

May 2

Scriptures: Read Psalm 37

Key Verse: "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart."
(Psalm 37:4)

Overview

Psalm 37 was written in an alphabetic acrostic style, and many of the thoughts are in the form of proverbs. David wrote it toward the end of his life. His experience with the Lord had taught him much and given him much wisdom to share. The psalmist may have been disturbed by an erroneous point of view regarding the justice of God who allowed the wicked to flourish and the righteous to suffer. David's purpose in writing this psalm was to counsel and teach the correct understanding of the prosperity and success of the wicked (cf. Job 20:5; Psalm 49 and 73) by addressing the issue of the inheritance of the righteous (vv. 9,11,18, 22, 29, 34).

When the godly people understand that it is not a material issue, but a spiritual one that is of utmost importance, then there is no reason for them to be envious, concerned, or angry about the success of the wicked (v. 1, 8; cf. James 1:9-12; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18). The poor righteous people are in a much better position than the wealthy wicked (v. 16); so rather than being jealous, the godly should occupy their time with putting into practice their faith and trust in God by doing good. David instructs them to feed on the Good Shepherd's faithfulness (v. 3), meaning to rely on Him for their every need, since in all David's years he had "not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread" (v. 25).

David also advised that God's people "delight" themselves in the Lord (v. 4a). This means to take pleasure in Him by getting to know Him better, reading and meditating upon His Word, having communion (fellowship in prayer) with Him, loving Him, following Him, and doing His will. If these things are done, the believer will have a very close relationship with God; his steps will be ordered by God (v. 23); his spirit will be in tune with God; his life will be in harmony with the Lord's ways; he will abide in God and God's words will abide in him, and whatever he asks of the Lord will be given to him (John 15:7), for the desires of his heart will be the desires of God (v. 4b). They will not be selfish requests but requests that will bring glory to God (cf. James 4:2-3)

David further advises the godly to continue to trust in God and commit their ways to Him, then one day the Lord shall publically honour them for their righteousness (v. 5-6). Believers in Jesus know that He is the way (John 14:6), and the only true righteousness is that which comes through faith in Him (Philippians 3:8-9). Jesus is the Light and the One who can give real inner peace, and He dispels all anxiety about the concerns of this world and the seeming triumph of the wicked (cf. Micah 7:8-9). The psalmist urges the righteous to "wait patiently for Him" (v. 7a), for He has all things in control, and the time of judgment and vindication will surely come (James 5:7-9). The evildoers will be cut off, for the Lord is just (v. 28), and the righteous who have patiently waited will not only be vindicated but (the meek) shall inherit the earth and enjoy "the abundance of peace" (v. 11), which is far better than the temporary material abundance of this life (Matthew 5:5; Isaiah 29:19-20).

What is the main lesson of this psalm? It is to rest in the Lord, for He knows the glorious destiny of His people and laughs at the futility of the wicked (v.13; Proverbs 1:31, 33). God will not forsake the righteous. Therefore rest confidently, knowing God is in control (Hebrews 13:5; Romans 8:18).

Prayer

Dear Lord, help us to keep an eternal perspective so we might not be overwhelmed by the temporal concerns of life. The desire of our heart is to yield to Your desires.