Psalm 37: Patience, Justice, and Hope Now. David wrote psalms throughout his life. For some, it is difficult to determine when they were written, but from verse 25, it is clear that David wrote Psalm 37 when he was old. “I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread.”

In many ways, the psalm sounds like the loving advice that a grandfather would give to his grandchildren. ***What a life David had lived!*** Think of the years of experience and meditation that he had when he wrote this psalm. As David saw his own end coming closer, he may have wanted to give the generations following him something to help them with life.

So, he tried to answer the perplexing question, “Why do the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper?” Not only was that an important question in David’s day, but it is also a question that is asked many times every day.

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David recognized that the situation did exist where it seemed like the wicked often did better than those who loved the Lord and were trying to do His will, and his first eleven verses contained a message to hold on and get everything in the right perspective. David began piece of advice with words designed to encourage the faithful.

He wrote, “Do not fret because of evil men”, “Trust in the Lord and do good”, “Delight yourself in the Lord”, Commit your way to the Lord”, “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him”, and “Refrain from anger and turn from wrath”.

Often, life seems to be horribly unfair. At such times when it is happening to US, it is hard to see why God would allow things to happen. The question creeps into our mind, “What good is it to be a Christian if this is going to happen?” In reading David’s psalms, it’s clear that he had written many of them while he was wrestling with tremendous problems and trials. So, the first eleven verses are especially precious; because David “has been there”, and his words were written out of those times.

David’s words would be echoed time after time by the New Testament writers. We are “told to endure, persevere, run the race, hold fast to our faith, and countless other words. All of these men saw life as a task to be done, and it would require a faith and trust in the Lord.

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Psalm 37: Patience, Justice, and Hope Now

Not only would the wicked seem to do better than the righteous, David also knew that the wicked would also plot against the men and women that loved and followed the Lord. Today, in varying degrees, Christians face hostility from those that will not follow the way of

the Lord. However, verse 13 shows what will happen, “The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them, but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming”.

For those opposed to the Lord, the day of reckoning will arrive. For Christians, that promise is to be a word of encouragement, but it must not be taken too far. With Godly love, all in Christ are to take the Good News to a lost world. We are to work to save souls, and even those that are to be considered wicked can find salvation in Jesus Christ. Our work is to be about the Lord’s business, His job is to settle the accounts.

In verse 18, David wrote, “The days of the blameless are known to the Lord, and their inheritance will endure forever”. This passage, in a sense, answers the question about why the wicked seem to prosper and the Righteous seem to suffer. In this world of sin, the wicked will have their day. In addition, Satan actively works against those that follow the Lord. However, the Lord KNOWS those that love him and try to follow him. No matter what happens here, the eternal inheritance that has been promised is secure. This world will end, but what is real will last.

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How much do people know about other people that lived in the past? How many details do we even know about our personal families?

Certainly, memories are often very clear and precious concerning parents and grandparents. But what is known about great-grandparents or great-great grandparents? What did they do in their lives? What did they accomplish? What about great-aunt so-and-so, or old great uncle… "What was his name again?" How important is a person's life if the details are lost?

But the Psalmist wrote, "The days of the blameless are known to the Lord…" In Christ, every Christian's life has meaning. The efforts, the prayers, the struggles, and the great joys don't disappear. In fact, they are remembered for eternity.

In verses 23 and ***24***, David wrote, "The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the One who holds his hand." How many parents have carefully walked behind a small child just beginning to walk? Each tentative step is a victory for that little one, and the joy of success is obvious in those young eyes. But the danger of falling and getting hurt is very real. So, "Mommy" or "Daddy", shadow each step to make sure he, or she, does not get hurt.

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How many times have we seen a small child holding onto the hand, or finger, of Daddy as they walk along the sidewalk or parking lot? It is clear that the child feels secure and confident, because the Father is right there.

In a very real sense, the Lord is with very one of His children. If that Christian stumbles or falls, any injury will be relatively minor. In many cases, tragic incidents or trials are avoided, because “the steps of a man are established by the Lord”. Like a small child, a Christian can move through the events of life confident that the Lord is right there.

So, when life seems to be horribly unfair, remember Psalm 37 and the wise advice of an old man who had a very special understanding of the importance of the Lord. Across the centuries, his words will help.

Psalm 37: Patience, Justice, and Hope Now