



**The Blessings of the Lord
The Marks of the Righteous and the Source of Salvation
Psalm 37:16-40**

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Continuing our study of Psalm 37, we pick up with verse 16 and see a contrast between the blessing of those who are blameless versus those who are wicked. In David's eyes, there are only two options available and that is indeed what the Bible teaches.

We are either followers of Jesus Christ and have accepted His free gift of redemption as our own, or we are not followers of Jesus Christ and considered to be the wicked. There is no in-between.



How does the Lord bless the life of the one who is His follower? Let's begin by backing up to verse 16 again and seeing how this ties in.

Psalms 37:16–19

“Better is the little of the righteous Than the abundance of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked will be broken, **But the LORD sustains the righteous. The LORD knows the days of the blameless, And their inheritance will be forever. They will not be ashamed in the time of evil, And in the days of famine they will have plenty.”** (NASB 2020)

Those who are into the false teaching of the prosperity gospel would tell you that health, wealth and prosperity, as defined by them, is the source of a happy life. The world tells us the same. No, it isn't and quite frankly when they say that, they are lying.

What we read in the scriptures is that earthly wealth is not what matters in this life. And those who make that their god, will soon discover that it is not going to be too terribly faithful to them. Meanwhile our Lord and Savior is faithful all the time.

When we read “the arms of the wicked will be broken,” do not think literally here since the word in the Hebrew has a different meaning. The word we see translated arms is זְרוֹעַת (zero'at) and means “arm, forearm: of man...power, force...the arm of God...military forces. (Koehler, et al. 1994-2000, 280-281)

The power or force of the wicked will be broken. Shattered would probably be a better word choice here as the Hebrew does carry the sense of fractured or destroyed. The money-making capabilities of those who are not followers of the Lord will be destroyed.

That is a picture that was seen very clearly in the Great Depression as the fortunes of many vanished overnight, their god left them. That is also what we see in the book of Revelation, it is indeed the future of those who worship this god. We see this as Babylon is destroyed at the end of the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 18:11–15

“Then the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn for her because no one buys their cargo any longer—cargo such as gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all sorts of things made of citron wood, all sorts of objects made of ivory, all sorts of things made of expensive wood, bronze, iron and marble, cinnamon, spice, incense, perfumed ointment, frankincense, wine, olive oil and costly flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and four-wheeled carriages, slaves and human lives. (The ripe fruit you greatly desired has gone from you, and all your luxury and splendor have gone from you— they will never ever be found again!) **The merchants who sold these things, who got rich from her, will stand a long way off because they are afraid of her torment. They will weep and mourn,”** (NET 2nd ed.)

The Lord sustains the righteous. The Hebrew word *samek* carries the sense of not only being sustained, but of being supplied all that is needed, His support and supply because He is unflinching and firm. He never will leave us, ever.

As followers of Jesus, you and I are blessed, because He takes care of all our needs.

He knows, right now, how long we will be here on this planet, and what He has for us as an inheritance will be forever. That is good to know information, but what does it mean for us here today? It means that nothing happens to us where God would be surprised. Spurgeon puts it this way. “All events are known to our God, and that nothing in our future can take him at unawares. No arrow can pierce us by accident, no dagger smite us by stealth; neither in time nor in eternity can any unforeseen ill occur to us. Futurity shall



be but a continual development of the good things which the Lord has laid up in store for us.” (Spurgeon n.d., 175)

Romans 8:28

“And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose,” (NET 2nd ed.)

What this means is, at the creation of the world, God knew you and I would be studying this verse and this topic right now. And what He has for us in the future, Jesus spoke directly to as He was giving His final briefing to the disciples just before the cross.

John 14:1–4

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. **In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.** And you know the way to where I am going.” (ESV)

Very soon now, Jesus will return for us to fulfill this promise. He will meet us in the air where we will join up with all of those who are in Christ have already gone ahead in death, and that is the beginning of our forever with Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–17

“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.” (ESV)

Isaiah 64:4 **“For since the world began, no ear has heard and no eye has seen a God like you, who works for those who wait for him!”** (NLT)

Isaiah 65:17 “Look! I am creating new heavens and a new earth, and no one will even think about the old ones anymore.” (NLT)

Revelation 21:1–4

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, **“Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”**” (NLT)

That, is our inheritance and is just a surface view of what He has for us.

And as we live in this world today, we have His promise of not being immune from trouble. Really?

John 15:20

“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ **If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.” (ESV)

But He will be there with us in and through it. His last words in Matthew gives us our calling and His promise of being with us.



Matthew 28:19–20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. **And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**” (ESV)

Blessings for those of us in Christ thus far:

- We are satisfied with what He has given us.
- He supports, supplies and sustains us.
- He knows us and is with us.
- All things that take place in our life is Father filtered.
- We have an out of this world inheritance.
- We will not be ashamed.

Psalms 37:20–22

“But the wicked will perish; And the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures, They vanish—like smoke they vanish away. The wicked borrows and does not pay back, But the righteous is gracious and gives. For those blessed by Him will inherit the land, But those cursed by Him will be eliminated.” (NASB 2020)

Here is a serious contrast for us and it is incredibly significant. Have you ever noticed folks who do not know Jesus tend to build and do as if they will live forever. But they won't. The picture provided is the hot summer sun on a pasture of green grass that turns brown rather quickly without rain and then can burn and do so quickly.

Grass fires can move as fast as just under 14 miles per hour on level ground, but the average person can do about 6 miles per hour. That can be a problem if you are trying to get away from a grass fire. If the fire is burning up hill, it could even move faster.

Those who do not know the Lord will not be able to escape their fate and will vanish as if in a grass fire in the summer.

One more thing is also pointed out, they will borrow money, but not pay it back. There are those who borrow and have no intent of ever paying the money back. They are takers. But the contrast given here is with those who are followers of the Lord, we are givers.

Those who are taking perpetually are cursed while those who give, are blessed. And there is more for the follower of the Lord as well.

Psalms 37:23–24

“The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled down, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.” (NASB 2020)

Did you know that as a follower of Jesus, how we live, can delight the Lord and bring Him joy? “The LORD delights in how a good person lives, and He blesses his or her activities. Even though such people may stumble as they go through life, they will not experience a fatal fall from which they cannot rise.” (Constable 2003, Ps 37:23)

He is the one who is holding our hand and that keeps us from stumbling. This is slightly different than a parent working with a child and teaching them to walk. Kids will stumble and fall and that is one way to learn. We make sure the environment is free from anything that would cause harm and even add in some



extra padding to the diaper to pad those falls as well. Our heart though wants to jump in and hold their hand to keep them from stumbling.

Once you have a toddler though, they want to walk everywhere and even in places that if you stumble, it may cause injury and be painful.

As followers of Christ, we are out there toddling along and all of us are walking in an environment that is hazardous. We have God's armor, but He still has our hand in His to keep us from stumbling. Even if we think we are on our own and can handle it, He still has our hand and will keep us from being hurled down. The Hebrew word used here, carries the sense of being thrown forcefully and can also be used to mean being cast out.

If we belong to the Lord, He will not cast us out and He prevents that actively from happening. This is picture of Him maintain our eternal security in Christ. And now a controversial statement.

Psalms 37:25–28

"I have been young and now I am old, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken Or his descendants begging for bread. All day long he is gracious and lends, And his descendants are a blessing. Turn from evil and do good, So that you will dwell forever. For the LORD loves justice And does not abandon His godly ones; They are protected forever, But the descendants of the wicked will be eliminated." (NASB 2020)

David is an old man at the time he is writing this. He has lived a life of observation and now reports one of the things he has seen. And yes, many have heartburn with what he says and there are those who twist it.

In context this could be the psalmist's graphic way of underlining the traditional belief that the righteous are never permanently forsaken by God. They may face difficulties; they may stumble; but underneath there is always a steadying hand (v. 24). They remain generous, kindhearted, and their children, instead of having to beg from others, are a source of blessing to others (v. 26). (Davidson 1998, 127)

Yes, this is indeed another text ripped out of context to support the prosperity gospel.

While he has seen the righteous passing through difficult times (cf. vv. 7, 12, 14, 16, 19), yet he has never seen them completely forsaken by the LORD. Though they may have periods in life when it seems that the LORD has withdrawn his love, yet that is never final. The righteous are able to show compassion to others and share with them their resources. (Harman 2011, 315)

But Ken, how could David say this? Again, context. Yes, Jesus does indeed tell a story (Luke 16:20) about a believing beggar named Lazarus who goes to paradise.

First of all, even though David himself was downtrodden and had to ask for the shewbread in the Tabernacle, he did not consider himself a beggar. What he says here is based on his observations and is not a universal claim. **"I have not seen."**

"Second, he is not claiming that no righteous person ever starves, but simply that he has not seen them "begging bread." There is a difference.

Third, the context of his statement was the OT Jewish economy wherein no one needed to starve because the Law provided that they could glean in the fields (cf. Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21). In this system, there was generally no need to "beg bread"—it could be gleaned freely from the fields.



Finally, **like Proverbs, this statement need not be taken universally, but only as a general rule that in a society ordered according to God's law, those who live righteously will seldom find it necessary to beg for food.**" (Geisler and Howe 1992, 238)

There is another reason as well in the culture of David's time why he would not see the follower of God beg for bread, and again it goes to the context to include the culture he is writing in. It is the generosity of the righteous community (note also v. 21) that precludes righteous children from begging bread. These verses speak in the plural. (Broyles 2012, 182)

What this shows us is the danger of building a theology on snippets of the scripture taken out of context rather than on the whole council of God.

Psalm 37:27–28

"Turn from evil and do good, So that you will dwell forever. For the LORD loves justice And does not abandon His godly ones; They are protected forever, But the descendants of the wicked will be eliminated." (NASB 2020)

We see a couple of promises here. First of all, as an incentive to turn from evil, in other words, to turn to Christ, there is a promise of living forever. The silent part not stated here is this, those who do not, do not live forever, not like they would want to.

For those David is writing to, they are currently living in the land of Israel. Continuity of life there depends on obedience to the Lord.

Deuteronomy 11:8–9

"You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess, and that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey." (ESV)

For the nation under the covenant, they had a conditional promise which they did indeed fail. The result was the exile to Babylon.

For us, once we turn to Christ, we indeed have a future we never would have had before. But just like obedience and faithfulness was paramount for the nation, it is for us as well. Jesus talked about this.

Luke 6:46–49

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great." (ESV)

John 14:15

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (ESV)

For those who turn to the Lord and have a life reflecting that faith, in other words, it is not simply fire insurance, and you continue living as you did, but a lifestyle, there is a future that is forever.

God loves justice, but the reality is heavier than that. "Justice is not something that God has. Justice is something that God is. A grammarian might say it should be phrased, "Just is something that God is." But



I say, “No, justice is something that God is.” God is love and just as God is love, God is justice.” (Tozer and Fessenden 2003-, 61)

And in the Old Testament, justice is indistinguishable from righteousness. He is righteous and as such, is also justice personified. No wonder He love it. No wonder He will never abandon those who are His and once we come to Christ and are His, that protection is literally, forever.

But for those who reject the Lord and continue in their own lifestyle rejecting Him, even their kids will be eliminated. This implies that those who do not love the Lord raise their kids to do the same, thus the need to intervene with the gospel as often as possible. Thus the need to engage in Good News Clubs and disciple kids.

Psalm 37:29–31

“The righteous will inherit the land And dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, And his tongue speaks justice. The Law of his God is in his heart; His steps do not slip.” (NASB 2020)

For the faithful and obedient Jew, the promise was they would be in the land forever. That is indeed a promise that has not gone away and is behind everything we see in the Old and New Testament. Once the church is raptured and with the Lord, as clearly evident in Revelation 4, it is all about Israel again and the remnant that will enter the Kingdom.

As for the land, within the confines of the Church Age there has been no real independent government in the land since A.D. 70. The land has been overrun many times and ruled by many people, but always ruled from somewhere else...The first time an independent government was set up in the land since A.D. 70 was in 1948 with the State of Israel. The history of the land also shows that the Abrahamic Covenant continues to be fulfilled with the people of Israel. (Fruchtenbaum 1994, 630)

It is this promise of the land that is why, when Jesus returns, why He goes to the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:3–5

“Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations, as he has fought in times past. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will split apart, making a wide valley running from east to west. Half the mountain will move toward the north and half toward the south. You will flee through this valley, for it will reach across to Azal. Yes, you will flee as you did from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all his holy ones with him.” (NLT)

Yes, as followers of Jesus, we will indeed be with Jesus at that very moment.

At the point that this inheritance becomes real for the remnant at the end of the Great Tribulation, we see a new manner of government take place. For those who follow the Lord, and are faithfully obedient to Him, those blessings are already but not yet becoming fully realized in how we do life everyday. David is pointing to the new covenant.

Psalm 37:30–31 **“The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, And his tongue speaks justice. The Law of his God is in his heart; His steps do not slip.” (NASB 2020)**

When you or I are walking in the Spirit, then yes, we utter wisdom and speak justice.

If you are like me, I would like that to be a continuous thing in my life. But we are currently living in a fallen world and as such are still subjected to our sin nature from time to time. When I am not allowing the Holy



Spirit the control and access that He desires that I give Him, then I am living for self. The Bible calls that type of living as living to the flesh.

Paul talks about the struggle we have and helps us realize why we want to live in the Spirit and be Spirit filled and Spirit led.

Romans 8:3–10

"For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (ESV)

The promise here for us is that as the righteous, in the Spirit, we can indeed utter wisdom and speak justice constantly. As the Spirit guides us, the Law of God is indeed in our heart and we do not slip at all. There is coming a time in the future where this will be constant.

There will no longer be a sin nature, we will be in glorified bodies that will not have that aspect of our personality that we deal with everyday presently. And for the nation of Israel, the remnant that enters into the Kingdom, they too will have that as a reality with Jesus on the throne.

Ezekiel is incredibly clear about this.

Ezekiel 36:24–28

"I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God." (ESV)

Jeremiah adds to this that David sees as a future for his people.

Jeremiah 31:31–34

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (ESV)



Those things that David is writing about here are what the remnant will indeed experience at the end of the Great Tribulation and the institution of the Kingdom. Until then, this is still a part of the reality we all have to contend with.

Psalm 37:32–33

“The wicked spies upon the righteous And seeks to kill him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand Or let him be condemned when he is judged.” (NASB 2020)

Those who do not know the Lord really do not understand the reasons why we live the way we do. They do indeed watch us to see why. In some cases, they see us fail, since we do indeed still have a sin nature. This is another reason why it is so important for us to remain transparent as sinners saved by grace and not “Holier than Thou.”

Yes, the unbeliever can smell hypocrisy a mile away, but they are blinded to their own version of it and prefer to cast aspersions on those who are followers of the Lord.

There are those who do indeed seek after our lives only because we follow Jesus.

The wicked are not just going about their life in ignorance of God and the righteous ones. The wicked actively seek the lives of others (v. 32). The threat is real, but so too is God’s protection of God’s own (v. 33). (Jacobson and Tanner 2014, 354)

Lawlessness, which we see on the increase in these last days, reflects the increase in animosity we see against those who follow Jesus. Spurgeon says the following, “If it were not for the laws of the land, we should soon see a massacre of the righteous.” (Spurgeon n.d., 178)

In areas all around the globe, we see this is now a present reality for those who follow Jesus. But we also see the promise that the Lord will not leave us in their hands.

God often appears to deliver his servants, and when he does not do so in this life as to their bodies, he gives their souls such joy and peace that they triumphantly rise beyond their tormentor’s power. (Spurgeon n.d., 178)

Again, it is all based on perspective. The wicked think they have ended it all for the faithful, but for the follower of Jesus, not at all. And there is also this.

Romans 12:19

“Beloved, **never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God**, for it is written, “**Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.**”” (ESV)

Psalm 37:34

“**Wait for the LORD and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are eliminated, you will see it.**” (NASB 2020)

Why the repeat? Because it is difficult to do. Anyone enjoy waiting on the Lord?

The encouragement here is to wait on the Lord remaining faithful and obedient and as you do so,

To ‘exalt’ in this context is practically equivalent to deliver (cf. Ps. 27:6). Once more the land of Canaan comes into focus here. (Harman 2011, 318)



David is again pointing to the promises made to the people of Israel, obedience was deeply connected to that and they would indeed fail.

As we look at this from a future things perspective, it is pointing to the end of the age and as the final battles of Armageddon takes place, the remnant will indeed see the destruction of the wicked.

By the way, the church, which returns to this planet with Jesus Christ in the second coming, will also see the final elimination of the wicked as well.

Revelation 19:20–20:3

“Now the beast was seized, and along with him the false prophet who had performed the signs on his behalf—signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. **Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire burning with sulfur. The others were killed by the sword that extended from the mouth of the one who rode the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh. Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a huge chain. He seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan—and tied him up for a thousand years. The angel then threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it so that he could not deceive the nations until the one thousand years were finished.** (After these things he must be released for a brief period of time.)” (NET 2nd ed.)

David then gives us his own personal observations of what he has seen happen to the wicked.

Psalms 37:35–36

“I have seen a wicked, violent person Spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil. Then he passed away, and behold, he was no more; I searched for him, but he could not be found.” (NASB 2020) Have you ever noticed that those who do not know the Lord, tend to think they have solved the problems of life. They haven’t, we see them suddenly deciding the answer is somewhere else other than where they were last week.

If you watch any reality television, and I do not recommend that you do, the one thing you do see is the lifestyle of those on the screen. Yes, there are indeed those who then will decide they need to be like them.

We watch the wicked and want to copy them. We talked about this problem earlier when we looked at the first part of this psalm.

If God were to show up today and ask you “to ask me for whatever you want?” What would we say. Really.

Solomon, David’s son, was asked that question by the Lord and he asked for the wisdom to rule Israel. He was concerned with serving rather than for himself.

But there are those today who would teach you that God asks that of every believer and because we do not know how to answer Him, then we do not have health and wealth.

To know how to ask Him correctly, all you have to do is learn to “name and claim” whatever they desire because of their faith. Proponents believe they can create a binding transaction with God in which He is absolutely obligated to bless and provide what is asked of Him.” (Hope for the Heart 2024, 2)

This is nowhere near Biblical. This is watching whoever and wanting what they have and coming up with a “theology” to make coveting acceptable.



David tells us, from his personal experience, what happens to those given over to this type of prosperity lifestyle. They are wicked and violent and apparently have a large spread to live on. Spreading like a huge tree.

In the 35th verse he tells us, that it is no strange or unwonted thing for the ungodly, puffed up with their prosperity, to spread themselves far and wide, and to give occasion of terror to the innocent. Then he adds, that their greatness, which had been regarded with so much wonder, disappears in a moment. (Calvin and Anderson 2010, 50)

One minute, there is a huge estate and an overwhelming appearance based on their wealth, the next, nothing, someone else is there now.

Solomon wrote about this when done for anyone other than the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 8:11–13

“When a crime is not punished quickly, people feel it is safe to do wrong. But even though a person sins a hundred times and still lives a long time, I know that those who fear God will be better off. The wicked will not prosper, for they do not fear God. Their days will never grow long like the evening shadows.” (NLT)

And, per David, they disappear.

Psalms 37:37–40

“Observe the blameless person, and look at the upright; For the person of peace will have a future. But wrongdoers will altogether be destroyed; The future of the wicked will be eliminated. But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in time of trouble. The LORD helps them and rescues them; He rescues them from the wicked and saves them, Because they take refuge in Him.” (NASB 2020)

The last four verses provide us a summary to the issue of the wicked versus the righteous, all based on years of observation from David.

First of all, we are commanded to take another look at the righteous person. The word translated observe is שָׁמַר (smar) and means “watch, guard...be careful about, protect...save, retain...protect, observe, watch...keep watch, stand guard...be on one’s guard, be careful...” (Holladay and Köhler 2000, 377-378)

We are to carefully watch over, literally guarding the blameless person. This is someone to watch and observe carefully. David also commands us to look at the upright. And he uses a different word.

The word translated look is רָאָה (reha). “Unlike other verbs referring to visual perception, rā’â denotes the experience of seeing as a totality, in which sensation and perception merge. The experience of the visual nature of reality has as its content the meaning, character, and nature of the images perceived; this experience is the polar opposite of sensation, i.e., the experience of the concrete nature of reality, an experience that conveys the nature and intensity of such sensory data as color, form, and spatial location.” (Fuhs 2004, 214)

We are being commanded to closely examine the life of the one who is righteous and perceive why they are so. They are also people of peace and they have a future. “Overall, therefore, the moral of this psalm is that one should pursue Yahweh’s way because in the end the righteous will inherit the land and the wicked will be cut off from it.” (Broyles 2012, 182)

Those who are obedient and faithfully following the Lord reflect the one they follow and they have an eternal future waiting for them.



In the very next verse, we contrast that with the wicked. What future do they have? The contrast is incredibly sharp as we are told, they have no future and no legacy. They will be destroyed and will only show up again at the Great White Throne to receive judgment.

Revelation 20:11–15

“And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. **I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books.** The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.” (NLT)

For those who die in their sin, per this psalm, the wicked, they all have only one thing to look forward to after death, judgement.

The judgment is eternal punishment in hell. Yes, here at Calvary Chapel, we believe in an actual real place called hell and those who go there will be punished forever.

There is no such thing as annihilation as the Bible is quite clear. There is an important point to remember, let God be God.

Psalms 115:3

“**Our God is in the heavens, and he does as he wishes.**” (NLT)

He is answerable to no one. He sure is not answerable to His own creation. When all is said and done, our feelings, our wants, and our wanting to make hell less fearsome, is subject to God who is ultimate over everything.

Isaiah 55:9

“For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.” (NLT)

Jesus was very up front about a place that He went to the cross to provide you and me a way not to go to.

Matthew 5:22

“But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.” (ESV)

Jesus talked about a judgment He will do at the end of the Great Tribulation called the sheep and goats judgment. The detail is in Matthew 25:31-46. After Jesus examines the evidence for each person, judgment is made. Believers who are in their human bodies at the end of the Great Tribulation are invited into the Kingdom, the others, are not. As part of their final sentence they will hear the following, “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, **into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**’” (Matthew 25:41, ESV)

Jesus tells us what it will be like there as part of His parable about the wheat and the tares.

Matthew 13:40–43

“Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and



throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.” (ESV)

We are not talking about the never-ending party AC/DC sings of.

John 3:36

“The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. **The one who rejects the Son will not see life, but God’s wrath remains on him.**” (NET 2nd ed.)

Reject Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross, which He willingly did for us all, and the result is eternal punishment. “Jesus spent more time warning people about the dangers of hell than He did in comforting them with the hope of heaven. The concept of a real, conscious, forever-and-ever existence in hell is just as biblical as a real, conscious, forever-and-ever existence in heaven.” (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

When David gives a hint of the future of the wicked being eliminated, he means it.

Psalms 37:39–40 “But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in time of trouble. The LORD helps them and rescues them; He rescues them from the wicked and saves them, Because they take refuge in Him.” (NASB 2020)

The source of salvation, the source of redemption, is the Lord and no one else. There is nothing you or I can do to save ourselves.

God is the source of our salvation, He is the source of our protection, He is the source of our future and our eternity.

In this life, it appears that the wicked are often on top, but the book of Revelation, among many other places, reminds us that God will ultimately destroy the wicked and bring his people into the new Jerusalem. Indeed, we should hope in the LORD and keep his way (v. 34), because the salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD (v. 39). (Longman III 2014, 181)

Let’s pray.

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