord, when you serve him loyally, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed. Dwell in the land.

Of course for David in Israel he was referring to the promised land, the land that God had promised his people, the Jews or Israel. And he was saying, you will know security and safety, you'll dwell there and verily thou shalt be fed like a sheep. We feed sheep, in other words we take them to good pasture, that's the meaning of the Hebrew word here.

God will provide for you. You're not dependent on those evil people, they may take your possessions from you, they may take your land from you, they may deprive you of all sorts of things, but you can trust God. God will feed you, God will look after you.

So, verse 4, you should delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Someone says, but that's wrong, isn't it? Because I have all sorts of wrong desires in my heart and surely God isn't going to give me those. No, of course, if you've got wrong desires you won't get those.

This promise is for the person who delights themselves in the Lord. In other words, they want what God wants. Their will is as God's will and God is giving them the desires of their heart because the true desires of their heart are to want what God wants.

Verse 5, commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass. Thy way, your way, your pathway through life, your journey through life, what happens in your life, trust God about that and God will bring about what he wants from your life. Verse 6 suggests to us what these evil people are doing.

They're accusing God's people, they're stirring up trouble for them, maybe they're even making judgments in a court of law against them, but God is looking after his people and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as light and thy judgment as a noon day. We talk in English about truth coming to light. God is going to bring your righteousness, your right relationship with him clear to everyone.

He's going to uphold your cause, he's going to look after you, he's going to bring justice for you, that's what judgment means, he's going to bring justice for you and as sure as day follows night. So this present time of darkness in the land, this present time when evil people have so much power will come to an end and it doesn't depend on you, it doesn't depend on your efforts, your struggle to try and prove yourself right, your angry words, no. Verse 7, rest in the Lord.

The Hebrew is even more emphatic than that, it means be silent in the Lord, don't try to achieve the defeat of evil by your own efforts, put your trust in God, live for God, serve God and wait patiently for him, wait for him to act on your behalf because at the proper time you will do so. Threaten not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Wicked devices means evil plans, prospereth means doing well, making himself successful.

This sort of person shouldn't cause you to fret or to become angry because you're trusting God. So instead, verse 8, cease from anger and forsake wrath, wrath is another word for anger. Threat not thyself in any wise to do evil, don't allow these evil people with their evil schemes to cause you to think in an evil way, even to think in an evil way against them, no you're waiting for God to act.

Verse 9, for evil doers shall be cut off but those that wait upon the Lord they shall inherit the earth. It's the same word for earth as it is for land earlier on, this is the promised land but of course for God's people everywhere the promise is they shall inherit the earth, God's possession for them is the earth, God is giving it all to them to live in that they may serve him there. This evil time will certainly come to an end and it will come to an end sooner than you expect it perhaps.

Verse 10, for yet a little while, not a long time, a short time and the wicked shall not be, thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be. Oh the wicked person made himself a prosperous house, he acquired lots of farmland through theft and through robbery and through his evil deeds. He looks so wealthy and so luxurious and so secure in his place and in the land but when God's judgment comes there will be no place for wicked people in the land that God has given his people.

But, verse 11, the meek, God's humble people, maybe God's poor people, those who have been so deprived and so mistreated by evil people, well God has a promise to them, the meek shall inherit the earth, that's words that Jesus repeated of course in the Sermon on the Mount and they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace at the time when God's King, God's Messiah rules all things, then God's people shall have their place in his world, the world that Messiah rules. They'll have their proper place in there and they'll have peace and prosperity and success, not like the prosperity of evil men, not a prosperity gained by robbery and injustice and evil but a prosperity because God's Messiah is ruling and ruling rightly. On to verse 12 and we're now going to learn a little about these wicked people.

Verse 12, the wicked plotteth against the just and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. To plot is to make evil schemes, evil plans. These wicked people are making evil schemes against the just, against those people who serve God and live in the right way.

And what's this evil scheme? Well, it's to take advantage of those people, just as the most fierce wild animals attack an innocent little animal and pull them apart or gnash on them with their teeth. Wicked people are constantly trying to destroy and attack God's people and take their possessions for themselves. But verse 13 declares what's going to happen.

The Lord shall laugh at him, at the wicked person, for he seeth that his day is coming. To laugh means to mock. The day that is coming is God's day, the day when King Messiah rules, the day when King Messiah is the judge of all people.

And in that day, the wicked person, for his proud schemes, will see the failure of them all. Verse 14, the wicked have drawn out the sword and have bent their bow to cast down the poor and needy and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Oh, so this is now the language of war.

The wicked have a sword, a sharp knife. They have a bow. And what is more, they've got these things ready.

They've drawn out the sword, they've taken it out of its protective holder. They've bent the bow. They're about to shoot and to kill, to cast down or to throw to the ground or to defeat or to kill God's people who are here called the poor and needy.

And they're also called those who are of upright conversation. Conversation today means speech. But in the time of the King James Bible, it meant how you live your life.

Those of upright conversation are those who live their lives in an upright and proper way. God's going to make a judgment against those wicked people. Verse 15, their sword shall enter into their own heart and their bows shall be broken.

This evil scheme is certain of defeat because God is against it. Indeed, God turns it against the wicked people themselves. But someone says, we've said that God's people might be the poor and needy.

Verse 14. And how can the poor and needy inherit the earth? How can they receive all these good things that God has for them? They have so little. Oh, but you're looking at it in the wrong way.

Verse 16. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. Many wicked people may boast of their wealth.

It's worth nothing. And although the righteous person, God's person, has so little in this life, God makes it better than all that wealth. Verse 17.

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken. If your arms are broken, you lose the power to lift things. You lose the power to hold things.

You lose the power to carry things. The wicked will lose all their power. They will lose all their wealth.

They will lose all the things that they consider precious. But the Lord upholdeth the righteous. He's looking after, his faithful people.

Verse 18. The Lord knoweth the days of the upright and their inheritance shall be forever. Yes, God knows them.

He knows every day that they live and he is preparing for them a permanent place, a permanent reward, a permanent inheritance. So although they suffer now, verse 19, they shall not be ashamed in the evil time. And in the days of famine, they shall be satisfied.

Famine is the time when you don't have enough food. But they will have enough because God will provide for them even during the evil time, even during the time of suffering. Verse 20.

But the wicked shall perish and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs. They shall consume into smoke, shall they consume away. So here we've got again God's judgment against these wicked people repeated over and over.

This time the word picture is of the fat, the valuable part of a lamb. The part that burns so easily, it burns into smoke. But that's not the end of its destruction because then the smoke is scattered by the wind until

no one can see any part of the smoke.

So the wealth and the success and the prosperity of which these evil men boasted turns to nothing and they are turned over to their proper punishment and to the judgment of God. Let's start to learn then about good people. Verses 21 and 22.

The wicked borroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous showeth mercy and giveth for such as be blessed of him that's of God shall inherit the earth and they that be cursed of him of God shall be cut off. Yes the righteous person is so different from the wicked person. When the wicked person borrows he never returns it, he never never pays back.

But the righteous can be so generous and so kind-hearted as to give and not expect it back. They're receiving a reward, the reward of God's blessing, of God's kindness upon them. That reward of course the promised land, they shall inherit the earth.

But those who God's judgment is against, the wicked, they are cursed, God's judgment against them and they shall be cut off. They will be separated from God's people, separated from the holy land, separated from the place that God has promised his people. Verse 23.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way, though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. Yes the Lord is upholding his people, that means what it sounds like, he's holding them up, he's holding them, God is holding them with his hand and so their steps in life are ordered or established by God and God delights in the way they're living. God approves of them and though they run into troubles and though they run into difficulties, sometimes through the fault of evil people, sometimes by their own mistakes, it doesn't destroy them, it doesn't ruin them because God is holding them up, God is looking after them.

How much we say is God looking after his people? David replies with that testimony. Verse 25. I have been young and now I'm old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

God's people are not forsaken, God never turns away from them. To be forsaken means to be left alone but God's people always have God with them. The seed of the righteous means, well probably it means the children of the righteous but in the bible it's got the specific meaning of those who are following the same way as their parents and sometimes you have this phrase seed used of those who are not parents and children, the future righteous people.

David says he's never seen them begging bread. Yes perhaps they've been poor and needy but they haven't been so destitute as to need to beg, so poor as to need to beg because God has provided for them. They are righteous, they are God's people.

When they've been short of things, when they've been in need, they've looked to him, they've trusted him and in David's experience God always provided for them. In fact he provided for them much more than for them to be very poor because verse 26, he, that's the righteous person, God's person, is ever merciful and lendeth and his seed is blessed. In other words God provided that even though that righteous man was poor yet he had enough that he could share what he had with others and it's part of being one of God's people that God often gives us the opportunity to share what we have with others.

His seed is blessed. Those who follow in the future, the righteous way, the good way, God's way, God's kindness is to them. So David can now give advice in verse 27, depart from evil and do good and dwell

forevermore, verse 28, for the Lord loveth judgment and forsaketh not his saints.

They are preserved forever but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. God doesn't turn away from his saints, his holy people he now calls God's people. He loves those who care about judgment, who care about what's right.

So you shouldn't be with the seed of the wicked. You shouldn't be with those who follow wicked ways and are separated from the place that God has for his people. No, you should be among those who dwell forevermore, who know God's everlasting life and who are they? The ones who depart from evil, who separate themselves from evil.

They don't, they live amongst evil people. The world around them is full of evil people. They cannot escape from evil people but they depart from evil.

They choose not to do evil in their own lives. They choose to do what is good. Verse 29, the righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever and verse 30, the mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom and his tongue talketh of judgment.

The law of God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide. Now we're starting to understand this righteous man. Where does he receive his wisdom? Where does he learn of judgment, of justice? It's in God's law and God's law for him is the Bible of course but it's not just a book that he puts away.

No, he's learnt it. He's placed it in his heart. That is what he lives by.

That is how he lives. That is why none of his steps, none of the things he's doing in life shall slide. In other words, not like someone who's walking along and slips and falls.

No, he stands firm because he knows what God's law is. He knows what God's taught. Verse 32, the wicked watcheth the righteous and seeketh to slay him.

The Lord will not leave him, the righteous man, in his, the wicked man's hand nor condemn him when he is judged. So the wicked person is constantly in this life watching God's people, constantly making evil schemes against God's people and constantly failing because the Lord doesn't hand over his people to the power of wicked people. It says at the end of verse 33 that the Lord will not condemn the righteous man when he, the righteous man, is judged.

That word condemn in the Hebrew means act wickedly. God will not act wickedly against his people. God will do what is right.

God will look after them. God will uphold them and in the place of judgment, God will be their defender and their supporter. Wait on the Lord, verse 34, and keep his way and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.

When the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it. I've spoken so far in terms of a future judgment but this is not all about the future. Sometimes we see even in this life how God's judgment is clear against wicked people.

David had seen that too. David had seen how he turned over the nation of Israel under his rule and he'd allowed him to put many good people in government and to take many evil people away from their positions of power. And so David gives another testimony in verse 35.

In verse 25 he gave his testimony about the righteous people. Now David's testimony about the wicked people. Verse 35, I've seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a green bay tree.

Yet he passed away and lo he was not. Yea I sought him but he could not be found. Okay so David says that he saw the wicked man as a truly powerful man.

He was successful this wicked man. He was doing so well in life. He'd acquired wealth and possessions for himself like a green bay tree.

I'm looking at a bay tree in the garden at the moment. It grows big. We have to cut it back a lot to control it.

The Hebrew describes not really a tree of the type I'm looking at but the sort of tree that's growing in its own native land. It's growing in a place where it grows well. And verse 26, this thing of passing away.

The King James translators have it worded like the wicked man dying but in the Hebrew it's worded much more like I saw this tree and I passed by it. And then I turned to look for the tree, the wicked man. Yet he could not be found.

I searched and I searched and I just couldn't find the tree that had so much impressed me. And I searched and I searched for that wicked man who seemed to have such great power and I couldn't work out where he'd gone. What had happened to his wealth? What had happened to him? But I knew because God's judgment was against him.

So verse 37, mark the perfect man. Watch for him. Behold the upright for the end of that man is peace.

But the transgressors, the people who do evil things, shall be destroyed together. The end of the wicked shall be cut off. They shall be separated from God's people.

This time when good people and bad people mixed together in this world will come to an end. And only those who've turned to God, only those who put their trust in God, only those who've chosen to forsake evil and do good will have a place in the land, in the world, when Messiah's rule is complete. Because, verse 39, but the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.

He is their strength in the time of trouble and the Lord shall help them and deliver them. He shall deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust in him. He delivers them, he saves them, he allows them to escape from the plans of evildoers and he brings them to a place of safety.

That final word for trust really means seek refuge. They seek refuge in him. They look for a safe place, for a place of protection.

And where do God's people find that place of protection? They trust in God. God himself is their place of protection. Please write to me, my email address is 333kjv at gmail.com. That's 333kjv at gmail.com. And now here's the whole of Psalm 37.

Psalm of David. Threaten not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed.

Delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass and he shall bring forth thy righteousness like the light

and thy judgment as the noon day. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Threaten not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger and forsake wrath. Threaten not thyself in any wise to do evil, for evildoers shall be cut off but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth for yet a little while and the wicked shall not be.

Thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be, but the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plotteth against the just and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him for he seeth that his day is coming.

The wicked have drawn out the sword and have bent their bow to cast down the poor and needy and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked, for the arms of the wicked shall be broken but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

The Lord knoweth the days of the upright and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in evil time and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied, but the wicked shall perish and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs. They shall consume, into smoke shall they consume away.

The wicked borroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous showeth mercy and giveth for such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way, though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young and now I'm old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread.

He is ever merciful and lendeth and his seed is blessed. Depart from evil and do good and dwell forevermore for the Lord loveth judgment and forsaketh not his saints, they are preserved forever but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever.

The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom and his tongue talketh of judgment, the law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide. The wicked watcheth the righteous and seeketh to slay him, the Lord will not leave him in his hand nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the Lord and keep his way and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land, when the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it.

I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a green bay tree, yet he passed away and lo he was not, yea I sought him but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace but the transgressors shall be destroyed together, the end of the wicked shall be cut off but the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord. He is their strength in the time of trouble and the Lord shall help them and deliver them, he shall deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust in him.

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