

# Peace and Victory When Evil Abounds

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | January 5, 2023



Every day, the news overwhelms us with reports of crime, violence, war, disasters, abuses of power, and injustices of all kinds. How can we retain our peace, our confidence, our joy when it appears that evil is winning and the righteous are suffering?

Psalm 37 is filled with wisdom perfectly relevant for our need today. Let's unpack these powerful truths from *The Remedy of the Lord in Song: The Psalms* (my comments are in red):

1 Do not be distraught over the apparent gains of the selfish or envy those who persist in violating God's design of love; [Why shouldn't we? It isn't fair, is it? Why should those who do wrong prosper? Shouldn't they suffer? But what law lens are you viewing the selfish and wicked through?]

2 for they will soon wither like grass, like flowers of the field they will fade away.

3 Trust in the Lord and live to love others; be active in your community as a shepherd of God's kingdom of love. [What happens in us if we do these things?]

4 When you delight in the Lord, he will give you what your heart desires. [What does this mean? Does it mean God will give us the numbers to the next winning lottery ticket? No, it means our hearts are in harmony with God's and we will desire what He desires for us; that's why He will give us what we

desire.]

5 Commit yourself to following God's plan — living in harmony with his designs; trust him with how life turns out and he will do what is best:

6 he will renew your character into righteous love that shines brighter every day; your decisions will radiate goodness like the noonday sun. [What is the focus of the righteous? On God's kingdom of truth, love, liberty, which operates where? Within us!]

7 Rest in the Lord and be patient for his plan to unfold; don't be distraught when the selfish seem to succeed — when they carry out their wicked schemes. [Do we see why we don't need to be distraught when the selfish seem to succeed? Because every act of sin damages them; they are hardening their hearts, searing their consciences, warping their characters, and destroying their souls. We don't need to be jealous of them for they have nothing of eternal value. We need to, like Jesus did, pray, "Father, forgive them; they don't know what they are doing."]

8 Don't let anger or resentment take root in your heart; don't worry or ruminate — it only inflames selfishness. [Do you see how our modern politics, media, programming, and messaging constantly seeks to divide society on issues that are designed to incite anger, instill resentment, cause fear and worry, and inflame selfishness? What is happening in the world is part of the roar of the lion, inflaming fear and driving selfishness and division. Don't listen to the messaging of the world; focus on Jesus instead—understand His character and methods of truth, love, freedom, and then follow the truth on all subjects.]

9 And selfish people will sever themselves from life, but those who trust in the Lord will inherit the earth. [Why will the selfish die? What happens? Who decides for the selfish that they die eternally? From where does the inheritance of the righteous come? Is this inheritance a legal pronouncement, a ruling, or is it something literal, experiential, objective that we receive? When a branch is grafted into a vine, does it receive something that is its own by right—or does it begin to inherit something from the vine that doesn't originate in itself? When we are grafted into Jesus, do we inherit something actual from Him that lives and operates within us and brings forth new life? But doesn't the Bible say the meek will inherit the earth? Isn't the land, the world, our inheritance? Then why am I suggesting we receive our inheritance through being grafted into Jesus? Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life—is an inheritance a right or a gift? But what kind of gift is an inheritance? It is a gift given to one's descendants. Meaning, it goes to members of the family, the children of the patriarch. And what makes us children of God? Being reborn into the family of God, dying to sin and selfishness and having our hearts renewed to be like Jesus—being His image-bearers! And what causes us to experience this renewal, this regeneration, this recreation to be like Jesus? It is being grafted into the Vine, Jesus, being won back to trust and opening the heart to Him and receiving His indwelling presence so that He writes His law upon our hearts and minds. And we receive His law, character, and methods written upon our hearts and, ultimately, inherit the earth made new as our home. But we don't get the earth made new as our home unless we first inherit from Jesus the gift of a new heart and right spirit.]

10 It won't be long, and the selfish will be no more; you will consider their place in the universe and realize they no longer exist. [Why won't the selfish be in the universe? How does that come about? Do we need to be jealous and envious of those who are destroying themselves by embracing and practicing the methods of God's enemy?]



11 But the humble who trust the Lord and love others will inherit the earth and enjoy everlasting peace. [Have you experienced more peace when you love others, trust the Lord, and are humble—but more stress when you fight with others who are arrogant and selfish?]

12 The selfish plot against the unselfish and viciously attack them; [Why? Why did the selfish plot against Jesus and attack Him? Was Jesus seeking to harm anyone? Do the true followers of Jesus seek to harm others? Do they seek to selfishly take from others? Or are the followers of Jesus seeking to uplift others, bless others, protect others, and advance the only principles and practices that bring health and life? Then why do the selfish attack the followers of Jesus?]

Because the natural result of sin, of selfishness, is guilt, fear, and shame. These emotions are painful, and no one wants to experience them. There are only two ways to avoid feeling these feelings. One way is the godly way, which is through repentance and renewal in which we receive new hearts and right spirits and live new lives with new motives; we stop living selfishly. This is almost always a painful experience, walking through the valley of the shadow of death, in which we feel like we are dying. But we are only dying to the old selfish nature because our Shepherd is leading us in the paths of righteousness for the restoration of our soul.

However, because this is a painful renewal process, because it requires giving up old ways, old ideas, old habits, old addictions, old pleasures, old beliefs, old power, many people reject this path and instead choose the other way, the ungodly way, to avoid these feelings—by denial and distortion. Denying that anything is wrong, distorting their minds and their understanding of what is happening, projecting their dysfunction and defects out of themselves onto others, and blaming others as a means of making themselves feel better. “It wasn’t me; it was the woman you gave me,” Adam cried.

Those who refuse repentance will use denial and distortion as a means of avoiding the inherit guilt, shame, fear, and sense of inadequacy that comes from being out of harmony with God and His designs for life. But when they come into the presence of the righteous, the rightness of the life of the godly condemns them even if the righteous say nothing. The denial and distortions of the selfish don’t work, and they feel the pressure of guilt, shame, fear, and inadequacy and will do several things to avoid this:

- They will seek to tempt the righteous to join them in their sinful and dysfunctional living.
- If the righteous graciously refuse, then they will try to force the righteous person to tell them how good they are.
- They will try to justify their sin, making excuses and defending themselves.
- They will make themselves out to be victims, claiming it isn’t their fault, and they confront the righteous with their struggles and demand the righteous tell them that they are okay. If the righteous comply and agree that evil is good—that perversion is purity, that the wicked are righteous—then the denial of the guilty is maintained and their guilt, shame, and fear are suppressed, and they move on.
- But if the righteous do not comply, but maintain a godly standard of living, then the wicked will become angry and accuse the righteous of being intolerant, judgmental, abusive, bigoted, etc., and will use whatever means possible to try to punish and destroy the righteous. This is what the unrighteous did to Jesus; do you see this happening in the world today?]

13 but the Lord laughs at their foolishness, for he sees their end approaching. [We don’t need to fear the lies, attacks, plots of the wicked, because they are only destroying themselves.]

14 The selfish draw their knives and load their guns to kill the humble and those who refuse to defend

themselves — to destroy those who live in harmony with God's designs.

15 But their knives cut through their own hearts, and their guns will be broken. [What law lens do we see things through? Do we remember, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28 NIV84)?]

16 It is better to be unselfish and poor than to be selfish and rich; [Why? Is this what the world teaches? Do we remember that the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world?]

17 for the selfish are terminal and will lose all they have, but the unselfish receive life from the Lord. ["For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26 NKJV).]

18 The Lord cares for the unselfish, and they inherit eternal life. ["Cares" in this verse refers to actively providing for and intervening in the lives of the unselfish; it is not referring to the mere feeling of compassion or concern. God is unable to provide for the welfare of the wicked when they refuse the truth, love, and grace that is the basis of their healing and restoration. Thus, God is unable to actively care for those who reject His care.]

19 In the time of trouble they will not be ashamed; in the days of spiritual famine, they will be filled. [Daniel was not ashamed when he was accused of being a traitor to the king and condemned to the lion's den. Peter, Silas, and Paul were not ashamed when they were labeled as heretics by the church and arrested and imprisoned. We will not be ashamed to call Jesus our Lord and to stand for the principles of God. And our hearts and minds will be filled with the Holy Spirit and the love of God.]

20 But the selfish will perish: those that oppose the Lord and his design will be like the fat of rams; consumed in the fires of love, they will go up in smoke. [Why do the wicked perish? Does God want them to die? Who insists on the wicked being cut off from life, from God, from being part of God's kingdom? The wicked do! It is their choice; they beg for the mountains to fall on them (Revelation 6:16). They do not want to live in a kingdom of infinite truth and love, where their lies, denial, and distortion do not work, where they experience the pain and suffering that unremedied sin causes.

And why are they likened to the "fat of rams"? The fat of the sacrificial animals was burned on the altar and is symbolic of sin. What happens to lies and selfishness when they are exposed to infinite truth and love? They are consumed. The lies the wicked tell themselves, and that further warp their minds, in order to avoid their own guilt and shame don't work in the flames of infinite truth and love and, thus, they suffer the pain that unremedied sin causes; they ultimately choose to let go their lives and voluntarily surrender their existence rather than live in the presence of God, rather than being bathed in His infinite truth and love.]

21 The selfish take from others and do not return, but the unselfish give generously. [These are the two antagonistic principles of the two antagonistic systems of governing. We all choose one or the other as the law that we settle into in how we will treat others.]

22 Those blessed by the Lord will inherit the earth, but those who reject the blessing will be cut off. [Why? Is it an arbitrary reward or a natural result? Who does God want to inherit the earth? Or another way to say it: How many humans does God want to be saved and inherit the earth? So, if God wants all humans to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4) and inherit the earth, then who decides, determines, chooses for those who are not saved to not be saved?]

23 The Lord heals and restores those who follow his prescription for life;

24 even if they sleep in the grave, they will not be eternally lost, because the Lord holds on to them. [Do we remember this when a loved one dies from any cause—whether sickness, accident, or murder or some other injustice?]

25 Once I was young, but I've lived long and am now old, yet I have never seen the unselfish abandoned by God or their children seeking to feed only themselves.

26 They always give generously and lend freely, and their children live to bless others.

27 Turn from selfishness and love other people; then you will live forever.

28 For the Lord loves the unselfish — those who live right — and will not abandon those who faithfully follow him; he watches over them forever, but the children of selfishness will be cut off.

29 The unselfish will inherit the earth and live upon it forever.

30 Those who live in harmony with God's designs speak wisdom, they tell how reality works — what is right and true.

31 God's design protocol (law) is in their heart and they don't sidestep it.

32 The selfish spy on the unselfish, seeking to destroy them;

33 but the Lord will not abandon them to the power of the selfish or let their condemnation stand. [The wicked will condemn the righteous, but they have no true power over them.]

34 Wait expectantly for the Lord and live in harmony with his way. He will regenerate you to inherit the earth; you will see: the selfish will be no more. [We must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on eternal realities, not on earthly problems. We must not fall into the trap of pursuing human justice, seeking to make justice by implementing artificial rules enforced upon others, such as the equity agendas that we see so much of today. All such actions make things worse and cause harm. We are to live God's principles of equality for all people. Equality is treating everyone with the love, dignity, respect, and autonomy that we each have as beings created in the image of God. Equity is about forcing outcomes based on some identity measure and always causes inequity and injustice, and it interferes with individual development and autonomy. Equity sows division in society, inciting conflict by creating opposing groups fighting for limited outcome slots, but all under the lie of seeking to improve society. It is a fraud, a lie, a manipulation, a violation of God's methods; recognize it and refuse to support it.]

35 I once saw a selfish and cruel person who appeared to grow in influence and power like a tree growing in good soil,

36 but when I looked again, they died and were no more: though I looked for them, they were nowhere to be found. [This will be the result of all the wicked in the end; it's not an infliction but the unavoidable result of cutting off themselves from the source of life.]

37 Take note of the person with mature godly character, observe those who live right, for such living results in peace.

38 But all who rebel against God's design will cease to exist; the future of the persistently selfish is destruction. [Why? Because they sever their connection with God, the source of life; their end is unavoidable.]

39 The remedy that heals the godly comes from the Lord; he is their sanctuary in troubled times.

40 The Lord helps them and rescues them; he delivers them from the wicked and cures them from their own selfishness because they trust in him. [This is *the* key to health, happiness, victory, and eternal life—the saved trust God; they trust Him with their lives, fortunes, families, and futures and are sealed to God. They are so settled into their loyalty, love, devotion, and trust that no lie, persecution, trial, tribulation, or mistreatment can shake them from their trust. These are the perfected of God!]

Only by embracing and living out God's methods in our lives are we able to find peace and enjoy victory over the evil that abounds in this world.

---

You can read The Remedy NT online [here](#), download the **free** Remedy Bible mobile app [here](#), or, if you prefer it on the E-Sword Bible mobile app, [here](#).