

Managing Stress

Psalm 37:1-9

The Story of Psalm 37

This psalm is simply titled **A Psalm of David**. Verse 25 tells us that it is David in his older years, giving wisdom in the pattern of a song. In style this is a wisdom psalm, directed not to God but to man.

David saw that many evil people had everything that they wanted. They did what they liked. Nobody stopped them. They hurt poor people that did not have very much. He began to feel very angry, but he remembered that one day God would put things right. It's all about waiting for that Lord.

Psalm 37 is an acrostic alphabet psalm, with every other verse starting with letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Verse 1 begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, verse 3 with the second letter, and so on. Other acrostic alphabet psalms are 9, 10, 25, 34, 111, 112, 119 and 145.

What Psalm 37: 1 – 8 means

How do you wait for God to do something? How do you stop yourself getting angry because godless people have everything that they want? David tells us how: **do something else!** In **verse 3** he starts telling us the things that we should do so that we do not become angry. He says:

- trust in the LORD, or ask God for help
- do good things, or give help to people around us
- enjoy what the land gives, even if it is not much

We are happy with the LORD if we obey him. He will then give us all that we need. It might not happen immediately, but it will happen. We must learn to wait for God's time. This means the time when God decides to do something.

In **verse 6** there are 2 pictures. One is of the dawn, the other of the sun at midday. Just as everybody sees these things, so everybody will see what sort of people we are. But, as **verse 7** says, we must wait for God to do something.

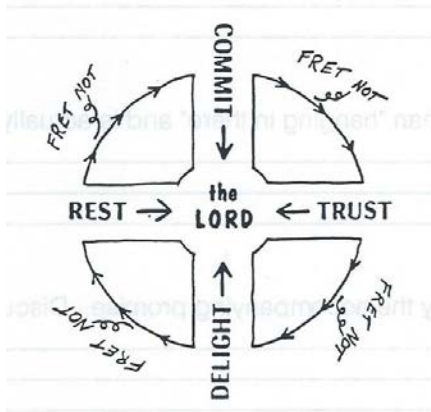
He will show people what we are like. We must not become angry if they do not see it. We must **be still and wait!** The Hebrew word for "be still" in **verse 7** means "do not make a noise" as well as "do not move".

We should not get angry with **anyone**. Another way to say "get angry" in English is "get heated (hot)" about something. As you can see in **verse 8**, it is the same in Hebrew. When we get angry with someone it usually leads to trouble.

The word "cut off" in **verse 9** means "destroyed". When the Jews came from Egypt to Israel with Moses, God cut off or destroyed their enemies. Then the Jews received their land. The enemies were the Canaanites that lived in the land before the Jews. This verse tells us that what God did in the past he can do again.

1. What was/is one of the most stress producing experiences in your life?

2. Examine the diagram and notice where “the Lord” needs to be in your life.



3. Read Psalm 37:1-9 to discover how you can handle with the stresses of your life. The word “fret” is used in verses 1, 7, and 8. What is the difference between worry and concern?

4. What five qualities from verses 3-8 do we need to practice in our daily walk with the Lord.

1. _____

4. _____

2. _____

5. _____

3. _____

5. What does “commit” mean to you?

6. Read verse 3. Why is “trust” such a difficult step for us?

7. Give a personal illustration of how trusting the Lord has brought great blessings into your life?

8. Read verse 4 and identify the accompanying promise. What is meant by the word “delight”? Is it an expression of will or emotion?

9. “Rest” (verse 7) is something I earn... I cannot leap from **commit**, over **trust** and **delight**, to **rest**. It is a rest from conflict, not from action. What is the difference between “resting in the Lord” and “rusting in the Lord?”

10. What are the benefits in life when my heart is quiet in the Lord?

11. From the acrostic “delight”... what are words of encouragement and praise that come to mind?

D _____

E _____

L _____

I _____

G _____

H _____

T _____