

## BIBLE STUDY

### Psalm 37 (OSB 36): Trust in God's Justice

#### Bible Study Preparation and Materials Needed:

Reflecting on: Psalm 37 (OSB 36) - God is Close to the Brokenhearted

For the Lesson: Orthodox Study Bible or Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition

*Recommended Orthodox Study Bible* [HERE](#).

*Recommended Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition* [HERE](#).

#### Optional Practice

If time permits, begin or conclude this Bible study with an antiphonal Psalm reading. Have students read the psalm aloud in two groups, line by line. Encourage them to hear David's emotion, allowing it to become their own prayer.

#### Leader Notes

Things to Watch For:

Some students may have experienced real trauma. Don't push for details or force sharing.

If discussions stall, that's okay. Silence is better than forced responses.

Be ready to follow up individually with students who seem especially affected.

#### Adaptation Options:

For smaller groups (under 8), skip partner discussions and keep everything as full group.

For larger groups (over 15), use more small group time.

If your group is less familiar with Holy Scripture, add more context about psalms in general.

For groups that are more reserved, extend individual reflection time and reduce sharing time.

#### Memory Verse:

**“Delight in the Lord, and He will give you  
the requests of your heart.”**

**- Psalm 37:4**

## ***Psalm 37 (OSB 36)***

*1 Of David.\**

*Do not be envious of those who do evil,  
Nor be jealous of those who work lawlessness;  
2 For like grass they shall be dried up quickly,  
And like green vegetables they shall swiftly wither.  
3 Hope in the Lord, and work goodness;  
Dwell in the land, and you shall be nurtured  
by its riches.  
4 Delight in the Lord,  
And He will give you the requests of your heart.  
5 Reveal your way to the Lord,  
And hope in Him; and He will do it.  
6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as light,  
And your judgment as the noonday sun.  
7 Submit to the Lord, and supplicate Him;  
Do not be envious of him who prospers in his way,  
Nor of him who transgresses the law.  
8 Cease from wrath and forsake anger;  
Do not be envious so as to do evil;  
9 Because evildoers will be destroyed,  
But those who wait on the Lord,  
these shall inherit the earth.  
10 For in a little while the sinner shall  
no longer be present,  
And you will look for his place, but not find it.  
11 But the gentle shall inherit the earth,  
And they will delight in the fullness of peace.  
12 The sinner will closely observe the just man  
And gnash at him with his teeth.  
13 But the Lord shall laugh at him,  
Because He foresees his day will come.  
14 The sinners draw the sword  
And stretch their bow,  
To cast down the poor and needy,  
To slay the upright in heart.  
15 May their sword enter their heart,  
And may their bows be shattered.  
16 Better the little with the just man  
Than the great riches of sinners;  
17 For the arms of sinners shall be shattered,  
But the Lord supports the righteous.  
18 The Lord knows the ways of the blameless,  
And their inheritance shall be forever.  
19 They shall not be ashamed in an evil time,  
And in days of famine they shall be filled.  
20 But the sinners shall perish,  
And the enemies of the Lord altogether,  
When they glorify and exalt themselves;  
Like smoke they shall vanish away.*

*21 The sinner borrows, but will not repay;  
However, the righteous man  
is compassionate, and gives;  
22 For those who bless Him shall inherit the earth,  
But those who curse Him shall be utterly destroyed.  
23 The steps of a man are guided aright by the Lord,  
And he shall desire His way.  
24 When he falls, he shall not be broken to pieces,  
For the Lord supports him with His hand.  
25 I was young, but indeed I grew old;  
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,  
Nor his seed begging bread.  
26 Day in and out, he is merciful and lends,  
And his seed shall be a blessing.  
27 Turn away from evil, and do good,  
And dwell unto ages of ages;  
28 For the Lord loves judgment,  
And He will not abandon His holy ones;  
They shall be kept forever.  
But the lawless shall be banished,  
And the seed of the ungodly shall be utterly destroyed.  
29 The righteous shall inherit the earth  
And dwell upon it unto ages of ages.  
30 The mouth of the righteous shall meditate on wisdom,  
And his tongue shall speak of judgment;  
31 The law of God is in his heart,  
And his steps shall not be tripped up.  
32 The sinner observes the righteous man  
And seeks to put him to death;  
33 But the Lord will not leave him in his hands,  
Nor condemn him, when He judges him.  
34 Wait on the Lord, and keep His way,  
And He shall exalt you to inherit the earth;  
You shall see the sinners when they are utterly destroyed.  
35 I saw the ungodly greatly exalted  
And lifting himself up like the cedars of Lebanon;  
36 And I passed by, and behold, he was not;  
And I sought for him,  
But his place was not found.  
37 Keep innocence, and behold uprightness,  
For this is the remnant for the peaceful man.  
38 But transgressors shall be utterly destroyed together;  
The remnants of the ungodly shall be utterly destroyed.  
39 Now the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord,  
And He is their protector in time of affliction;  
40 And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them;  
And He shall deliver them from sinners,  
And save them, because they hope in Him*

## Bible Study Lesson

### Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տո՛ւր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՛ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց, ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos, ee paneets yev kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

## A Reflection on Psalm 37 (OSB Psalm 36): Trust in God’s Justice

Have you ever looked around and felt like everything is upside down? People who lie, cheat, and hurt others seem to get ahead, while those who try to follow God struggle. It feels unfair. You might ask: *“Why do the wicked prosper while the righteous suffer?”* Psalm 37 is an answer to that question.

This psalm doesn’t just give easy answers. Instead, it offers a long and patient vision. It teaches us to zoom out. David reminds us that the story isn’t over yet, and that God’s justice will come in His time, not ours. In the meantime, we are called not to panic, not to envy, not to give in to anger or despair, but to trust.

*“Do not be envious of those who do wrong, for they shall be dried up quickly like grass, and soon wither like green vegetables. Hope in the Lord and work goodness; dwell in the land, and you shall be nurtured with its riches. Delight in the Lord, and He will give you the requests of your heart. Reveal your way to the Lord, and hope in Him, and He will do it.”* (vv. 1–5)

The world is full of injustice, but we are not called to obsess over it. We are called to delight in God and entrust our path to Him. David speaks from experience. He’s seen evil rise and fall. He knows what it means to wait on God.

But what does it really mean to *“delight in the Lord”* when you’re watching someone cheat their way to the top? When you see the bully get popular while you get ignored? When your friend lies and gets everything they want while you tell the truth and get grounded?

Here’s what David is trying to tell us: envy isn’t just about wanting what someone else has. It’s deeper. Envy is actually doubting God’s goodness toward you. When we envy someone who’s succeeding through wrong means, we’re secretly saying, *“God, you’re not being fair to me. You’re not enough for me.”* That’s why envy is spiritually dangerous. It’s like a poison that slowly makes us question everything we believe about God.

David gives us a different path: delight in the Lord. Not *“grit your teeth and pretend you’re happy,”* but genuinely finding your deepest joy in knowing God. When we start to do this (really do this), something amazing happens. The things we want starts to change. We stop craving what the wicked have because we’ve tasted something better. We realize that knowing God, walking with Him, and being close to Him is actually better than getting everything we thought we wanted.

Think about it like this: imagine someone offering you candy, but you just finished the most incredible meal of your life. The candy doesn’t look that appealing anymore, right? That’s what happens when we delight in God. The *“successes”* of people who lie and cheat start to look empty because we’ve tasted real goodness.

**Q:** *What feelings come up when you see someone who lives selfishly or dishonestly succeed? How does this psalm challenge or encourage you?*

## Don't Get Distracted

*"Cease from anger and forsake wrath; do not be envious so as to do evil. For those who do evil shall be destroyed, but those who wait on the Lord shall inherit the earth."*

When we see wicked people succeed, it can make us angry or envious. That's natural, but it's not where we're supposed to stay. Psalm 37 tells us not to be consumed by these emotions. Why? Because they will lead us off the path.

Here's what happens when we let anger and envy take over: we become obsessed. We can't stop thinking about how unfair it is. We check their social media constantly. We imagine conversations where we finally tell them off. And slowly, without realizing it, we become bitter. We start to become like the very people we despise.

In the Orthodox tradition, we talk about the passions (things like anger, envy, pride). These aren't just "bad feelings" to stuff down. They're spiritual diseases that need healing. We don't pretend they're not there. We bring them to God honestly and ask Him to transform them.

So what do we do with the anger we feel at injustice? We acknowledge it. We tell God about it. *"God, I'm so angry that this person is getting away with this."* And then we ask Him to help us not let that anger control us or make us bitter.

Instead of stewing in anger, we're called to wait on the Lord. This doesn't mean doing nothing. It means continuing to do what's right even when it's hard. It means trusting that God sees what we see (and sees way more than we do). It means believing that His justice will win in the end, even if it doesn't happen on our timeline.

**Q:** *What are some ways we can respond to injustice without letting it poison our hearts?*

## The Wicked Fade, the Righteous Endure

*"The Lord knows the ways of the blameless, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in an evil time, and in days of famine they shall be filled. But the sinners shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord altogether shall be consumed."*

David paints a contrast: the wicked are like grass (green today, gone tomorrow). But the righteous are like trees with roots. Their lives may not look impressive to the world, but they are secure in God.

Think about grass. After it rains, grass springs up fast and looks green and alive. But as soon as the heat comes, it shrivels up and dies. Why? Because it has no roots. It's all surface-level. That's exactly what the success of wicked people is like. It looks impressive for a moment, but there's nothing holding it up.

Now think about a tree. Trees grow slowly. They might not look like much at first. But they're putting down deep roots. And when the drought comes, when the storms come, the tree stands. It endures. That's what a righteous life is like. You're not racing to look impressive on the outside. You're going deep with God. And that depth sustains you through everything.

David says he's seen this pattern over and over. He's watched people who seemed untouchable (powerful, successful, surrounded by admirers) completely disappear. Their empires crumbled. Their reputations destroyed. Meanwhile, the quiet faithful (the people who just loved God and loved others, who did right even when no one was watching) endure. Their influence lasts and their memory is a blessing.

This doesn't mean the righteous won't suffer. Jesus himself told us we would have trouble in this world. But David promises we won't be abandoned. *"The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he shall not be hurled down, for the Lord holds his hand"* (v. 23-24). You will stumble. You will have hard days. But you won't face them alone. God will catch you. He will hold your hand. He will help you get back up.

**Q:** *What do you think it means to "inherit the earth"? Where else have you heard this phrase? How might that look different from the world's idea of success?*

## A Better Inheritance

*"Better the little with the righteous than great riches of sinners. For the arms of sinners shall be shattered, but the Lord upholds the righteous."*

This is radical. The world says: get more. Do whatever it takes to succeed. God says: be righteous. It's better to have less with a clear conscience than to have everything but lose your soul.

That may not feel true when you're the one being treated unfairly. When you're the one who studied hard and got a B while someone else cheated and got an A. In those moments, David's words can sound like a nice idea that doesn't match reality.

But here's what David knows: the wicked may accumulate things, but they never have peace. They lie awake anxious someone will discover their secrets. They can't trust anyone because they assume everyone is as dishonest as they are. They're haunted by guilt, paranoid about losing what they have, spiritually empty.

The righteous person, even with less, has something money can't buy: peace with God, genuine friendships, a clear conscience, and the hope of eternal life. They can sleep at night. They can look at themselves in the mirror. They have relationships built on truth, not manipulation.

Jesus asked, "What does it profit someone to gain the whole world and lose their soul?" That's the question this verse is asking you. Would you trade your integrity, your relationship with God, your inner peace for success? And here's the beautiful promise: "The Lord upholds the righteous." When wicked people fall, they fall hard because their foundation is rotten. But when righteous people stumble, God catches them.

**Q:** Have you ever made a choice to do what was right, even though it cost you something? Looking back, are you glad you did the right thing?

## A Lasting Peace

*"The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord, and He is their protector in time of affliction. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; and He shall deliver them from sinners and save them, because they hope in Him."*

The promise here isn't that life will be easy. The promise is that God is with us. He will help. He will not forget those who place their hope in Him.

This is what it means to live in an unjust world with faith. Not denial, not fear, not anger, but hope. A quiet, steady hope that knows God sees all and will one day set all things right.

God's justice might not come on your timeline. It might not come in high school or even in this lifetime. But it will come. Every tear will be wiped away. Every wrong will be corrected. Every act of faithfulness will be rewarded.

In the meantime, you're called to trust. Trust that God sees you when no one else does. Trust that your life is building something eternal, even when it doesn't look impressive.

*"Delight in the Lord, and He will give you the requests of your heart."* When you truly delight in God, your desires start to transform. You start wanting what He wants. Your heart aligns with His heart.

The wicked are chasing shadows, grasping at things that can't satisfy. But you? You're learning to find satisfaction in the only thing that lasts: God Himself. And that changes everything.

**Q:** What does it look like to "hope in the Lord" when life feels unfair? What's one thing you can do this week to delight in God more?

### Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesheree, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sasanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.