

The Brevity of Life I Psalm 39

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Date: 18 September 2020

[0 : 00] Would you take your Bibles and go to the book of Psalms in chapter number 39? Psalms, chapter number 39 in your Bible. And if you'd like, the ushers have a sheet of paper to fill in the blanks.

You do not have to take one, but if you would like to follow along, you can grab one of those. We're in the book of Psalms in chapter number 39. Sometime back, pastor started us out in Psalms, and we've been following this through.

We made it up to chapter number 39. Psalms, chapter number 39. And if you'd like one of those papers, just raise your hand there, and they'll make sure that you get one of those and you can follow along. Psalms, chapter number 39.

I'm very thankful. Yesterday, with many of you, I was able to drive by pastor's house and see him sitting out there. And I was so surprised how good and healthy he looked and how, I mean, just the countenance happy.

And man, it just thrilled my soul. There are so many people praying for him, and I'm so thankful for that. And I'm ready for the day that he steps back in and continues going forward as we go through the book of Psalms and many other passages of the scripture.

[1 : 02] I want to say I'm very grateful as well as a church family that throughout this time, God has used Pastor Trent to guide our church and to help us through this time. Isn't it beautiful how the Lord uses certain people and does certain things, and God hasn't left us alone.

God's given us that, and I'm so thankful for Pastor Trent and for his family. We're in the book of Psalm 39, and if you would, right under the Psalm chapter number 39, it says this, maybe you have it there in your Bible, the pericope, that outline, that header right there.

It says this, the chief musician, even to Jaduthen, a psalm of David. In other words, this is a psalm of David, one that David wrote, but it says this was to Jaduthen.

And I looked it up. I thought, who in the world is Jaduthen? You know, I mean, it sounds pretty cool. Uncle Jed, you know, I mean, that sounds like a cool name. But who's Jaduthen? And so I looked it up and found out that Jaduthen is one of the choir directors, one of the main musicians in Hebrew history at that time.

And I looked in, I saw there was a list of men. And so I began to look at it, and it said the Asaph and the sons of Asaph and He-Man, which not the same He-Man, which is the figure for me growing up, and the days when Saturday was worth getting up for cartoons.

[2 : 11] You know what I'm saying? But anyway, I looked it, and so you see He-Man. You also see, it said the sons of Korah. And I remember as I saw that just the other day, I flipped through and thought, sons of Korah?

And my mind ran back to the Old Testament of Genesis, and, oh, excuse me, to Numbers, and Numbers chapter number 16, when there was Korah and several men. They got up there, and they started complaining, and they said, come on, man, who said that Moses and Aaron get to be the guys in charge?

You know, they wanted this socialistic church authority going on, you know? Everybody needs to say so. And the Lord says, you know, just stop right there. And Moses says, God, you're the one who put me here, not me.

And the Lord says, I'll prove. And so he just keeps on going. Korah keeps on going. And God opens the earth. You remember that? God opens the earth, and whoop, he swallows Korah and all of his family.

Well, you don't hear much about Korah until years and years later. We move to the book of Psalms. And now the sons of Korah are actually some of the greatest and the sweetest singers that are out there in the Hebrew nation.

[3 : 11] I begin to think, that is awesome. One, it shows that God never holds a grudge. Amen? And so, you know, it doesn't matter the sin, the pat, and everything else. God never holds a grudge. And secondly, it shows me what a beautiful thing that these men did not let their past hold them back to live for God in the future.

And you know what? So many times, because we look back, and I mean, psychologists and counselors and people would say, you know what? If in your past there were drunkards, very likely you're going to be a drunkard. And if there was abuse, then you're going to live like this.

And if there was, and they name all these different things, you are almost destined for failure in life that there was failure in the past. But these boys said, you know what? We will not let anything stop us from serving our Savior.

What a beautiful testimony, isn't it? And so they didn't let the past stop. So that's Jaduthun, this man who was a musician there. Well, let's jump into the passage very quickly. And for time, grab a pen. Let's underline a couple different things.

We're going to jump all the way down to verse number five. The Bible says this. Underline this word right here.

[4 : 12] Vanity. Says Selah. Everybody's life is just vanity. Empty, worthless, useless, fruitless, purposeless. You know, it just doesn't have, it's pointless. It doesn't have anything.

It's just vain. Jump down to verse number six. It says, surely every man walketh a vain. Underline that word. Vain. Vain show. Surely they are disquieted in vain.

Underline that. Pointless, worthless, useless. Doesn't even matter. It's just empty. Jump all the way down, if you would. All the way down to verse number 11. When thou with rebukes, thus correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.

Surely every man is, look at that next word, vanity. And underline that. So over and over it says it's vanity, vanity, vain, vain, vanity. Well, if you jump all the way to verse number one very quickly, and we make our way there, and the Bible says, so David's starting this out and he said, I said I will take heed to my ways.

Underline that. I'll take heed. I'll take heed. I'll pay attention. I'll look. I'll watch. I'll go in front. I'll make sure I'm really looking into it. I'll take heed to my ways. So the title that you see there in Psalm 39 that we put, if you have one of those papers there, the title is the brevity of life.

[5 : 20] It says, man, it's just vain and it's empty. It's worth it. What in the world are we even living for? What does it even matter? And then David says, let me go ahead and start it out before I tell you it's all vain. It's all, you know, worthless and empty and pointless and everything.

Let me just tell you to take heed to your ways. So very quick, let me give you two different reasons, because life goes by so fast. Things happen so fast. It just looks like it's pointless and useless.

There's two different things that he mentioned in the passage that we must take heed to. First of all, in your notes right there, watch your, and there's a space right there. Watch your tongue. Watch your tongue.

Look at verse number one, will you? It says, I said, I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my, look at what it says, I sin not with my tongue. It says, I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me.

It goes on. He says, first of all, as I'm taking heed to things, because life's so fast and it seems pointless and worthless and useless. And I just, boy, I don't even know what's going on. He says, I know what I'm going to take heed to. First of all, I'm going to take heed to my tongue.

[6 : 18] Now he offers in verse number one, a point in verse number two, a point in verse number three. He offers us three specific ways how we can watch our tongue. Verse number one, it tells us that I will keep my mouth with a bridle.

A bridle is a muzzle. See those poor little puppies, you know, and walk around. Sometimes even the pit bull, you know, you're looking at him, you're like, oh, what you looking at, boy? You're like, you can't do anything now. You know, you got a bridle on, you got a muzzle on you.

And you know what, this is what he says. So if you have the notes right there, we have an A, B, and C. So there are wrong, put the word wrong as he gives these lessons about the tongue. There are wrong things to say. This is what he said.

I'm going to put a bridle over me. I'm going to put a muzzle over me. I don't need to say anything. There are wrong things to say. You know, with your mouth, we can judge, criticize, gossip, and condemn. Any fool can do it and most fools do do it.

But don't play the part of a fool and jump in there. There are wrong things to say. You know, with your tongue, you can lift people up or you can put people down. You can hurt people, you can help people.

[7 : 16] You can encourage people, you can discourage. There's all kinds of things. In fact, James chapter 3, beautiful passage. It gives so many word pictures in James chapter 3 of what the tongue is. And one of those, he says, it's a small little member, yet, buddy, it makes a big old fire.

How many marriages and friendships and jobs and relationships have been burnt up by the fire from the tongue? You know, it would do all of us good to take a little bucket there of humility and walk over wherever those fires are and pour it out and get rid of those fires.

I enjoy, one of my favorite things to do is go camping. And especially breakfast the next morning when you go camping. Oh, there's nothing like the camp food. You know, you get the eggs ready, you know, and you get it on that camp.

There's just a special taste. And, you know, even if all the, you know, I don't know, the ashes get in there, it's even better, you know. I mean, it's just great. And so you get the eggs ready and then you put the bacon in, you get it all ready. No, you get the big bacon grease, you know.

You say, that's not healthy. Beloved, if you're camping, you don't worry about health, you know what I'm saying. And, I mean, you just get it all ready, put some extra potatoes in. Man, you get it ready. Well, when you finish, you get ready to go, you know, go off fishing or go off hiking or whatever.

[8 : 23] And right before you do, you look and you know, any good camper knows, you've got to put out the fire. Because if not, buddy, I mean, you're just going to make a big old forest fire. And so you get ready and you pour it out.

So you go get a bucket of water and you just pour it out. Listen, and you know, do all of us good in any fires in our life? Just take a bucket of humility and let's just scorch that thing right out. Let's get rid of it.

He says, here's what we need to do. The first thing, there's wrong things to do with our tongue. You know, if you notice there, he said, put a bridle. In other words, control your mouth. In other words, before you answer somebody, you better think. Before you send a text message, you better think.

Before you put up a post, you better think. Before you react in anger, you better think. In all of life, you better think. 1 Peter 3, verse number 10, it says this. Listen, it says, if you love life and you want to see good days, refrain your tongue.

Man, I want to see good days. I want to enjoy life. And he says, good, then watch your tongue. So when we watch our tongue, first of all, there's some wrong things to say. But look at verse number two. It offers this. It says, I was done with silence.

[9 : 21] I held my peace, even from good. So there's some wrong things. Letter A, there's some wrong things to say. Letter B, there are times when not to speak.

There are times when not to speak. He said, I held my peace. I didn't do it. Sometimes we think that the smarter person is the one who's going to speak up. Because, buddy, I got nuggets of wisdom, I want to say. But sometimes it's best just not to say anything.

Maybe because you're tired. Maybe because you're angry. Maybe because you're hungry. Maybe you're hangry. You know? I mean, maybe because, you know, you just don't have a good answer. Or you're not ready to say. Whatever it is, there's sometimes just don't say anything.

That's what he says. You know what? I put a bridle on. And so I'm not going to say the wrong thing. But now I'm not going to say anything. Well, look at verse number three very quickly. This is what it says. Verse number three. My heart was hot within me. While I was musing, the fire burned.

Look at this. Then spake I with my tongue. So remember, he said, there's some wrong things to say. Put it over. And then he said, you know what? I'm not. It's not time to speak. I'm going to hold it. I'm going to hold my peace.

[10 : 21] And now he says, I'm going to speak. But look what he says in verse number four. Very first word. He said, I'm going to speak in verse number three. Then spake I with my tongue. Verse number four. First word. What does it say? Lord. The first thing he says, so put this down in letter C.

There are right things to say. So there's wrong things to say. There's not the right time. But there are right things to say. What are the right things to say? Anything that uplifts our Savior and edifies our brother. And he says, you know what?

I haven't spoke. I won't say anything. OK, I am going to speak. Lord. And he begins to talk to God. God. That's when we speak. That's how we do. The book of Proverbs. And you have it there in your note. The book of Proverbs offers so many things about our tongue.

Well, we don't have time to look through many. So I chose out Proverbs chapter number 10. And it's just got many different great advice about our tongue. Let's look at a couple of them very quickly in your notes here that Proverbs 10 offers. And he says, the mouth of the righteous, it's a well of life.

Put that word life right there. Life. In other words, it's not death and it's not discouragement. When you open your mouth, give life. A well of life. Deep and cold and wonderful and pure life.

[11 : 23] Let her be. In his lips, his wisdom is found. Not poison. Not anger. But wisdom. Let her see. Refrain his lips. That's chapter number 10, verse number 19.

I put those passages right there. So this tongue that we're supposed to hold on to. He said, refrain your lips. And in my mind, I don't know why, but I keep having that great theologian that you may have heard of. His name is Barney Fife.

And I see him in my mind and he keeps saying, zip it, zip it, zip it. I don't know if you've seen that great episode by Andy, but you need to watch it four times. But it's just great. Zip it, zip it. And sometimes, reframe your lips, brother.

I'm just don't, you don't need to say anything. We don't need to say anything. That's what he says about the tongue. Letter D, very quickly, the tongue of the just is choice silver. In other words, it's value. It's not a waste of time. I read in a book not long ago that it said a man was willing to spend \$1 million to spend, I think, I don't remember, it was 15 minutes, 30 minutes, maybe even an hour with Warren Buffett.

Because the value that he's going to get. Listen, you know what he says about our tongue? Boy, let it be a wisdom and let it be a value. Next one, letter D real quick. Letter, yeah, E. Lips of the righteous, they feed many.

[12 : 25] You know what that means. Feed is to give food. It's to nourish. It's to strengthen. It's to fortify. It's to supply. It's to provide. It's to give. All these different. But many times, very few people actually nourish with their tongue.

Strengthen and fortify. When was the last time that you opened your mouth to fortify and strengthen and nourish somebody with your tongue? When was the last time that you wrote a text or wrote a letter or sent an email, something to fortify somebody with their tongue?

That's what we need to do. Letter F, very quickly, finish right here. Letter F, the mouth of the just produces wisdom. There's a lot of things we could produce. Anger and bitterness and everything else would produce wisdom.

So here's it summed up very quickly, number one, about our tongue, that we're going to watch our tongue because of the brevity of life. Well, hold it. And then you say, honor God with it and help others with it.

Say that with me. Hold it. Honor God with it and help others with it. One more time. Hold it. Honor God with it. Help others with it. One more time. Hold it.

[13 : 23] Honor God with it. Help others with it. Make sure with brevity light. Buddy, it's pointless and it's what in the world? And so he says, look, first of all, let me give you a little advice. Watch your tongue. Well, secondly, we see here in the next section here, watch your time.

This is what he says in verse number four. He says, Lord, make me to know mine end. You remember Psalm chapter 90 verse number 12. He says, you know what? Lord, teach me to number my days. Ephesians 5, 16, Colossians 4, 5. You know the verses.

And he says, boy, I just need to know. Lord, teach me. And he says, so let me know my end. Look what it says in verse number four. The measure of my days. The measure of my days. I mean, they're not as long as we think. What it is that I may know how frail I am.

The frailty of life. You know what I mean? You think big and strong and wonderful and courageous and everything else. I love to play sports, but sometimes I go and play sports and I used to, as a young person, man, I would play.

Now I come back and my wife says, baby, why do you even go? All you do is moan when you come back. I say, I don't know. I'm a mask because I love to suffer. You know, like, I don't know. I mean, but goodness, the frailty of life.

[14 : 25] Look what it says in verse number five. Behold, thou hast made my days as a hand breath. The hand breath, it was something that was measured in Egypt and Israel and some of the Middle Eastern countries. The hand breath was from the thumb all the way to the pinky and they would measure it.

Let me just say, if you have a chocolate chip cookie cake, you need to not use my hand breath. You need to use Kyle Shreve's hand breath. You know what I'm saying? I mean, get half of that baby, you know? But the hand breath, he said, Lord, that's my life. It's not as big as I think it is.

And then it goes down in verse number five. The hand breath, mine age is as nothing before thee. I remember meeting people in Argentina. One of our pastors, he had family in Paraguay and we went out there and I remember meeting his family and his granddad was there.

And he said, this is my granddad. The gospel entered in my family because of my granddad. Boy, he told me all these stories and man, I was so excited. And they said, he's in, I don't remember, it was 96. And my, one of the pastors looked over and he said, they say he's 96, but we all know.

And I don't remember the exact number. He said, he's 102 because in the areas, the rural areas there in Argentina, Paraguay and some of the places in the rural areas, they didn't have many times records.

[15 : 27] And so maybe they were six, eight years old before dad would take them up there. And they actually got, you know, paperwork and different things. And he said, he's 102. And I looked in, I thought, wow, that's a real long life.

And the Lord says, what do you think? You're impressing me with your long life? The days are short. And so he goes on. Well, I mean, we can, we can go all through there, but this is what it is. Watch your time. So we're watching our tongue.

Watch your time. So here are a couple of things that the Bible says throughout the Bible about the frailty of life, about the brevity of life, about your life. So letter A, life is a vapor. Put that right there in the space.

Life is a vapor. In other words, it's here, it's gone. Letter B, life is dust. In other words, it blows away or, you know, it gets on your car, you wipe it away, but it's gone. It says life, letter C, life is wind.

In other words, you feel it. Last a minute, it's gone. Life is just like wind. Letter D, life is as grass. And I put all these passages there so you can see these. Life is as grass.

[16 : 23] In other words, it's green. Give it, I don't know, two months until October and it's brown. It grows and then you cut it off. I mean, just grass, it's gone. Next one, it says, letter E, life is as a flower.

According to Psalm chapter 103, it's beautiful, but it withers away so quickly. The next one, life is vanity. In other words, it looks good, but it's really empty and just not lasting. The next one, letter G, life is as a shadow.

In other words, a few hours, give it a few hours, it changes and it's gone. Next one says life is spilled water. In other words, when you spill something on the ground, you can never recover it all. You can't pick it back up. It's just gone.

He said that's what life is just like. The next one, life is like a tale or a story that is told. In other words, it's a fading memory. We remember it, but it's gone. So life is short.

Verse number six, very quickly, as you run back there, we stop in verse number five. Look at verse number six. Surely every man walketh a vain show. They walk a vain show. So this is what he says.

[17 : 23] You know what? Let's watch our tongue. And then he says, let's watch our time because, man, life goes by quick and we see all these different things throughout the word of God. Time goes by so quick. And he says, all right, let me tell you, let's not walk a vain show.

So how do we walk a vain show without priorities in our life? Let me give you three priorities very quickly here on your notes right here. Letter A, don't wait to serve God. Don't wait to serve God.

Let me just clarify very clearly. You don't have to be a missionary or a full-time ministry to serve God. You know, the greatest lessons that I learned in my life about serving and loving Jesus was from my dad.

He never one time stood behind a pulpit and preached. He never taught a Sunday school class. He never gave a devotion. He never taught discipleship. He never preached. But listen to this. Everything I learned about giving and loving God and being hospitable and being dedicated and being committed, those things were sermons that my dad taught me that will reverber in my life for the rest of my life.

They'll never die. So don't wait. Time goes by quick. Don't wait to serve God. Letter B, don't wait to enjoy your family. Make memories now.

[18 : 33] Kids grow up so quick. The Bible says in the book Psalm 127 that kids are like arrows in the hand of a mighty man. You know, arrows are not for looks. They're not for decor. They're not for show. Arrows are to shoot.

Maybe it's to protect your house. Maybe it's to hunt and kill. But either way, it's to shoot. It's to use. That's what arrows are for. And before we know it, whether we want to or whether we try to hold on or whether whatever we do, you stink.

You still can't help it. They're going to be shot out there in the world. So you better enjoy them now. You better make some memories now. You better enjoy what God's given you now. Letter. So don't don't wait to serve God.

Don't wait to enjoy your family. Letter C, very quickly. Don't wait to love your spouse. Don't wait to love your spouse. In other words, dear friends, Esau had to lose his birthright before he appreciated what he had.

You don't have to lose what God's given you before you love it and appreciate it. So take advantage of it. Last year, Pastor Robert, myself, and Pastor Trent, we went and picked up Brother Don Sisk.

[19 : 35] And he came here and he preached here. And then we took him back up to Chattanooga. And when we got to Chattanooga, his wife, I believe, passed away maybe four or five years ago. We drove back up to Chattanooga.

We're dropping him off at his house. And we got out and it was a beautiful sunset. And his house was right there. Very pretty in the background. He's got all these woods in the back there. He lives on the campus of BIMl. And we got out. And as we got out, he looked and he said, you know what?

I used to sit on that back porch right there with my wife. Every evening, we sat right there on the back porch and we'd watch the deer come. We'd watch the... And then he looked and he had tears in his eyes. And he said, you know what? I would give a million dollars to have 15 minutes with her.

And dear friends, love and appreciate and take advantage of what God's given you now. Well, it concludes very quickly in verse number... Go all the way down to verse number 13.

The whole chapter concludes, but I want you to see what it says. It says, oh, spare me. This is what the psalmist says. Oh, spare me that I may recover the strength. Look what it says. Before I go hence and be no more.

[20 : 34] Very soon, whether we want or we don't, whether we believe it or not, life's going to go and we will be no more. And so this is what he says. Hey, buddy, you better watch your tongue and you better watch your time before you are no more.

When I was young, I used to live to be outdoors. Whether it was play sports, whether it was hunting, it was fishing, it was catching snakes or lizards, it didn't matter. I lived for the outdoors.

And as a result for living out the doors, I didn't enjoy school because they wanted to trap me in the asylum of staying inside. Man, I didn't enjoy it. And so because of it, I did not, because my love for outdoors, I did not do my homework.

I thought, phooey on that. Well, spoiler alert, if you don't do your homework, they don't let you go to the next grade. And it took me maybe a couple of years to realize that. But you know, I mean, I went in fourth grade, I went to three different schools, no lie.

Two public schools, one Christian school. I was hoping the Christian school would be, you know, Christ-like, forgiving and loving, but those heathenistic teachers didn't help me at all. They're like, go back and repeat the thing again. Man, you know, I'm going to be a grandpa when I'm in fourth grade.

[21 : 40] You know, I just keep repeating that baby over and over. And I thought, this is just silly. I don't want to do it and I don't care. And finally, I mean, my parents would tell me and I'd get called in the principal's office every Friday without fail.

I got a spanking for not doing my homework. And I get a spanking at school and I get a spanking at home. I thought, you ain't teaching me anything, buddy. I didn't know that spanking's coming. I mean, bring her on, baby. I mean, I, you call me, nevermind.

But you know, I mean, I did, Lord, keep a bridle on my tongue. Yeah, so I remember every Friday, man, I thought, phooey on this. And man, I kept repeating. Finally, after the third time, I learned my lesson and I did enough homework that they gave me from fourth grade, they sent me to fifth grade.

Woo, I was happy camper. The only time I was the tallest person in my class. But anyway, I remember, dear friends. You repeat the grade long enough, you'll be the biggest, you know.

But anyway, I remember being there and I thought, I have finally learned my lesson. And you know what? If you do what they requirements, what they ask you, they pass you on to the next grade. Now listen, in the same way, life is so fast.

[22 : 47] And if you'll learn to watch your tongue, you'll learn to watch your time, you can go to the next level. You can enjoy life. And you know what? We'll be even obeying God's word a lot better.

So this is what David says. You know what? Pretty soon, I'm gonna be gone. Gone hence, be no more. So let me just say, take heed. Watch your tongue. Watch your tongue.