

This psalm of David is a teaching sermon about the “justice of God - an exploration of why, if God wills and works for justice, the wicked “prosper in their way.” The promise seems to be that the righteous will live, while the “wicked perish,” which resonates with Psalm 1:6: “for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

Psalm 37:1-11;39-40 (NIV)

- 1 Do not fret because of those who are evil
or be envious of those who do wrong;
- 2 for like the grass they will soon wither,
like green plants they will soon die away.
- 3 Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
- 4 Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

- 5 Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:
- 6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.
- 7 Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.

- 8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- 9 For those who are evil will be destroyed,
but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.
- 10 A little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look for them, they will not be found.
- 11 But the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.

- 39 The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord;
he is their stronghold in time of trouble.
- 40 The Lord helps them and delivers them;
he delivers them from the wicked and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

We all know the golden rule is how the world at its best operates. However, disciples of Christ are to imitate our God who is kind to the ungrateful and merciful to the wicked. To be “kind” does not mean to approve of their actions, but it means to seek the best interest of those doing harm. God wants even the ungrateful and the wicked to repent and become a part of the kingdom of God.

Luke 6:27-38 (NIV)

²⁷ “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”