

PSALM 37

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 37

[A Psalm] of David

This psalm, it is very probable, was written at the same time, and upon the same occasion, with the former; and describes the different states of good and bad men; and is full of exhortations, instructions, and advice to the people of God; intermixed with various encouraging promises. A late learned writer^{f514} thinks it was written for Mephibosheth's consolation under Ziba's calumny.

Ver. 1. *Fret not thyself because of evildoers*, etc.] The saints may be grieved at them and for them, because of their evil doings, and may be angry with them for them; yet are not to show any undue warmth, at least in an indecent way, by calling them opprobrious names; for the words may be rendered, “do not show thyself warm” or “angry”^{f515}: in a sinful way; or fret not at their outward prosperity, as it is explained (^{<497B>}Psalm 37:7). The Targum adds, “to be like them”, which agrees with (^{<497B>}Psalm 37:8);

neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity; that is, at their present temporal happiness; (see ^{<497B>}Psalm 73:3). The Targum adds, as before, to be joined with them; which sense some parallel places seem to incline to, (^{<418B>}Proverbs 3:31 23:17).

Ver. 2. *For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*] Which in the morning looks green, pretty, and flourishing, and in the evening is cut down, and then fades away; (see ^{<491B>}Psalm 90:5,6); and so the wicked prosper and flourish for a while, and then they perish with all their honour, riches, and wealth; so that their happiness is a very short lived one, and therefore need not be envied and fretted at.

Ver. 3. *Trust in the Lord*, etc.] Not in men, who are fading and perishing like the green grass and tender herb; nor in riches, which are very uncertain things; but in the Lord, in whom is everlasting strength; and with whom are riches and honour, yea, durable riches and righteousness; trust in him both for things temporal and spiritual, for soul and body, for time and eternity;

the way to have peace and quietness of mind under all dispensations is to exercise faith on a promising God. The Targum is, “trust in the Word of the Lord”, in the essential Word of God, the promised Messiah;

and do good; in general, all good actions, in faith, and as the fruits and effects of it, without trusting to them, but in the Lord; doing them in his strength, and with a view to his glory; or in particular, acts of beneficence to the poor, to which the encouragement follows;

[so] shalt thou dwell in the land; either in the land of Canaan, a continuance in which depended upon the obedience of the people of the Jews to the commands of God; (see ^{<2019>}Isaiah 1:19 ^{<400>}Ephesians 6:1,2); or rather in the good land which is afar off, the heavenly and better country, which those that trust in the Lord, and have that faith in Christ which works by love, shall dwell in to all eternity;

and verily thou shalt be fed; either temporally, shall have food and raiment, even all the necessaries of life; or spiritually, with the word and ordinances, and with Christ the bread of life now; and hereafter shall be fed by him, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and by him led to fountains of living water: some read the words as an exhortation, and render them, “feed truth” ^{f516}, that is, teach it, as Abraham taught his household, and as faithful pastors feed with knowledge and understanding; or “feed by faith” ^{f517}, as the just live by it; or, as the Targum renders it, “be strong in faith”, as Abraham was, (^{<400>}Romans 4:20); or rather, “feed upon truth” ^{f518}, the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation, and the several truths and doctrines of it, which are food for faith, and nourish up to everlasting life.

Ver. 4. *Delight thyself also in the Lord*, etc.] In the persons in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in the perfections of God, his power, goodness, faithfulness, wisdom, love, grace, and mercy; in his works of creation, providence, and redemption; in his word, his Gospel, the truths and ordinances of it; in his house, and the worship of it; and in his people, the excellent in the earth, in whom was all the delight of the psalmist; and each of these afford a field of delight and pleasure, to attend unto, contemplate, and meditate upon;

and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart; such as are according to the will of God, and for the good of his people; such as relate to communion with him, and to the communication of more grace from him, and to the enjoyment of eternal glory.

Ver. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord*, etc.] Or “thy works”, as in (^{<316B>}Proverbs 16:3); that is, all the affairs and business of life, which are a man’s ways in which he walks; not that men should sit still, be inactive, and do nothing, and leave all to be done by the Lord; but should seek direction of God in everything engaged in, and for strength and assistance to perform it, and go on in it, and depend upon him for success, and give him all the glory, without trusting to any thing done by them: or, as some render the words, “reveal thy way unto the Lord” ^{f519}; not that God is ignorant of the ways of men, and of their affairs, and of their wants and necessities, but it is their duty to ask, and it is his delight to hear; they may come and use freedom with him, and tell him their whole case, and leave it with him, believing he will supply all their need: or, as others render it, “roll thy way on the Lord” ^{f520}; (see ^{<4652>}Psalm 55:22); meaning not the burden of sin, nor the weight of affliction, but any affair of moment and importance that lies heavy upon the mind;

trust also in him; it is an ease to the mind to spread it before the Lord, who sympathizes with his people, supports them under and brings them through their difficulties;

and he shall bring [it] to pass; as he does whatever he has appointed and determined shall be, and whatever he has promised, and whatever will be for his own glory and his people’s good.

Ver. 6. *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light*, etc.] That is, the good man having committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously, he will, in his own time, clearly make it appear that it is a righteous one, both to himself and others, in whatsoever obscurity it may have lain;

and thy judgment as the noonday; the same as before, unless rather the righteousness of Christ, which is the believer’s by imputation, and is a justifying one in the judgment of God, should be meant; (see ^{<317B>}Micah 7:9); and the phrases may denote not barely the revelation of it in the Gospel, but the more clear manifestation of it to the believer himself, from faith to faith; or as it will be still more clearly revealed and declared at the day of judgment, when those who are clothed with it shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and be clear of all those charges and imputations which they have lain under in this life.

Ver. 7. *Rest in the Lord*, etc.] Or “be silent to the Lord”^{f521}; be still, and know that he is God; quietly submit to his will, and acquiesce in all the dispensations of his providence: it does not design a stupid indolence, or a stoical apathy, that we should be like sticks and stones, without any concern at the hand of God upon us; nor an entire silence under afflictions; we should own that they are of God, and that we are deserving of them; we should pray to him to sanctify them, to support under them, and deliver out of them; we should bless his name that they are no worse, and that they are any ways useful to us; and we should speak to others of the divine goodness experienced under them; but this stands opposed to an arraignment or murmuring at the providence of God, and intends a patient bearing the hand of God, and a resignation of will to his will; for it follows,

and wait patiently for him: for the enjoyment of him, help from him, and deliverance by him;

fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass; this explains the sense of (^{4370B}Psalm 37:1); it being often an additional uneasiness to the people of God under affliction, when they observe the prosperity of men that go on in a sinful way, and have all or more than heart can wish; and whatever they contrive and devise, though wicked and criminal.

Ver. 8. *Cease from anger*, etc.] Either at these wicked men who are so prosperous, or at God, who for the present suffers it; (see Jon 4:9) (^{4193B}Proverbs 19:3);

and forsake wrath; which is anger wrought up to a greater degree; and the rather to be shunned and avoided, as being very disagreeable to the character of a good man;

fret not thyself in any wise to do evil; evil may be done by fretting at the prosperity of wicked men, or by imitating them, doing as they do, in hope of being prosperous as they are; from which the psalmist dissuades by reasons following.

Ver. 9. *For evildoers shall be cut off*, etc.] Though they flourish for a while, they shall be cut down like the grass or flower of the field, or they shall be cut off as branches from a flourishing tree; they shall be cut off from the earth, and rooted out of it by death or some desolating judgment; (see ^{4102B}Proverbs 2:22); and therefore not to be envied and fretted at;

but those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth; such who attend his word, worship, and ordinances; obey his commands, trust in his grace and mercy; or, as the Targum, “trust in the word of the Lord”; who wait upon him for the manifestations of himself, for the performance of his promises, for answer of prayer, for supplies of grace, and live in the expectation of the heavenly glory; these shall have for their inheritance, not the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, which the obedient Jews enjoyed; but either this world and the necessaries of it, which such persons have the promise of, a right unto through Christ, are heirs of, and do enjoy what they do with a blessing; or else the new earth after this, in which only righteous ones, those that wait upon the Lord, and trust in him, will dwell; unless the heavenly country, the good land afar off, is meant, often called an inheritance.

Ver. 10. *For yet a little while, and the wicked [shall] not [be]*, etc.] Not that they shall be annihilated or reduced to nothing, because nonentities have no place nor being any where; when they die they shall lift up their eyes in hell; their bodies will rise again at the last day; they shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and go into everlasting punishment; but they shall be no more in the world, and in the same flourishing and prosperous circumstances they were: and this their destruction will be in a short time, very quickly;

yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it [shall] not [be]; his dwelling place, called after his own name, to perpetuate the memory of him; (see ^{<4070>}Job 7:10 20:9); an instance of this the psalmist gives of his own knowledge, (^{<4975>}Psalms 37:35,36).

Ver. 11. *But the meek shall inherit the earth*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{<4950>}Psalms 37:9”); of this character (see Gill on “^{<4026>}Psalms 22:26”). Our Lord seems to refer to this passage in (^{<4085>}Matthew 5:5);

and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace; of spiritual peace enjoyed in a way of believing, arising from a comfortable view of interest in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and of all happiness and prosperity in the kingdom of Christ here on earth, at which time there will be abundance of peace, (^{<4970>}Psalms 72:7); or of eternal peace in the world to come, which will be a state of uninterrupted and unspeakable peace; (see ^{<4975>}Psalms 37:37); all which afford inconceivable delight and pleasure; and therefore such have no need to fret and be envious at the fading happiness of wicked men.

Ver. 12. *The wicked plotteth against the just*, etc.] Forms schemes to make him uneasy, uncomfortable, and unhappy:

and gnasheth upon him with his teeth: which expresses his malice and hatred, as David's enemies did upon him, (^{<13516>}Psalm 35:16); and Stephen's, (^{<4075>}Acts 7:54).

Ver. 13. *The Lord shall laugh at him*, etc.] Have him and his plots in derision, confound his schemes, and disappoint him of his designs, bring him into calamity, and laugh at it; (see ^{<19114>}Psalm 2:4 ^{<31123>}Proverbs 1:26);

for he seeth that his day is coming; either the day of the Lord, which he has appointed to judge the world in, and which comes suddenly, at unawares, as a thief in the night, and is known unto the Lord, though to none else; or the day of the wicked man's ruin and destruction, to which he is appointed, and which is the same; and so the Targum is, "the day of his calamity": which the Lord observes is hastening on, when he will be for ever miserable.

Ver. 14. *The wicked have drawn out the sword*, etc.] That is, out of the scabbard; they drew upon the righteous, in order to sheath it in them; or they sharpened the sword, as Aben Ezra observes some interpret the word; it may be literally rendered, "opened the sword"^{f522}, which before lay hid in the scabbard:

and have bent their bow; having put the arrow in it, in order to shoot. The former expression may design the more open, and this the more secret way of acting against the righteous; and their view in both is

to cast down the poor and needy, who are so, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; to cause such to fall either into sin, or into some calamity or another:

[and] to slay such as be of upright conversation; who walk according to the rule of the word of God, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ: nothing less than the blood and life of these men will satisfy the wicked; and it is an aggravation of their wickedness that they should attempt to hurt men of such character who are poor and needy, holy, harmless, inoffensive, and upright; and this points at the reason why they hate them, and seek their ruin, because of the holiness and uprightness of their lives; (see ^{<8159>}John 15:19,20 ^{<1043>}1 Peter 4:3,4).

Ver. 15. *Their sword shall enter into their own heart*, etc.] As Saul's did into his, (^{<0810>}1 Samuel 31:4);

and their bows shall be broken; the meaning is, that their efforts shall be fruitless, and their attempts in vain; the mischief they have contrived and designed for others shall fall upon themselves; (see ^{<3075>}Psalm 7:15); and therefore the saints should not be fretful and envious.

Ver. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath*, etc.] It is the portion of the righteous, for the most part, to have but little of this world's goods; some indeed have been rich, as Abraham, Lot, David, Joseph of Arimathea, and others; but, generally speaking, the wicked have the largest share of worldly things, and the righteous but little, and are as having nothing comparatively; and yet their little

[is] better than the riches of many wicked; not that a little is better than much, or that poverty is better than riches, or a poor man better than a rich man; but the comparison is between a righteous man and a wicked man; the emphasis lies there; and the sense is, that a "righteous" man's "little" is better than a "wicked" man's "much"; the righteous have a right to what they have, through Christ, who is heir of all things, but not the wicked; they have what they have in love and with a blessing, not so the wicked; they are contented in their state and condition, when the wicked are never satisfied; they possess and enjoy what they have, even all they have, when God oftentimes does not give the wicked an heart to eat and drink of what they are possessed, but a stranger eats it; they have the presence of God with them, and that makes a little sweet, and to go a great way; and they live without any anxious, distressing, burdensome care; not so the wicked; and before long the tables will be turned, and they will have their good things, and the wicked their evil things; (see ^{<2108>}Proverbs 16:8 15:16,17); wherefore they have no need to fret under present circumstances, nor envy the happiness of wicked men. Arama interprets it, of a little help that a righteous man has, better than the riches of many wicked; and Gussetius ^{f523} understands all this not of the smallness and largeness of the substance of different persons, but of their numbers, the one small, the other large; and Jarchi, that the sense is, that a few persons with the righteous, which was the case of Abraham and Gideon, are better and succeed more than the multitude of many wicked persons; and the church should be content with a small number of believers, and not draw in a multitude of wicked men into their communion.

Ver. 17. *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken*, etc.] That is, their sword arm, with which they have drawn it; and so shall not be able to strike with it; and with which they have bent their bows, but shall not be able to shoot: and this proves, what is before suggested, that their efforts shall be fruitless; or their substance shall be taken away from them, in which they trusted, and wherein their strength lay; and this confirms what had been just spoken, that the righteous man's little is better than the wicked man's much; and which is further confirmed by what follows;

but the Lord upholdeth the righteous; both in a providential way, by supporting them in their being, supplying their need, preserving them from dangers, and bearing them up under all their afflictions; and in a spiritual way, by maintaining the principle of grace and life in them, by furnishing them with all spiritual blessings, by sustaining them in times of temptation, and by securing them safe from their enemies; upholding them so as that they stand in the grace of God now, and shall stand before Christ with confidence hereafter; and shall not fall here finally and totally, nor in the day of judgment. The Targum is, "the Word of the Lord upholdeth the righteous".

Ver. 18. *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright*, etc.] Not only how long they shall live, and so fill up their days, the number of them, as Aben Ezra interprets it; but the nature of their days, whether prosperous or adverse; and causes both to work together for their good; and he knows the work of their days, as Jarchi explains it, the actions done by them in faith and love, and to his honour and glory, and which he approves and accepts of in Christ; (see ^{<8006>}Psalm 1:6);

and their inheritance shall be for ever; in heaven, which is an eternal and never fading one, (^{<8015>}Hebrews 9:15 ^{<1004>}1 Peter 1:4); and therefore they ought not to fret and be envious.

Ver. 19. *They shall not be ashamed in the evil time*, etc.] Of affliction and persecution, or of old age, or in the day of judgment, when it will go ill with others; (see ^{<1028>}1 John 2:28);

and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied: whether it is understood figuratively of a famine of hearing the word, or literally of a proper famine of bread and water: these God will provide for them, as he did for Elijah, and they shall be sure unto them, and therefore let them not fret nor envy.

Ver. 20. *But the wicked shall perish*, etc.] In a time of famine, in an evil day, and particularly at the day of judgment: for this is to be understood, not merely of being in bodily distress and want; nor of perishing by death, common to the righteous and the wicked; nor of being in a lost perishing condition, as all men by nature are, but of eternal perdition in hell;

and the enemies of the Lord [shall be] as the fat of lambs, they shall consume; that is, either they shall consume away as the fat of lambs burnt upon the altar, which evaporates, or as lambs fattened on purpose to be killed, and so prepared for the day of slaughter; in like manner the wicked, who have waxed fat and kicked, will be destroyed; they being the enemies of God, yea, enmity to him, to Father, Son, and Spirit, to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, and to his people, and will be treated as such. Some render the word, “like the excellency of pastures”^{f524}; the grass of the field, which is cut down and withers presently; (see ^{<9870>}Psalm 37:2);

into smoke shall they consume away, or “with”^{f525} it; that is, as it; (see ^{<9881>}Psalm 68:1,2); or “in smoke”^{f526}; in the smoke of eternal torments, or hell, as the Targum.

Ver. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again*, etc.] While the wicked live, they are scandalous; they live by borrowing, which was always reckoned mean; (see ^{<9882>}Deuteronomy 28:12,44 ^{<9893>}Proverbs 22:7); and what is worse, as they borrow, they do not design to repay; they take no care nor thought about that, but live upon what they borrow: for this either expresses their incapacity that they cannot pay; or the evil disposition of their mind, which rather seems to be the sense, that they will not pay;

but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth; which not only argues capacity and ability, but a kind, merciful, and tender spirit to persons in distress, and is expressive of a generous action.

Ver. 22. *For [such as be] blessed of him*, etc.] Not of the righteous man; for he blesses them that curse and persecute him, and despitefully use him; but of the Lord, as the Syriac version expresses it; or by the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; both in a providential way, for it is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and puts into a capacity to give to others; and in a way of grace, with an interest in God as a covenant God in Christ; and with the blessings of grace in him, with a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and a right to eternal glory. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, render the words actively, “such as bless him”; either such as bless the

righteous, who are blessed also, (^{<0123>}Genesis 12:3); or rather such as bless the Lord, as the righteous do, for all their blessings temporal and spiritual they receive from him; these

shall inherit the earth; (see Gill on “^{<1570>}Psalm 37:9”);

and [they that be] cursed of him; not of the righteous man, but of the Lord, according to the tenor of his righteous law, which they have broken:

shall be cut off; out of the land of the living; many of them in the midst of their days, and shall everlastingly perish.

Ver. 23. *The steps of a [good] man are ordered by the Lord*, etc.] Or “of a man”^{f527}; such a man as is blessed of the Lord; the steps which he takes in life are ordered by the Lord, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual: his good conduct is not of himself, it is a blessing of the Lord, who directs and keeps the feet of his saints, and inclines them to take such steps, and pursue such methods, which he succeeds and prospers;

and he delighteth in his way; which he knows and approves of, guides and directs him in; (see ^{<1906>}Psalm 1:6).

Ver. 24. *Though he fall*, etc.] Into temptation, and by it into sins, and these very great ones; from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace, and a degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of grace:

he shall not be utterly cast down; because he is in the arms of everlasting love, and in the hands of Christ Jesus; is on him as the sure foundation, and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and so shall not perish, but have everlasting life;

for the Lord upholdeth [him with] his hand; with the right hand of his righteousness, and keeps him from falling finally and totally; (see ^{<2310>}Isaiah 41:10); and (see Gill on “^{<1577>}Psalm 37:17”).

Ver. 25. *I have been young, and [now] am old*, etc.] The psalmist makes mention of his age, which takes in the whole compass of his life, to command attention to what he was about to say; which was founded upon a long experience and observation of things, and was as follows;

yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken; though afflicted of God, and persecuted by men, yet not forsaken; though poor and needy, and often in

necessitous circumstances, yet God in his providence appeared for them in one way or another; and so as Apollinarius paraphrases it,

“I never knew a just man entirely needy;”

for such might be forsaken by men, and even by their dearest friends and relations, yet not by the Lord: they might indeed, at times, think themselves forsaken of him, and their enemies might conclude and say they were, and yet this was not their case, (^{<2344>}Isaiah 49:14 ^{<49710>}Psalm 71:10,11); and though they may be forsaken by him for a while, yet not utterly; he will not leave them and forsake them for ever, (^{<2347>}Isaiah 54:7 ^{<5835>}Hebrews 13:5);

nor his seed begging bread; they being righteous also, which must be supposed; otherwise, as good men have wicked children, these, through their wickedness, may come to poverty, to beggary, as they sometimes do; though a distinction may be made between being poor and beggars; the seed of the righteous may be the one, and not the other: besides, there is a difference between asking bread of others, in some few instances, and constantly begging bread from door to door, in which last sense the psalmist must be understood here; for otherwise he himself in some cases, had asked bread, as of Ahimelech at Nob, and of Nabal, etc. as did also Elijah of the widow of Sarepta: and though there might have been instances of some of the posterity of the righteous who got their bread by begging at the door, as in the case of Lazarus; yet David had never observed any such instance during the time of his life, which shows that such instances are very rare; whereas among wicked men and their offspring the case is frequent and common. Again, it may be observed, that the psalmist is speaking in the context of righteous men that are liberal, and give to the poor freely and largely; and it is seldom if ever known that they or their children come to want and poverty. Once more, the word “forsaken” may be repeated in this clause, thus; “nor his seed begging bread forsaken”^{f528}; or seeking it in vain, and finally destitute of it; though they have been so reduced as to beg their bread, they have not been forsaken; they have find it, bread sufficient to support life, as Apollinarius paraphrases it; their bread has been given and their water sure; (see ^{<23417>}Isaiah 41:17,18). In an ancient Midrash^{f529}, or exposition of the Jews, the sense is thus given:

“although his seed and his sons are begging bread, yet I have not seen the righteous man, their father, forsaken, because of his fear of the blessed God.”

Ver. 26. [*He is] ever merciful, and lendeth*, etc.] He sympathizes with the poor in distress, and shows mercy to miserable objects; not only by words, but deeds: and this is his constant disposition and conduct; of which his lending, as well as giving to persons in necessity, is an instance; and which shows capacity, and is a proof of the observation of the psalmist, that such are never forsaken, nor left to beg their bread: so far from it, that they have to lend and give to others;

and his seed [is] blessed; either his seed sown, his alms deeds, which are blessed to him and his, and to them to whom he ministers, as Jarchi explains it; (see ^{<4006>}2 Corinthians 9:6,10); or rather his offspring, who are blessed of God with things temporal for his sake; and are blessed by men, who say of them, these are the posterity of such and such liberal persons.

Ver. 27. *Depart from evil, and do good*, etc.] Depart from evildoers, and their evil ways; join not with them, nor fret and be envious at them; but do acts of beneficence, and all good works; since righteous men, and their seed, are not forsaken, but blessed of God; (see Gill on “^{<4304>}Psalm 34:14”);

and dwell for evermore; or “thou shalt dwell for evermore” ^{f530}; (see ^{<4370>}Psalm 37:3); that is, in everlasting habitations, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, (^{<4260>}Luke 16:9 ^{<4001>}2 Corinthians 5:1). The Targum is, “that thou mayest dwell in everlasting life”.

Ver. 28. *For the Lord loveth judgment*, etc.] Righteousness, or righteous actions, when done according to his will, from love, in faith, and to his glory; (see ^{<4107>}Psalm 11:7); or to minister judgment to the people, and to render to every man according to his works;

and forsaketh not his saints; his Holy Ones, who are called with an holy calling, are created in righteousness and true holiness, and have principles of grace and holiness wrought in them; or whom he prosecutes with his favour and goodness, with his everlasting love and mercy, with spiritual blessings, with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, and a right to eternal life: these he never forsakes, not their persons, neither in life nor at death, nor at judgment; nor does he ever forsake the work of his own hands in them; but performs it until the day of Christ: nor will he ever so forsake them, as that they shall perish through the strength of sin, the temptations of Satan, or the snares of the world;

they are preserved for ever; from the dominion and damning power of sin, from being devoured by Satan, from a total and final falling away, and from

being hurt of the second death: they are preserved in Christ, in whose hands they are; and by the power of God, safe to his kingdom and glory, into which they shall have an abundant entrance;

but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off; out of the earth, in the midst of their days, like withered branches; and be cast into everlasting burnings.

Ver. 29. *The righteous shall inherit the land*, etc.] (See Gill on “⁴⁸⁷⁰Psalm 37:9”) and (see Gill on “⁴⁸⁷¹Psalm 37:11”);

and dwell therein for ever; (see Gill on “⁴⁸⁷²Psalm 37:27”).

Ver. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom*, etc.] Or “meditateth wisdom” ^{f531}; that is, utters the wisdom he has been meditating upon; (see ⁴⁹⁰⁸Psalm 69:3); he meditates and speaks of the wisdom of God, which appears in the works of creation, providence, and grace; and of Christ, who is wisdom itself, and the wisdom of God essentially; and who, as Mediator, has the spirit of wisdom resting on him, the treasures of wisdom hid in him, and is made wisdom to his people: and righteous men meditate upon and speak of the glories of his person, the fulness of his grace, and the works of his hands; as also of the Gospel, which is the wisdom of God, mysterious, hidden, ancient wisdom, ordained before the world for their glory; and likewise of that internal wisdom, and experience of divine grace, the Lord has made them to know in the hidden part; which lies in the knowledge of themselves, and in a spiritual, experimental, and saving knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation by him; and his mouth delivers out wise sayings, and useful instructions, fetched out of the word of God, and founded on experience and observation;

and his tongue talketh of judgment; of the judgment which the righteous God ordinarily ministers in a providential way; and of his extraordinary and awful judgments, which have been or are in the earth; these he takes notice of for his own use, and observes them to others for their instruction; and also of the last judgment, the judgment to come, which he speaks of as sure and certain, as universal and inevitable, and at which he must appear before God: and he talks of judgment or righteousness; that is, of the righteousness of Christ; he makes mention of this only as his justifying righteousness before God; he rejoices and glories in it, and desires to be found in it living and dying, and at judgment; and whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, and of good report, he thinks and speaks of them, and

instructs his family, his children and servants, in them, that they may do them; (see ^{<0189>}Genesis 18:19).

Ver. 31. *The law of his God [is] in his heart*, etc.] Which may be understood of the moral law, which was written in the heart of Adam at his creation, and continued there during his state of innocence, but was greatly obliterated by sin: there are some remains of it in fallen man, even in the very Gentiles; who, though without the law, do some things contained in it, which shows the work of it to be written in them; though in some it is scarcely legible, having lost all distinction between good and evil: but in regeneration the law of God is reinscribed, according to the promise of the covenant of grace, (^{<2613>}Jeremiah 31:33); and such have a real knowledge of the spirituality and perfection of it; of the impossibility of justification by it; and of Christ being the fulfilling end of it: and they have a strong affection for it; they love it; and delight in it after the inward man, and serve it with their minds; in which lies part of their conformity to Christ, and is a branch of their character as good men; (see ^{<1908>}Psalms 40:8 ^{<2507>}Isaiah 51:7); moreover, the word *trwt*, here used, signifies any doctrine or instruction, and is sometimes used for the doctrine of the Gospel, (^{<2108>}Isaiah 2:3 42:4), and may have this sense here, and the meaning be, that that has a place in the hearts or righteous men, dwells richly there, and works effectually in them; and particularly the doctrine of grace which relates to covenant interest in God; for it is the law or doctrine of “his God” that is in his heart;

none of his steps shall slide; not that he shall never slip nor fall; for that is supposed (^{<13724>}Psalms 37:24); but he shall never finally and totally go out of the paths of truth, holiness, and righteousness: the Lord keeps the feet of his saints, and orders their steps, and directs them in the way they should go, and preserves them in it; and enables them to walk uprightly, according to the rule of the divine word, and in all his commandments and ordinances; and to hold on and out unto the end: or the clause may be rendered, “it”, the law, “shall not cause his steps to slide”, ^{f532}; neither the law of God, nor the Gospel of Christ, but shall guide him in the right way, and be a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path.

Ver. 32. *The wicked watcheth the righteous*, etc.] All his motions and steps, his works and actions; he watches for his halting, and to take all opportunities and advantages against him; (see ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 20:10);

and seeketh to slay him; murder his reputation, destroy his substance, and take away his life: some understand it of the devil, who watches the saints, observes their failings, accuses them, before the throne, and seeks to devour them, (⁴¹¹⁸1 Peter 5:8).

Ver. 33. *The Lord will not leave him in his hand*, etc.] Or power; but will in his own time deliver him from all the reproach, affliction, and persecution endures by him; as he will also deliver him out of all the temptations of Satan;

nor condemn him when he is judged; by the wicked man: he will not join in the sentence, but reverse it, and condemn the tongue that rises up in judgment against him, and save him from him; (see ⁴¹⁴⁸Psalm 109:31) (⁴²⁵⁴⁷Isaiah 54:17); nor will the Lord condemn him when he is judged by him at the hast judgment; but will acquit him before men and angels, and introduce him into his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 34. *Wait on the Lord*, etc.] In the way of his appointments and ordinances; where may be learned the design of his providences, and of the prosperity of the wicked, and their end, (⁴³⁷³⁶Psalm 73:16-18); and in a providential way, for the performance of his promises, in which he never fails; and patiently bear whatever he is pleased to lay upon them; waiting for a deliverance out of every affliction, which will be in his own time. The Chaldee paraphrase

“trust in the word of the Lord;”

and keep his way: which he has pointed out in his word, and has directed his people to walk in; though tempted by Satan to turn aside to the right hand or the left; though wicked men reproach, persecute, and seek to pervert it; and though a narrow and rough way, yet keep constantly in it, in which there are both pleasure and profit; good comes of it, and in it peace is had, and the presence of God enjoyed;

and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: that is, shall raise out of a low and uncomfortable situation of life to a more comfortable one; or however, hereafter, to dwell in the new heavens and new earth, to reign with Christ upon his throne, and to enjoy the eternal inheritance;

when the wicked are cut off; as in (⁴³⁷⁰⁹Psalm 37:9,22,28);

thou shall see [it]; with joy and pleasure; not as exulting: in the destruction of the wicked, simply considered; but as the glory of divine justice is displayed therein; (see ^{<4816>}Psalm 52:5,6).

Ver. 35. *I have seen the wicked in great power*, etc.] Meaning some particular person invested with great power, in great authority among men, one of the spiritual wickednesses in high places; such a man as Haman in Ahasuerus's court; and though the psalmist does not choose to mention his name, he doubtless had him in his mind; as either Saul, or Doeg the Edomite, or Ahithophel, or some such man, who was in an exalted station of life; and it may be when he himself was in low and distressed circumstances: the word used ^{f533} signifies one formidable and terrible, striking terror to all around; of whom others are afraid, as Aben Ezra interprets it, (^{<2300>}Isaiah 29:20 49:25);

and spreading himself like a green bay tree: or like one that grows up out of the earth of itself, and is in its native soil, and very flourishing: and the metaphor denotes an increase of riches and honour, and a seemingly settled state in the enjoyment of such outward felicity; so Jarchi interprets it **צַרְצָם**, "taking root"; as well as such a man's glorying in and boasting of his affluence and fulness; (see ^{<4732>}Psalm 73:12 ^{<2411>}Jeremiah 12:1,2 ^{<4916>}Psalm 49:6). Aben Ezra explains it of a wicked man's openly committing iniquity, declaring his sin as Sodom, and glorying in his shame; but rather it denotes a man in great authority and esteem, as a man crowned with laurels, and in a very exalted and triumphant state.

Ver. 36. *Yet he passed away*, etc.] At once, on a sudden; either his riches and honour, which, in one hour, came to nought, by one providence or another; or he himself by death; in the midst of all his prosperity, and while blessing himself in it, his soul was required of him; and so the Targum is, "he ceased from the world"; he went out of it unawares: the laurel, or bay tree, very quickly grows old ^{f534};

and, lo, he [was] not; he was not reduced to nothing; he did not become a nonentity, though he might wish himself to be so; it being better for him if he had never been born; but he was not in the land of the living, in hell he lifted up his eyes;

yea, I sought him, but he could not be found; in the place where he formerly was, that knowing him no more; he could not be found on earth, from whence he was gone; nor in heaven, where no place is found for such

wicked men; he was gone to his own place, as is said of Judas, and of whom Jerom interprets the whole of this passage.

Ver. 37. *Mark the perfect [man]*, etc.] None are so in themselves, not the most holy man upon earth; for though all grace is implanted at once in regeneration, the seed of grace of every kind is cast into the heart at once; yet it opens and spreads, and gradually increases; nor is any grace in its exercise perfect; not faith, nor hope, nor love: sin is in the best of men, and all stand in need of fresh supplies of grace. None of the saints ever affirmed that they had arrived to perfection, but have disclaimed it: one saint may indeed attain to a greater degree of grace and knowledge than another, and in a comparative sense be perfect; and there is a perfection of parts, though not of degrees, in all; the new man is formed in all its parts, though these are not grown to their full perfection: and whereas perfection often denotes truth and sincerity, such may be said to be perfect, that is, sincere, who have received the grace of God in truth, have the, truth and root of the matter in them; so Noah, Job, and others, are said to be perfect men; but not simply and absolutely in themselves, but as in Christ Jesus; who has obtained complete redemption, perfectly fulfilled the law for them, fully expiated their sins, procured the entire pardon of them, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, by which they are justified from all sin, and are perfectly comely, and a perfection of beauty, through the comeliness of Christ put upon them;

and behold the upright; the man that is upright in heart and conversation, who has a right spirit renewed in him, and the uprightness of Christ showed unto him; or, in other words, who has the truth of grace within him, and the righteousness of Christ upon him: such men are to be marked, observed, viewed, and considered, as rare and uncommon men; and to be imitated and followed in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and especially the end of such persons is to be marked and beheld, as follows;

for the end of [that] man [is] peace: such a man now enjoys a conscience peace, which passes the understanding of worldly men; and which he possesses in Christ, and from him, amidst a variety of tribulations, arising from a view of interest in his blood and righteousness; and, generally speaking, goes off the stage of life, if not triumphing, yet resigned to the will of God, and in a serene and tranquil frame of spirit, and even desiring to be gone, and to be with Christ, and to have leave, with good old Simeon, to depart in peace; and as soon as they are departed they enter

into peace, into the joy of their Lord, into his presence, where is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; (see ^{<40230>}Numbers 23:10).

Ver. 38. *But the transgressors shall be destroyed together*, etc.] This is to be understood of obstinate and continued transgressors, who live and die in their transgressions; (see ^{<40103>}Proverbs 11:3); otherwise all men are transgressors in Adam, and sinned and fell with him in his transgression; and are justly called transgressors from the womb; and are guilty of actual transgressions, nor are any clear from them; and are arraigned, convinced, and judged by the law as transgressors; and for many of these Christ died, and makes intercession; and who are converted, and turned from their transgressions; and these are pardoned, and saved, and not destroyed: but stubborn and perverse transgressors are destroyed; not only with a temporal destruction of their substance, and of their names, and they themselves are rooted out of the earth; but with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; for this seems to refer to the day of judgment, when all the wicked will be “together”; and shall in a body stand at Christ’s left hand, and be bid to go, “ye cursed into everlasting fire”, (^{<41254>}Matthew 25:41), and shall be turned into hell at once, and together;

the end of the wicked shall be cut off; meaning either their posterity, as the word is rendered in (^{<39493>}Psalm 109:13); or their hope and expectation of good things here and hereafter; when the righteous man receives the end of his faith, hope, and expectation, even the salvation of his soul; but these shall be disappointed and frustrated of their end; (see ^{<41218>}Proverbs 23:18); or their last end is cutting off from the presence and sight of God, utter ruin and destruction; and so it stands opposed to the end of the perfect and upright man, which is eternal peace and happiness.

Ver. 39. *But the salvation of the righteous [is] of the Lord*, etc.] Both their temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; particularly the latter, which is originally of the Lord, and springs from the thoughts, purposes, and resolutions of his heart: it is of him freely, of his rich grace and abundant mercy; and it is of him fully and completely; it is an entire salvation of soul and body; includes all blessings of grace and glory in it; it is to the uttermost, and from all sin, and every enemy; and it is of him only; there is no salvation in any other; and the glory of it is to be ascribed to him, even to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; for all the three divine Persons have a concern in it: the determination, contrivance, and settlement of it, is of

Jehovah the Father; the impetration or effecting of it is of Jehovah the Son; and the application of it is of Jehovah the Spirit; (see Gill on “~~Psalm~~ Psalm 3:8”);

[he is] their strength in the time of trouble; by reason of the hidings of God’s face, the temptations of Satan, the prevalence of corruptions, the weakness of grace, and the many afflictions that befall them from God and men; the Lord he is their strong hold and munition of rocks, whither they, betake themselves, and find help, protection, and safety; he puts underneath everlasting arms, bears them up, and upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness; and is the strength of their hearts, of their lives, and of their salvation.

Ver. 40. *And the Lord shall help them*, etc.] In their distress, and out of their troubles, when none else can, and they themselves cannot; and that seasonably, and sometimes with means, and sometimes without;

and deliver them; out of all their afflictions, which he does sooner or later; if not in life, yet at death;

he shall deliver them from the wicked; this is repeated both for confirmation and explanation sake, showing who they are the Lord will deliver his people from, even from wicked and unreasonable men; he will not leave them in their hands now to do with them as they shall think fit; and he will free them from them to all eternity in the other world, where they shall cease from giving them any trouble;

and save them, because they trust in him; not that there is any saving virtue in faith, or in trusting in the Lord; the saving virtue is in the Lord, the object of faith and trust; but inasmuch as the Lord has appointed salvation to be through faith, or has made that the means of receiving and enjoying salvation, and the blessings of it, and has declared that he that believeth shall be saved, he does accordingly save all such persons; wherefore blessed are they that trust in him. The Chaldee paraphrase is,

“he shall redeem them because they trust in his Word.”