

“STOP STRESSING OUT!”

(Or “Quit Vexing Your Soul”)

Psalm 37:1-15

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INTRODUCTION

In the first 15 verses of Psalm 37 the Lord repeats the same expression three times: “Fret not yourself!” What does that mean?

- Don’t heat yourself with vexation. Stop being inwardly angry.
- Stop being stressed out.
- Don’t let your insides be all stirred up and agitated.

Now in this Psalm, the stress and anger were due to perceived injustices that were not being addressed and made right. Wicked people were getting away with their sin and seem to still prosper. What we need to realize is that the same principle applies to every source of stress in our lives. The answers given here by the Lord through David apply to every situation in our lives that brings us anxiety, stress, and depression.

STOP TROUBLING YOUR SOUL – ROLL ALL YOUR BURDENS ON THE LORD!

In this text we see exhortations for the present, and confidence for the future.

I. EXHORTATIONS FOR THE PRESENT

A. Don’t fret over wickedness and wicked people (1, 7, 8)

1. The character of the wicked (1, 7b, 9, 12, 14)
2. The character of the angry believer (1,8)

B. Trust in the Lord (3, 5)

The root idea of “TRUST” is: to throw one down upon his face; lie extended on the ground.

1. Commit your way to the Lord (5a)—Literally: **“Roll your way upon the Lord.”**
The idea is that of “getting rid of a burden.” The verb is really a synonym for “entrust” (Pr. 16:3; Ps. 22:8). David is saying, “Release the burden and lay it on the Lord.” For a New Testament commentary on this verse, see I Peter 5:7 – “casting all your care upon him....”
2. Be quiet and still (7)
3. Wait patiently for God (7).

This verb literally means whirl, writhe in anguish; but here and in one other place it means to calmly and patiently wait – though the circumstances are agitating and distressing.

C. Delight in the Lord (4).

The vexation caused by wicked people could “take all the joy out of life”; here David suggests that believers must continue to find delight in their relationship with Yahweh-- take exquisite delight in Him.

D. Carry out your duties (3)

1. Do good. (Good works must always be the result of trusting God.)
2. Dwell in the land. (Stay in the place where God has put you and fulfill your duty there.)
3. Feed on faithfulness.

These are important expectations for us to fulfill every day.

Doing right in the present is very important; but God gives his child confidence for the future as well.

II. CONFIDENCE FOR THE FUTURE.

A. For the Child of God

1. He will *give you your hearts desires* (4).

The reason that this promise is possible is that one who delights in Yahweh will find his desires being conformed to the will of Yahweh. Yahweh changes his “heart.”

2. He will *take care of your way* (5). The resulting promise is that **He will do**
3. You will *be vindicated* (6).
4. You will *inherit the earth* (vv. 9, 11; cf. Mt. 5:5—3rd Beatitude; **Jesus refers to this passage, but expands the promise from merely the land of Israel to the entire earth during the millennium.**) THIS IS ONE OF THE THEMES OF PSALM 37: see vv. 9, 11, 22, 29, and 34.
5. You will have “*exquisite delight*” in abundant prosperity (11); **those who find their delight in the Lord will find His delight to be in them!**

The child of God has nothing to fear and to be agitated about! He must have a long-term picture for both his own future and for the long-term future of the wicked that surround him.

There is a future for the believer; there is no good future for the wicked outside of Christ.

B. For Those Who Have No Genuine Relationship with God – the Wicked.

1. God “laughs” at their bluster, pride, and prosperity (13; Psalm 2:4).
2. God sees that his “day” of judgment and punishment **is coming!** (13)
3. They wither and fade (2).
 - Their splendor, power, and glory are very temporary and quickly disappear.
 - They are like the grass and green Herb in a dry desert country.
 - The same sun that is a blessing to the righteous (v. 6) is a curse to them.
4. In a little while wicked men “will be no more”. (10)
5. The believer can carefully observe that his “place” is nowhere to be found – literally “there is not him.” He is a non-factor in God’s future plan and program – but the righteous flourish.
6. They are “cut off” (9).
7. God metes out to them the law of just recompense: “their sword will enter their own heart” (15).

Such may be called the great reversal and it will come as surely as God lives!

CONCLUSION

Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? Then heed the expectations given here in Psalm 37:

- Don’t fret – don’t stress yourself and get heated and agitated envious.
- Trust in the Lord.
- Delight in the Lord.
- Carry out your duties

Your future is bright! The future of the wicked is bleak!

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