

PSALMS WE NEED TO SING
“DISCIPLINE THAT BRINGS CLARITY”

October 14, 2018

Psalm 39

Psalm 39

**“I said, “I will guard my ways,
Lest I sin with my tongue;
I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle,
While the wicked are before me.”
I was mute with silence,
I held my peace even from good;
And my sorrow was stirred up.
My heart was hot within me;
While I was musing, the fire burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue:
“Lord, make me to know my end,
And what is the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I am.
Indeed, You have made my days as
handbreadths,
And my age is as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state is but
vapor.
Selah
Surely every man walks about like a shadow;
Surely they busy themselves in vain;
He heaps up riches,
And does not know who will gather them.
“And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My hope is in You.**

**Deliver me from all my transgressions;
Do not make me the reproach of the foolish.
I was mute, I did not open my mouth,
Because it was You who did it.
Remove Your plague from me;
I am consumed by the blow of Your hand.
When with rebukes You correct man for
iniquity,
You make his beauty melt away like a moth;
Surely every man is vapor.
Selah
"Hear my prayer, O Lord,
And give ear to my cry;
Do not be silent at my tears;
For I am a stranger with You,
A sojourner, as all my fathers were.
Remove Your gaze from me, that I may regain
strength,
Before I go away and am no more."**

INTRODUCTION: This particular occasion to which this Psalm refers is unknown, but it is quite evident that it was written during a time of doubt, affliction, and trouble. It has been recognized as one of the most personal Psalms written. David is occupied with his own sins and shortcomings. He is not thinking of others here but dealing with personal matters. Note the possessive pronouns.

1. My Way 1
2. My Mouth 1,9
3. My Tongue 1,3
4. My Peace 2
5. My Sorrow 2
6. My Heart 3
7. My Day 4, 5
8. My Age 5
9. My Hope 7
10. My Transgression 8
11. My Prayer 12
12. My Cry 12
13. My Tears 12
14. My Fathers 12

David is taking a close look at himself. He is coming to grips with reality and facing facts. David

sees himself as being chastened and disciplined by God.

Psalm 39 is a continuation of **Psalm 38**. In this Psalm the mood is changed. David is no longer outraged at the dreadful thing which has come upon his flesh. Instead, he has become more thankful, able to look at his issues more objectively.

Note progressive stages in overcoming different experiences.

I. DAVID'S COMMITMENT 1-3

Described as a BURNING HEART

Psalms 39:1

**"I said, "I will guard my ways,
Lest I sin with my tongue;
I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle,
While the wicked are before me."**

David starts out with good intentions of keeping his mouth shut, afraid that he may compound his liabilities by speaking evil against God and by murmuring because of his chastisement. He is particularly committed not to speak against God in the presence of wicked men.

Psalms 39:2

**“I was mute with silence,
I held my peace even from good;
And my sorrow was stirred up.”**

For a while he succeeded, but grief suppressed is increased. All great emotions require expression; his heart burned with intense pain. There is a time to keep silent and a time to speak and wise is the person who knows the difference.

“mute” – means to be tongue-tied. His effort to keep silent only aggravated his sufferings. David would not even speak a word of good for fear he would speak a word of ill.

Psalms 39:3

**“My heart was hot within me;
While I was musing, the fire burned.
Then I spoke with my tongue:”**

The smoldering fires within simply had to have an outlet, the inward pressure blew.

Jeremiah 20:9

**“Then I said, “I will not make mention of
Him,
Nor speak anymore in His name.”
But His word was in my heart like a burning
fire
Shut up in my bones;**

**I was weary of holding it back,
And I could not.”**

James 3:2

“For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.”

“perfect” – the end; there is nothing beyond; the person has attained perfection.

II. DAVID’S REQUEST FOR CLARITY 4-6

When he spoke, he prayed!

Psalms 39:4

**“Lord, make me to know my end,
And what is the measure of my days,
That I may know how frail I am.”**

Described as a BURDENED HEART

David wanted to know how much longer he had left, how much longer he must drag out his days, a living corpse, now that he had come under the discipline of God (**V9,10**). David knew the brevity of life with its frailty and futility.

Psalms 39:5

**“Indeed, You have made my days as
handbreadths,
And my age is as nothing before You;
Certainly every man at his best state is but
vapor.
Selah”**

“Selah” – stop and ponder this.

A handbreadth was just 4 fingers wide, David realized that life at best, was very brief. Even in his best state the whole of our life is soon over.

“vapor” – word for vanity; a breath, emptiness. One writer said its “what’s left after you break a soap bubble.

Psalms 39:6

**“Surely every man walks about like a shadow;
Surely they busy themselves in vain;
He heaps up riches,
And does not know who will gather them.”**

Nobody thinks of the rich man as being in a trap, but often he is. David’s sickness had sharpened his senses and brought things into clear focus.

Revised text translates **V6 “only as a phantom
does each walk to and from”**

David as a very wealthy man saw men laboring for wealth and as a result living lives of unreality and unrest, all made worse by materialism and mortality, living for what he calls **“a vain show.”**

The world of comfort and command, created by wealth, was a phantom unable to satisfy a thirsty, desperate soul.

Solomon dealt with this theme in **(Ecclesiastes 2:18-19)**.

Ecclesiastes 2:18-19

“Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me. And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also is vanity.”

Jesus dealt with this theme in **(Luke 12:16-21)**.

Luke 12:16-21

“Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater,

and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Life is swift, life is short, and for most people life is futile. In modern vocabulary, people are living for the IMAGE and not the REALITY.

III. DAVID'S CONFIDENCE 7

Described As A BELIEVING HEART

Psalms 39:7

**"And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My hope is in You."**

This is the central verse in the Psalm and the turning point in David's experience.

If life is short and goes past so swiftly, what am I waiting for? If the world is nothing but a shadow image (vain show), let me give myself to the Lord who is the foundation of all that is real and lasting.

Colossians 2:17

“which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

The main concern is not how long we live, but how we live. Life is measured, not by how rich we are, but whether we have values that last. Are we living with eternity’s values in view?

1 John 2:17

“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

David just moved from hopelessness to hope. The Lord’s discipline has given David direction.

Psalms 119:67

**“Before I was afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.”**

IV. DAVID’S CONTRITE HEART 8-13

Described As A BROKEN HEART

Psalms 51:17

**“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart —
These, O God, You will not despise.”**

A. Honesty 8-9

He knew his sufferings were what his sin deserved.

Forgiveness comes when we confess and forsake sin.

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

1. David Lost His Blessedness 10

“plague” - stroke – refers to the affliction of a leper; he felt accursed. Direct result of sin, fellowship with God was broken, high price of sin.

2. David Lost His Beauty 11a

Sin like a moth; eats away in the dark, secretly, silently, surely. It leaves its marks on the human soul and the human body.

3. David Lost His Bearings 11b

We see vapor rising from the surface of a lake.

It stands for a moment, drifts with whichever breeze happens to blow, then vanishes away.

B. David's Holiness 12-13

Bitter experiences often lead to the richest blessings. David has been in trouble, but the plague is not the attack of an enemy but the correction (discipline) of a friend.

Weeping eyes are never turned to heaven in vain; sincere expression of your heart.

Rabbis used to say there are 3 kinds of supplication; **PRAAYER, CRYING, TEARS.**

- Prayer is made in silence.
- Crying with a loud voice.
- Tears the language that persuades.

Our tears melt God's heart and move God's hand. David saw that there can be no happiness without holiness. There is pleasure without purity but there is no happiness without holiness.

V12 David felt like a stranger in his relationship with God; David desires restoration.

V13 **“REMOVE”** **“REGAIN”**

“Remove your gaze from me” – this is the heart of the gospel.

EXAMPLE: Luke 18 The Pharisee and Tax Collector

One said look at me, the other, look to the mercy seat.

“Regain strength” – means brighten up

David got better!

Addressed Psalm to the Chief Musician, Jeduthun (Praise-Giver).

After David’s discipline, sin is forsaken and forgiven, first love is restored, and joy is the result.

David sends this Psalm to the Chief Musician to be included in the special numbers to be sung by the temple choir. It’s his way of saying thank you, Lord.

What was too **painful to mention**, when troubled by the Lord, became **praise for his music**.