

Psalms 39

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Psalms 39

The transience of life; sorrow; Illusory

Psalm 39,

Life is not easy, and there are often many adversities. Whether or not you can come out of adversity depends largely on whether there is hope in your heart. Especially when you are in a difficult situation in body, mind, and spirit because of your own fault, how can you find that hope and get out of this situation? When David was depressed, he had a heavy heart, David knew that his life was short, and he also knew that the days flew by. He clearly realized that he was very fragile and that one day he would definitely die, so he began to count his days. "Thou hast made my days as narrow as the palms of my hands; The number of years of my life shall be like nothing before you." When everyone is at his safest, it is utterly illusory." (v.5) What about David, who still felt that life was as narrow as the palm of his hand after 40 years of reign? How do we spend our lives? People have different desires at different stages, and sometimes they will toss and turn in order to satisfy certain short-term desires. Even if desires are satisfied, there will soon be other desires.

"The actions of the world are illusions. They are in vain; Lay up treasures, and I don't know who will receive them." (v.6) Is it a blessing to give their children their hard-earned wealth to inherit and to give them a life free from wind and waves? In addition, some of our decisions can be critical and affect the next journey. People don't know what the next stage will be, only God can have a bird's-eye view of people's lives, and David sees his past life experiences as narrow as the palm of his hand, but he chooses to commit himself to God.

In his sorrow, the psalmist discovers that it is his sin and asks God to forgive him. There are many sorrows in life, there are external sufferings and internal sufferings that cannot be solved by one's own life, and the poet can only come to God to seek God. Life is too short and illusory (vv.4–6) We see many

problems with human nature. People have to face many problems, life is really short, it is illusory, like steam, disappearing in an instant. So the psalmist prayed to God that I would know that my life was short! Thou hast made my days as narrow as the palms of my hands; The number of years of my life is like nothing before you. When everyone is at their safest, it is completely illusory. Our lives pass quickly, and if we don't cherish them, time passes. When the world thinks it is safest, it is actually completely illusory. When everyone thinks they have a good job, but suddenly they lose the job opportunity. When people feel that they have good health, they are quickly lost when the epidemic comes, which is also illusory. Everyone is equal in the face of illness and death, no matter what kind of education and professional qualifications you have, whether you are a doctor or a grassroots citizen. Life is not immune to death because of your identity and status, and the actions of the world are phantoms. They are in vain; Lay up treasures, and I don't know who will receive them. (v.6) The life of the world is always busy, and it is in vain that people go about like ants, in pursuit of fame and fortune, and they accumulate treasures, but they do not know who will receive them.

When David mentions that he does not open his mouth before people (v.13), he decides to remain silent before both God and men. People are always crying out when they are uneven, how can they be silent? David was indignant when he saw the abandonment of many of his friends and the rampant of the wicked. In this chapter, however, he realizes the illusory and transience of life, and that all the actions of the wicked are only phantoms, and that his only hope lies in the eternal God (v.7). Since everything is in God's hands, what else can he complain about? Looking at people, I feel indignant in my heart; Look at God, and you will be silent. Therefore, what happened to him was from God, and it was allowed by God to come, so he naturally accepted it and remained silent.

David prayed to God not to be silent, and it would be terrible if we cried out to God and God didn't respond. So here the poet David confesses his sins to God, and asks God to listen to his prayers, and he tears and prays to God not to be silent, he needs God's guidance, he needs God to respond to him, and we also have to come to God and cry out in this way, because we are all strangers, and we will all leave the world, and David asks God to forgive and turn away from the blame. Pray that God will be forgiving him so that he will not lose his smile because he is being beaten, and that his relationship with God will be restored. In fact, we can be happy in life because we have a good relationship with God, and when we have a good relationship with God, we can smile no matter what circumstances we encounter.

How many boring, meaningless, and even unhelpful things we have done in our lives. These things do not contribute to oneself or others, and there is no benefit, this is illusory. When you and I look back, we have been busy all our lives, working hard all our lives, except for the sake of being well fed and warmly clothed, and we will soon become old and yellow, and we will end up empty. That's how people walk around in their lives, and they go all at once. It seems that there are a lot of things to do, and it is very busy, but in fact it is running empty; Even if you have made a lot of wealth in your life, the facts tell us that there are many people who will accumulate wealth for future generations, but in fact, the next few generations may not know you, which is very illusory. Children and grandchildren will fight for these wealth, and the six relatives will not recognize it, and you will live or die. Such an ending, can you say that it is not empty!

Let's pray together.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you. Thank you for showing us through today's text how David sought you in the midst of hardship and your chastise, and was convinced that his hope was in you. Heavenly Father, please give us the same faith that no matter what circumstances we face, even if we are

condemned by you for our sins, we will choose to come to you, repent and cry out to you, because our hope is in you! Heavenly Father asks you to keep rearranging our lives so that we can use our lives.

Pray and thank you in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Psalm 39

What Is the Measure of My Days?

To the choirmaster: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

39 I said, "I will guard my ways,

that I may not sin with my tongue;

I will guard my mouth with a muzzle,

so long as the wicked are in my presence."

2 I was mute and silent;

I held my peace to no avail,

and my distress grew worse.

3 My heart became hot within me.

As I mused, the fire burned;

then I spoke with my tongue:

4 "O Lord, make me know my end

and what is the measure of my days;

let me know how fleeting I am!

5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,

and my lifetime is as nothing before you.

Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Selah

6 Surely a man goes about as a shadow!

Surely for nothing[a] they are in turmoil;

man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!

7 "And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?

My hope is in you.

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions.

Do not make me the scorn of the fool!

9 I am mute; I do not open my mouth,

for it is you who have done it.

10 Remove your stroke from me;

I am spent by the hostility of your hand.

11 When you discipline a man

with rebukes for sin,

you consume like a moth what is dear to him;

surely all mankind is a mere breath! Selah

12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord,

and give ear to my cry;

hold not your peace at my tears!

For I am a sojourner with you,

a guest, like all my fathers.

13 Look away from me, that I may smile again,

before I depart and am no more!"

Overview of Psalm 39:

Psalm 39 is a contemplative prayer of David, reflecting on the brevity of life, the frailty of human existence, and the desire for understanding in the face of suffering. It is often regarded as a "lament" psalm, but it also expresses a deep trust in God's sovereignty. The psalm is structured in three distinct parts:

1. Verses 1-3: Silent Reflection

- The psalmist begins with a resolution to remain silent in the face of his frustrations and suffering. This silence is not a denial of his emotions but a purposeful decision to avoid sinning through words during a time of distress. He is determined not to speak rashly, but rather to contemplate his life before God.

2. Verses 4-6: Meditation on the Shortness of Life

- David reflects on the fleeting nature of human life. In these verses, he asks God to help him understand the transitory nature of his existence. He realizes that life is like a vapor,

transient and fragile. Despite human striving for wealth and status, in the end, all is futile because death is inevitable.

3. Verses 7-13: Prayer for Deliverance

- The psalmist turns to God, expressing his dependence on Him for hope. He pleads with God to deliver him from his suffering, acknowledging that human efforts and achievements cannot provide ultimate security. David also asks for forgiveness, recognizing that his own sinfulness and the consequences of sin are part of his affliction. The psalm concludes with a request for God's mercy, a prayer that God would not rebuke him in anger, and a plea for peace and comfort.

Important Verses and Themes

- **Psalm 39:4** – "Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is."
 - **Theme:** This verse is a key reflection on the brevity of life. David seeks to gain wisdom and perspective by recognizing how short life truly is. It emphasizes the importance of understanding life's temporality.
- **Psalm 39:5** – "You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure."
 - **Theme:** This verse emphasizes human fragility and how, in the grand scheme of eternity, human life is exceedingly brief and transient. It is a reminder of our vulnerability and the reality of mortality.
- **Psalm 39:6** – "Surely everyone goes around like a mere phantom; in vain they rush about, heaping up wealth without knowing whose it will finally be."
 - **Theme:** The pursuit of worldly wealth and success is ultimately empty. People may strive for material gain, but they cannot control their legacy or the outcome of their efforts after death. The pursuit of such things is futile without eternal perspective.
- **Psalm 39:7** – "But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."
 - **Theme:** Here, David expresses the shift from despair to trust. Despite the fragility of life and the futility of human efforts, his hope is anchored in God alone. This verse exemplifies trust and dependence on God, who is the only true source of hope.
- **Psalm 39:12** – "Hear my prayer, Lord, listen to my cry for help; do not be deaf to my weeping. I dwell with you as a foreigner, a stranger, as all my ancestors were."
 - **Theme:** David acknowledges his earthly sojourner status—he recognizes that this life is temporary, and he is ultimately a stranger on earth. This reminds the believer of the transient nature of human existence and the longing for a heavenly homeland.

Spiritual Influence and Lessons from Psalm 39:

1. Life's Transience and Eternal Perspective:

- Psalm 39 brings the reader face to face with the brevity of life. David meditates on the fleeting nature of human existence, urging the believer to consider the shortness of life

and the necessity of living with an eternal perspective. This reflects the Biblical principle that life is but a "vapor" (James 4:14) and encourages believers to focus on what is eternal rather than temporal.

2. Human Frailty and Dependence on God:

- The psalm stresses that human life is fragile, and no matter how secure or successful someone may seem, they are ultimately vulnerable. It encourages believers to trust in God as their ultimate refuge, acknowledging their dependence on Him. Human effort, wealth, and power are ultimately inadequate in the face of life's ultimate reality—death.

3. Hope and Trust in God:

- David's lament turns into a declaration of hope. Though life is brief and filled with suffering, God remains the believer's hope. The psalm encourages believers to place their trust in God alone, not in the transient things of this world.

4. Silent Reflection and Self-Control:

- David's decision to remain silent in his anguish (v. 1-3) reflects the spiritual discipline of controlling one's words in times of trial. It teaches the value of patience, self-restraint, and silent prayer, offering a model for those who struggle with expressing their frustrations. Silence before God can be a powerful form of meditation and prayer.

5. Plea for Divine Mercy and Forgiveness:

- Toward the end of the psalm, David seeks God's mercy and forgiveness, acknowledging the role of sin in his suffering. It serves as a reminder to examine one's life, repent, and seek God's mercy when facing hardships.

6. Stranger in This World:

- David reflects on the transient nature of his earthly existence, considering himself a "stranger" or "foreigner" in this world. This perspective resonates with New Testament teaching that believers are "aliens" and "strangers" on earth (1 Peter 2:11), emphasizing that our true citizenship is in heaven.

Conclusion:

Psalm 39 is a profound reflection on the fleeting nature of life and the need to find hope and security in God alone. Its themes of human fragility, the futility of worldly pursuits, the importance of trusting in God, and the brevity of life resonate deeply with believers. It teaches spiritual disciplines like silence, contemplation, and repentance while encouraging the faithful to keep their eyes on the eternal rather than the temporary. For anyone seeking to live with a clear understanding of life's impermanence, Psalm 39 offers both comfort and wisdom.