



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The Holy Book of Psalms

## Psalm 37

Bishop Youssef



# Introduction

- This Psalm is titled *A Psalm of David*
- It was written by David in his old age, verse 25
- According to some scholars, he wrote it three years before his departure from this world
- This Psalm is one of the alphabetical kind
- The first letters of the verses follow the Hebrew alphabet
- There is nothing in it of prayer or praise, but it is all instruction
- It is a wisdom Psalm, directed not to God but to men, teaching after the manner of the Book of Proverbs



# Introduction

- He deals with and answer the great question of the prosperity of the wicked and the affliction of the righteous, which has perplexed so many throughout the years
- The happiness of the wicked cannot last, and the justice of God will assuredly reestablish the right, punishing the evil and rewarding the righteous
- This same subject is a theme in Psalm 73 and Psalm 49





# Introduction

## Psalm Outline

- Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11
- The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20
- The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31
- The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- David begins with a warning and advices for times of temptation
- He cautions the faithful, when they see the wicked prospering, not to be tempted to imitate them, or to be angry with God, as if He were treating them unjustly
- Asaph was bothered by this problem in Psalm 73, wondering why the wicked often experienced so much prosperity
- If we allow ourselves to envy them, we shall be tempted to follow their example, *“Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them.”* (Proverbs 24:1)
- It is unwise to envy them; their position is not worthy or enviable



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- We ought to be content; it is not wise to envy anyone, godly or ungodly
- St. Augustine says, “This it is that disturbs you who are a Christian; that you see men of bad lives prospering and surrounded with abundance of things like these; you see them sound in health, distinguished with proud honors ... and your heart says that there is no Divine judgment; that all things are carried to and from by accidents, and blown about in disorderly and irregular motions. For if God, you say, regarded human affairs, would his iniquity flourish, and my innocence suffer?”





# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- David gives the same answer Asaph came to in Psalm 73, understanding that any prosperity experienced by the *workers of iniquity* was only temporary
- A most appropriate idea for showing how short their prosperity will be is, *they shall soon be cut down like the grass*
- *Grass* is green for a season, and so is the *herb* – but they both *wither* quickly
- *the grass*, Which in the morning looks green, pretty, and flourishing, and in the evening is cut down, and then fades away



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- And so, the wicked prosper and flourish for a while, and then they perish with all their honor, riches, and wealth
- Their happiness is a very short lived one, and therefore it does not need to be envied and fretted at
- They may enjoy many and prosperous years here, but these are nothing compared to the lengthy, everlasting happiness of the just
- No doubt if we compare time with eternity, the longest triumph that the wicked ever enjoy is but for a brief time and is soon gone





# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- Some may be bothered to see how much attention is paid in today's culture to people who stand for all the wrong things
- It might be hard but at the same time it is right to be "*salt and light*" (Matthew 5:13-14) in this tasteless, dark world
- We cannot let negative forces cause us to live in anger and wrath
- Instead, we must rely on God to have the ultimate say about evildoers



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- David's advise to the faithful is to remain in the land of the promise and in God's faith and depend upon His promise for protection and support
- There, and there alone, one can find true satisfaction in Him
- St. Augustine says that *the land* is the Church that is watered and cultivated by God
- He continues to says, "For there are many that, as it were, do good works, but yet, in that they do not "*dwell in the land*," they do not belong to God. Therefore, do good, not outside of the land,"



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- *Trust in the LORD*, Not in men, who are fading and perishing like the *green grass and tender herb*
- St. Augustine describe the ungodly way of trusting and says, "For they too trust, but not 'in the Lord.' Their hope is perishable. Their hope is short-lived, frail, fleeting, transitory, baseless."
- Instead of worrying and envying, David counseled the men of God to simply *trust* God and *do good* for His glory
- If one wishes to be happy and blessed, one must understand who is the author of all happiness, look to Him for it, and to no one else





# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- Love God from your heart, let Him be your delight, and then you will be safe because, *He shall give you the desires of your heart*
- One must not think first of the desires of the heart, but think first of *Delight ... in the Lord*
- The one who truly *delights in the Lord* will find his heart and desires changed, steadily aligning with God's own good desires for his life
- *Delight*, In the perfections of God, His power, goodness, faithfulness, wisdom, love, and mercy; in His works of creation and redemption; in His word, in His house the Church



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- Here David explains and elaborates more on what it means to *delight* oneself *in the Lord*, as described in the previous verse
- It means to *commit* one's way to Him and to truly *trust* in Him
- Hand over all your cares and affairs of life, your desires and necessities to God by fervent prayer, referring them to His good-will and He shall bring our life to pass according to His good counsel
- Seek God's direction in everything
- The true way for a man is to do his duty - to do right always - and then commit the whole to God



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- If the prosperity of the wicked *frets* the faithful, because it seems to cover and conceal his righteousness and his life may seem overshadowed by clouds and darkness, one must be sure that, in the end, this seeming injustice will be corrected and changed
- The righteous would be like a sun hidden behind clouds and fog
- *your righteousness as the light*, It shall be as visible to men as the light of the sun
- *the noonday*, Because the light is then most clear and bright
- God will make character of the righteous perfectly clear and bright; no cloud will remain on it





# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- *Rest*, The Hebrew word means to be mute, silent, still: Job 29:21; Leviticus 10:3; Lamentations 3:28
- Do not murmur; make no complaint; be silently submissive because God has promised to faithfully take care of those who put their trust in Him, we can *rest in the Lord*
- Be always obedient to God; leaving the whole matter with Him without being anxious as to the result
- Pray to Him constantly, lest the idea of seeing an unjust man successful in the world may tempt you and lead you to injustice
- *And wait patiently for him*, Be content to await His time, which is sure to be the right time



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- He may seem to delay long, but justice will be done, but whether sooner or later must be left to Him
- Verse 8 is a repetition and explanation of the first verse
- Throughout the whole Psalm the same idea is frequently repeated to explain it more clearly, and thereby to fix it more firmly on the memory
- He is advising the faithful to not allow the mind to be driven with envious, fretful, wrathful, or murmuring feelings against God because He is patient with them
- These feelings accomplish nothing except *harm*
- The supreme direction belongs to God



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- It is foolish to *fret* and get angry and storm against the ungodly whom we see prospering, since they will certainly be *cut off* sooner or later, but those that *wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth*
- This is another reason for our *delight in and rest upon the Lord*
- We can trust His promise that He will take care of His own not only in this world, but in the world to come
- In contrast, *evildoers shall be cut off*
- Having said, that *the evildoers shall be cut off*, he now adds, that it will soon happen





# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- The evildoers have their day of prosperity, but it is short-lived
- Soon the wicked who are the famous and praised in this world will be of no notice or standing at all, *you will look carefully for his place, but it shall be no more*
- He made a contrast between the wicked and the righteous
- There will be no trace of wicked, like a barren tree torn up from the roots while *the meek shall inherit the earth*
- The psalmist presents the best definition of the meek, that they are those who chose the way of faith with perseverance, instead of trusting in pleasures



# Counseling the Faithful 37:1-11

- Even if the meek suffer, their consolations will be much more than their tribulations and they will have peace
- They may not have abundance of wealth to delight in; but they have that which is better, abundance of peace, that peace which the world cannot give (John 14:27)
- Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount, “*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*” (Matthew 5:5)
- St. Augustine describe the *earth* and says, “That land is the one of which we have often spoken, the holy Jerusalem, which is to be released from these her pilgrimages, and to live for ever with God, and on God”

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Earlier in this psalm, David contrasted the fate of the righteous with the fate of the wicked
- Now he considered the inevitable conflict between the righteous and the *wicked* – how, without reason, *the wicked plots against the just*
- Their gnashing of teeth shows the depth of their anger and hatred
- These *plots*, have been since the creation of men by the wicked against the righteous; about which the Lord Christ says, “*If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you*” (John 15:18)



# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- The wicked – the devil – using every possible way, plots against the true believer, to make him fall into the snares of sin; and if he fails, he gnashes at him with his teeth, *“like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”* (1 Peter 5:8)
- Since Cain killed Abel in the old; and since St. Stephen was stoned to death by the Jews, and until the second coming of the Lord Christ, the true believers have been, and will be persecuted; yet will never be forsaken
- All the plotting and gnashing of teeth of the wicked, they accomplish nothing against the Lord and His people

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- God simply *laughs* at them, knowing their end
- God will *laugh at him*, because He sees the end of the wicked man is just at hand; and that he will be taken off before he can put any of his plans against the just man into execution
- St. Augustine explains, “He seems indeed full of wrath, while, ignorant of the morrow that is in store for him, he is threatening the just. But the Lord beholds and ‘foresees his day.’ ‘What day?’ That in which ‘He will render to every man according to his works.’”

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- David explains here, what he had expressed in verse 12
- They have prepared themselves with a full purpose to destroy the righteous
- As if one weapon is not enough, they carry another ready for action, *have drawn the sword And have bent their bow*
- The wicked stand with drawn swords, and bended bow, waiting to shoot with the arrow, and slay with the sword the just man
- *to cast down the poor and needy*, Who are so, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; to cause them to fall either into sin, or into some adversity



# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- *the poor and needy*, Those godly ones who, from the gentleness of their spirits are not able to defend themselves
- With a suggestion of the Beatitudes here, we are reminded that poverty of spirit should be our ultimate purpose
- Our Lord Jesus Christ who was meek and lowly was persecuted by cruel enemies, armed with all manner of weapons to kill Him
- We ought to watch and notice how the enemies of the godly are doubly armed, and to learn how true were our Lord's words, *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."* (John 15:18-19)

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Nothing less than the blood and life of the godly and righteous people will satisfy the wicked
- However, regardless of their attempts God shall protect His own and *their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken*
- Their efforts shall be fruitless, and their attempts in vain; the wickedness they have planned for others shall fall upon them
- Like Haman who was hanged upon the gallows built for Mordecai

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Many times, this has been the case
- Saul, who sought to slay David, fell on his own sword
- Their sword may reach the body of the upright the way it did when it pierced the bodies of the martyrs; but their hearts and souls remained unharmed
- Why then would the righteous *fret* at the prosperity of the wicked when they are ruining themselves while they imagine they are hurting the godly?



# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Since whatever the wicked has cannot last, the little that the *righteous man has is better* than all that the wicked possess
- A small income will be of more value to the just man than a great fortune to the sinner
- Because he has it with many great advantages; with God's blessing, with great fulfilment and satisfaction of his own mind, which is more pleasing and comfortable than all earthly possessions, with the consolations of the Holy Spirit, and the assurance of everlasting joy
- "*Now godliness with contentment is great gain,*" (1 Timothy 6:6)

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Content finds much in little, while for a wicked heart the whole world is too little
- We ought to understand that what David means is not that poverty is better than riches, or a poor man better than a rich man; but the comparison is between a righteous man and a wicked man
- The sense is, that a righteous man's little is better than a wicked man's "much"
- Some righteous, indeed, have been rich, as Abraham, David, Joseph of Arimathea, and others

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- But generally, the wicked have the largest share of worldly things, and the righteous but little
- The reward of the wicked is to have their own arms *broken*
- The reward of the righteous is to be *upheld* by God's own arm
- Their power to do evil shall be taken away and will easily fail, for the arms which they lifted up against God shall be crushed
- The wicked depends on the arm of the flesh, and his riches can afford him no help
- But the strength and power of the just cannot fail, because he depends on the arm of God



# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- *The Lord knows the days of the upright*, God approves of their life and blesses them; and, therefore, their days will be lengthened, and their inheritance shall be protected forever
- God *knows* their condition, and all things which do or may happen to them, their dangers and fears, and suffering from ungodly men
- And therefore, He will watch over them, and protect them from all the plans and attempts of their enemies
- The apparent reward of the wicked is temporary and passing
- The *inheritance* of the *upright* is eternal

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- The word *ashamed* here refers to disappointment
- Adversities and troubles will come, but deliverances will come also
- The righteous people are never exempt from trouble
- They will not be disappointed when they are called to take their share of it, but the rather they will cast themselves again upon their God
- They will find their expectations, arising from confidence in God, fully met

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- God can even find a way to provide for His own when others have nothing
- *the days of famine*, It may be understood figuratively of a famine of hearing the word, or literally of a proper famine of bread and water
- God will provide for them, as He did for Elijah, and they shall be sure unto them
- All these are more reasons to not envy of the wicked in their seeming (yet temporary) prosperity
- The word *perish* here would be relevant to any form of destruction





# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20

- Many scholars interpret it as the day of judgment
- *the enemies of the Lord*, For His people's enemies are His enemies
- Nothing touches the Lord's people that does not also touch Him
- As we read in Acts 9:4 on the road to Damascus, the Lord confronted Saul of Tarsus, "*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?*"
- They will vanish away like the beautiful flowers of the field, (1 Peter 1:24) and like smoke, "*And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever.*" (Revelation 14:11)

# The Victory of the Wicked is Short and Temporary 37:12-20



- Israel's rainy season causes the flowers of the field to spring up and blossom, but soon the strong heat of day causes them to wither
- Therefore, the flowers are short-lived
- The Lord's people were familiar with smoke that arose from the altar on which lambs were sacrificed
- It arose from the altar and quickly vanished
- The success, fame, and prosperity of the wicked is as temporary as *smoke*
- It never has any real substance and soon vanishes completely

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- David knew that the difference between the wicked and the righteous was not only found in what they believed and in whom they trusted
- The difference was also often seen in their conduct
- The *wicked* are takers, *borrowers and does not repay*
- One of the characteristics of a wicked person is his lack of trustworthiness
- He is a person who borrows but does not pay back what is owed
- The *righteous* are givers, full of *mercy*
- Sin leads a person to selfishly take from others; godliness encourages charity and kindness



# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- The promise of earth-inheritance is repeated a third time
- This is a blessing for the righteous, while the wicked find themselves *cursed by the Lord* and *cut off*
- It may seem that the righteous have nothing, when they actually have everything, and make many rich; as according to the apostle Paul, “*As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing but possessing all things*” (2 Corinthians 6: 10); possessing the grace and blessing of God
- The righteous who follow God, can look forward to dwelling in the Promised Land while *cursed by Him* the sinners and those who deny God will never inherit the Promised Land

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- He now begins to relate God's providence in regard of the just, in order to confirm them, for fear the prosperity of the wicked may tempt them to commit sin
- The reward for the righteous is not only in the age to come
- In the present day, God guides *the steps of a good man*
- The Lord is in control of the life of a righteous man, and the Lord delights in his path of life
- Another great and present benefit for the righteous ones is the knowledge that God *delights* in their *way*
- Surely, a righteous person may stumble and even fall, but the Lord will protect him

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- *he shall not be utterly cast down*, This is not because of his own internal strength or goodness, but because *the Lord upholds him*
- God can keep those who submit to Him from sin (1 Corinthians 10:13)
- If those who obey God and His commandments do stumble, the Lord is able to restore them
- Also, if we see a believer stumble into sin, we have a duty to restore that believer in a spirit of gentleness
- In the process, we should keep a watch on ourselves, lest we too, are tempted (Galatians 6:1)



# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- The psalmist makes mention of his age to bring attention to what he was about to say; which was founded upon a long experience and observation of things
- He noted that God cared for those who trusted in Him and walked in His righteousness
- Seeing God's faithfulness to His people, David wanted a younger generation to also trust in Him, learning from his wisdom
- They were not *forsaken* and their *descendants* were also blessed
- David's point in verse 25 is not that the "righteous" will never experience poverty, hardship, or even death

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- Rather, his meaning is in the context of recovery (Psalm 37:24)
- God provides sufficiently for His people (Matthew 6:31–33)
- Believers should not worry about what they should eat or drink or wear because their heavenly Father is aware of their need and has promised to meet it
- That provision is not always according to what we prefer, or what we expect, but it's always according to God's perfect will (Romans 8:28-30)

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- In times of famine and need, the righteous one not only receives God's provision, but with a generous and *merciful* heart he *lends* to others in need
- Once again, David observes that generosity is a sign of a righteous person
- The righteous person, generally speaking, experiences the growth of his income and possessions when he gives generously
- Luke 6:38 promises "*Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.*"



# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- Having therefore these glorious promises, let no man do any evil or unjust thing, to enrich or secure himself because the choice between evil and good has everlasting consequences
- The choice between good and evil is tied to *dwell forevermore*
- Not only to depart from evil, but to practice the *good* work
- As St. Augustine comments, “Do not think that you do good, if you do not rob somebody’s clothes. Yes, by that you depart from evil; but it is befitting of you not to stop at that level without giving fruit. For what is greater than not robbing somebody’s clothes, is to clothe a naked man.”

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- He says, *Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore*
- Why? Because *the Lord loves justice*
- David reminds us of the Lord's love of justice and His faithfulness to the righteous
- The God who loves justice will not allow the wicked and their children to continue and prevail
- God is faithful to *His saints* and does not *forsake* them
- St. Augustine says, "When the Saints suffer affliction, think not that God doth not judge, or doth not judge righteously. Will He, who warns thee to judge righteously, Himself judge unrighteously?"

# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- Once again, David assure the believers that God promises to keep those who come to Him in faith, with an absolute guarantee as we read, *“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”* (John 10:28)
- A righteous person knows when to speak and when to watch what they say, *“In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise.”* (Proverbs 10:19)
- The righteous speak wisdom and justice
- This ability to communicate true wisdom comes from knowing God (1 Corinthians 2:14-16)



# The Reward of the Righteous is Unquestionable 37:21-31



- He loves the word of God and has it in his heart
- His conversation is naturally seasoned with wisdom, because he has *The law of his God is in his heart*
- They have the commandments of God before them, that they may not offend by their tongue, "*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*" (Matthew 12:34)
- Because of this knowledge of and reliance upon God's word, *none of his steps shall slide*
- The two facts are associated as cause and effect
- The having the Law of God in his heart prevents his sliding or going astray



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- David's personal experience taught him that an intense conflict exists between the wicked and the righteous
- In considering the remarkable blessings God has appointed to the righteous, David did not think it meant life would be easy
- One danger continually faced was from the wicked who hated the righteous without cause or because they are a reproach to them
- In the long-lasting conflict between good and evil, the evil world system under the rule of the Devil (John 14:30) opposes God's righteous people



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- They carefully observe what the righteous says and what he does, in order *to slay him*
- On earth, the wicked may find a way to falsely accuse a righteous person and bring them to trial, as Jesus' accusers did, (Matthew 26:59)
- However, they are not at the mercy of the wicked
- God will protect the godly, particularly in the ultimate judgment
- In the ultimate judgment of all things, believers will be justified (Romans 5:9), while the wicked who reject God will be condemned (Jude 1:14-15)





# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- For the *fifth time* in this psalm, David promised the people of God that they would *inherit the land*
- If we trust and obey as His servants, the righteous will be exalted by the Lord and will dwell in the Promised Land
- The way to achieve victory when the enemy attacks is to wait on the Lord to act and to keep His way
- Those who honor God should not seek revenge (Romans 12:18-19) or rush into anger (Ephesians 4:26)
- When all sinners, condemned by the judgment of God, you will see the glory of divine justice displayed therein



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- David once again relied on his personal experience and testimony
- He had seen wicked people rise to great security and success, like a *tree* that seems to be firmly grounded and immoveable only to have *passed away* and to have become *no more*
- In vain, the wicked seek the glory of this world; for they will perish together with their glory
- *Yet he passed away*, At once, on a sudden; either his riches and honor, or he himself by death; in the midst of all his prosperity, and while blessing himself in it, his soul was required of him
- *I sought him*, Asked where he was, looked for some traces of his greatness, *but he could not be found* as if he had never been there



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- The expression *to mark*, as used here, means to take note of, or to pay special attention to
- David's instruction is for the reader to look at the example of those who are *blameless* and *upright*
- *Blameless* does not mean without sin and perfect
- No person, other than Jesus, has ever been or ever will be perfect (Hebrews 4:15)
- To be *blameless* means to sincerely desire and endeavor to please and glorify God, and therefore their concern is only to walk in His commandments blameless





# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- Though *the upright* may meet with troubles in his way; though his days may be long, dark, and cloudy; yet all shall end well with him; he shall be happy at last
- Such a man enjoys a peace, which passes the understanding of worldly men
- Many good things are in store for the righteous after death
- Christians enjoy peace with God (Romans 5:1), and by committing their concerns to God in prayer they can also enjoy the peace of God in their hearts and minds (Philippians 4:7)



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- For the sixth and final time in this psalm, David reminds us that the future of the wicked is no future to be desired
- The *transgressors* are those who rebel against God's authority
- *shall be destroyed*, There would be no exception
- Satan was the first rebel against God's rule, (Isaiah 14:14)
- And ultimately, the Devil will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10)
- To be *cut off* is to lose eternal life and the blessings God bestows on the righteous
- While the *future* of the one would be peace, the *future* of the other would be a *cutting off*, or *destruction*



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- The last two verses sum up the teaching of the psalm, and indicate its especial object, which was to encourage and sustain the righteous under their trials, by the assurance that they were under the special protection of God, who, whenever trouble threatened, would stand forth as their *strength* and defense, and would ultimately be their *Salvation*
- David learned firsthand that God is more than able to rescue His people in times of trouble
- No enemy that sought to kill David succeeded
- The Lord always protected him





# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- The righteous people are safe in Christ
- When trials overwhelm us, we need not *fret* but trust, knowing God cares for us, “*casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*”(1 Peter 5:7)
- As he closes out this psalm, David emphasizes once again that the Lord provides for those who follow Him
- He saves them from evil because of their faith
- David, himself, knew that this did not mean God guaranteed blessedness or safety for His people, always (Psalm 3:1-2,34:19; John 16:33)



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- Salvation from God is primarily eternal (John 3:16-18), and that is the main focus of His people (Hebrews 11:13-16)
- *Because they trust in Him*, They rely on Him, and not on themselves
- The psalm began with an appeal to reject anxiety on account of evil people
- It ends with a celebration of how God can save those who trust in Him
- It is better to have God for our friend in life, and our support in death, than to have all the external prosperity of wicked men



# The Final Contrast of Retribution and Recompence 37:32-40

- St. Augustine comments on the last verse of the Psalm and says, “At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire. The one will be consigned to the garner, the other to ‘everlasting burning;’ for it was for this reason that the just and the unjust were at the first together; that the one should lay a stumbling-block, that the other should be proved; that afterwards the one should be condemned, the other receive a crown....”





# Discussion

- The opening of the Psalm provides the overall theme; “*Do not fret because of evildoers*” What does it mean to fret? How do “evildoers” cause us to fret?
- What is the connection between trusting the Lord and doing good?
- What does it mean to delight ourselves in the Lord?
- How do we commit our ways to the Lord?



# Discussion

- How many times in this Psalm are we exhorted not to worry or fret?
- Why is fretting or worrying about things a useless waste of time?
- Much of this Psalm is a contrast between the wicked and the righteous. List the things David tells us about the wicked.
- List the things David tells us about the righteous.



# Discussion

- Jesus referred to this Psalm when he declared that the meek would inherit the earth. Define meekness, then explain how the meek, not the self-promoting, will actually receive things from God.
- What does it mean to have your steps ordered by the Lord?
- What does it mean to wait on the Lord?
- What is the final promise in this Psalm?