

## When evil people prosper

### Introduction

All of us struggle when those who have clearly acted in a dishonest or corrupt way not only get away with their actions but in fact seem to prosper because of them. We look at the world around us, see the prosperity of the wicked and find ourselves asking hard questions about justice, and particularly about the justice of God. If God is good and God is just then why does He not prevent evil things from happening and why, when they do happen, does He not act against evil doers?

It may of course be that we don't express these hard questions to others for fear of what they might think of us, but the questions are there and they need to be faced and answered, lest they begin to undermine our faith. So, how are we as believers in the good and just God to respond when evil people prosper? The Bible answers this important question in a number of places, but nowhere more clearly than in Psalm 37, the text for this study.

As we shall see, the Psalm begins with the exhortation "do not fret because of evil men" (37:1) In this way the Psalmist shows that he truly understands the challenge that we face when evil people prosper. We do become anxious and fretful, at times even angry about the situation. But as we shall also see, the call not to fret is also balanced by an exhortation to "trust in the LORD" and to persevere in "doing good". And behind all of these exhortations we find clear reasons given, most notably the assurance that the LORD does in fact see and that He will act in His own time. Thus a Psalm which begins with the exhortation "do not fret" ultimately invites the reader to "trust in the LORD" (37:3) and to "take refuge in Him" (37:40)

### Read Psalm 37:1-40

#### Investigate

1. What is the basic issue that the Palmist is grappling with? (see 37:1; 7; 35)







In what ways has this psalm challenged your thinking?



In what way has this Psalm encouraged your heart?



What changes do you need to make in the light of this Psalm?