

PSALM THIRTY-SEVEN, THREE THROUGH FIVE

Intro: Every child of God wonders at one time or another if it is really best to be a child of God.

Sometimes these thoughts arise from our own sinful hearts. At other times they are provoked by Satan who is quick to take advantage of us in times of trouble.

This thought often becomes unbearable when, in times of testing, we see the apparent ease with which the people who do not know the Lord live. THIS IS THE PROBLEM WHICH DAVID IS DEALING WITH IN PSALM THIRTY-SEVEN! Cf. vv. 1, 2.

Tonight we are only going to look at a small part of the Psalm: 3 out of 40 verses. If you get help from the 3, think what all 40 will do for you!

The three are very familiar. They are made up of two kinds of statements: commands, and promises. There are 5 commands, and 4 promises. One of the commands, however, is repeated, so this, in reality, gives us 4 of each. (We will see the reason for the repetition as we go along.)

The important thing about these commands is that they tell us what we should do when we do not know what to do because of the confusion that fills our minds. But, what is even more wonderful, they tell us what we can expect from God when we do what David has learned from his own experiences.

Let us look at these 3 verses, one at a time, to make sure that we understand what they mean.

I. THE EXPLANATION OF EACH VERSE.

A. Verse 3.

This verse has two commands and ~~one~~^{two} promises.

We are always to "trust in the Lord," i.e., in Jehovah. This means we are to place our confidence in Him, casting ourselves, and our cares, upon Him--remembering what Jehovah means.

But, while we are trusting Him, we are to do good. "Good" in God's sight always speaks of that which is according to His Word. We are not to wait until the testing is over, but we are to do it right along with the trusting.

The promises:

- 1) "So shalt thou dwell in the land." This was all that any devout Jew would desire. It meant the blessing of God. It meant deliverance from their enemies outside, deliverance from trouble and ~~stri~~ strife inside. This was always evidence of God's blessing upon Israel.
- 2) "And verily thou shalt be fed." Lit., this means that they will feed in faith, like ~~shepherds~~ sheep who have absolute confidence in the shepherd. They know he will be faithful to them. God is a shepherd!

B. Verse 4.

This verse has one command, and one promise.

"Delight thyself also in the Lord" is a reference to what our Lord called the first commandment. It is one thing to trust the Lord, but it is quite another thing to trust Him and to delight in Him while you are trusting Him!

We are to delight in Him as a Person, and we are to delight in His ways with us. We are to love Him and to love what He chooses for us.

What is the promise?

"And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." This speaks of answered prayer. "Desires" are petitions, requests, the things that we ask for.

How can God make such a promise? Because He is giving it to people who have come to delight in Him!

C. Verse 5.

Here we have 2 commands (one repeated), and 1 promise.

"Commit" = roll. Cf. 1 Pet. 5:7. We roll something which is too heavy to lift. It is a weight, a burden. Cf. also Psa. 55:22.

"Thy way" means thy life, the whole life, in every detail, made up, as it is, of steps. This is our walk. Life itself often gets to be more than people can bear--even for the people of God!

"Trust also in Him." Why the repetition? Because David wants us to know that we are to trust and to keep trusting!

The promise: "And He shall bring it to pass." Lit. it is, And He (emphatic) will do (it). He will take care of that which we cannot do, and see it through to the end.

This what the verses mean. Obviously we can see that the fulfillment of the promises is dependent upon our obedience to the commands. And yet even in our obedience we know that we are dependent upon Him.

From these verses now let us look at what they indicate regarding

II. THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN OUR TRIALS.

- A. They are designed draw us away from dependence upon ourselves, and to teach us to trust the Lord more. Cf., "Trust in the Lord."
- B. They are designed to teach us the importance of obeying the Word at all times, but especially in times of testing. Cf., "And do good."
- C. They are designed to teach us that our joy is always to be in the Lord. Cf., "Delight thyself also in the Lord." None of us loves the Lord as we should. Nothing is more important for our peace and joy day by day.
- D. They are designed to make us pray. Cf., "And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."
- E. They are designed to make us realize the need to trust the Lord for every detail of our lives. Cf., "Commit thy way unto the Lord."
- F. They are designed to teach us that we can always trust the Lord more than we have been trusting Him the in past. Cf., "Trust also in Him."
- G. They are designed to show us that God can do the things which are impossible for us. Cf., "And HE shall bring it to pass; or, simply, He will do it."

Concl: Is it any wonder that the writer of Hebrews says, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth"? Cf. Heb. 12:6. Instead of doubting the Lord because of our testing, it should make us love Him more because it means that He is seeking to teach us the most important lessons that we can learn--lessons which will ultimately lead to greater and greater blessing!