

Psalm 39

1 To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. 2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. 3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,

4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. 5 Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah. 6 Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. 7 And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. 8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.

10 Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. 11 When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah. 12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. 13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

Introduction notes:

1. Here the chief Musician is “Jeduthun” (1 Chr. 15:17; 16:41; 25:1 – Ethan (“strong”) is here referred to as Jeduthun (“praising”). (see also, Ps. 62 and 77).
2. A Psalm of David – David was identified as the writer of this Psalm. (There are inspired headings).
3. A Psalm of Lament and Wisdom. David wanted the nation to know about the consequences of secret sin.

Outline: (two themes: David’s distress and his prayers to the LORD).

- A. Silence before the LORD (vv.1-3)
 - B. Prayer for Illumination (vv.4-8)
- A.’ Silence before the LORD (v.9)
 - B.’ Prayer for Deliverance (vv.10-13)

Observations:

1. David controls his tongue (James 3:5-8).
2. But he also grew frustrated.
3. He prays to the LORD to alleviate his frustration.
4. The average life expectancy is 70 or 80 (Ps. 90:10).
5. David’s two main prayer requests:
 - A. Deliverance from transgression.
 - B. Deliverance from his enemies.
6. (v.9) David could not speak because God forgave him. Earlier David would not speak, this time he could not.
7. Now David is asking God to remove His chastisements: “stroke” and “blow.”

Lesson: “An embittered plea for respite from the avenging hand of God ends this bleak poem.” – Robert Alden, Psalms Volume 1, Everyman’s Bible Commentary.