

For Innumerable Evils

Psalms Thirty-Nine, Forty and Forty-One

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~ Most people are living solely for the riches and pleasures of this world today and, as a result, they have no depth or meaning whatsoever in their existence. They may provide lip service and piously proclaim they are just pilgrims and strangers in the world; but they love money. The Lord Jesus Christ means nothing to them in their everyday lives. Well, friends, let me tell you something: life is futile without Christ as the object of faith, hope, and love in our hearts. Only those who trust the Lord with every minute detail of their life have any purpose or plan in life, or of God, to be used in service to Him — or anyone else. Even the most devout-appearing Christian's can live in such a way that there is no meaning for them on any level. The life of the man still dead in trespasses and sin is utterly void of point or reason.

Now, I recognize our younger generation have concocted many of their own ideas about what they want this life and world to be; but it doesn't take them long to figure out the reality of what we are going to learn in this safari lesson. Many parents turn their children off to a life for Jesus at a very young age. They turn their children from Jesus by trying to get them to accept Him. When the parents have no life to back up their profession, it's useless. We have a generation today of young people who are dead-behind-the-eyes, uncaring, show no emotion, and are utterly indifferent to yours — and they have heard the Gospel, my friends. Make no mistake about it. Many of them came from seemingly very good homes, from all outward appearances. However, without parental obedience to Christ, the kids look at the so-called Christian home and find nothing to emulate. That's when they go off in all manner of wrong directions.

This report from our Spiritual Safari brings us to a Psalm that reveals the frailty, weakness, and the small-minded littleness of humanity. The vanity of human existence is revealed in this section of Scripture as nowhere else. Psalm thirty-nine has been used at many funerals — and it can be used properly in a eulogy — and, when applied correctly, it is one of the most

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beautiful elegies in the entire Psalter! Or, if it is not applicable in the life to which it is being force-applied, it is truly a savor of death. Here, the holy singer releases long pent-up feelings. It is apparent that busy feelings are stirring in David, but he remains focused on what is important. David isn't about to reveal his innermost thoughts to the rue gaze of an unsympathetic world. They wouldn't understand anyways! It is obvious David carefully constructs his discourse, so no stray word drop from his lips and give the wicked man an occasion to speak evil against God.

When David's emotions overtook him — as they often did — he spoke only to God — not to man. David understood the main problem of life to be sheer hopelessness — *EXCEPT* when viewed in the light of God. Moving on, Psalm thirty-nine contains unfathomably deep convictions. Without doubt, human life is the single most colossal failure in the entire created universe of God. Without a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, we have no meaning at all down here. Under the sun all is vanity when God is not included! Nice start, huh? Well, if you don't like that talk of truth, then you will definitely want to stop reading right now....

XXXOX ~ (To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David)

~ Jeduthun was one of three musical directors that we have record of in connection with temple worship in the nation Israel. Asaph the recorder was another, and also Heman. Of course, David was the sweet Psalmist and singer of Israel — and if you're going to have that title, then you're going to have to have some highly-qualified and most-talented men associated with you. Well, even with the doleful picture we have already painted of this Psalm, this is one of the loveliest in the entire Book of Psalms. Naturally, I recognize I say that about every Psalm we have examined thus far in this safari — because it is true of all — always....

1 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.***

~ We need to meditate on this Psalm carefully, friends. The brevity of our human, earthly, existential being should reveal profound truths alone. Frankly, if this life is all there is – or if our eternal life resembles our earthly life in any way – I'll pass on that. I would rather be a man who goes to sleep

and never has a dream and – that’s it – the end. Thackeray wrote a novel called ‘*Vanity Fair*’ — a brilliant satire novel of life. A little clique of petit people had all the status symbols available to mankind; and they played their parts as they bickered with each other across the stage of life – all the while committing their awful sins. The end. How tragic.

The Psalmist saw many people gather fortunes and leave it all to fools. Today, many people use their money in what they think is Christian service; but they’re just throwing it away. David is wondering what the purpose of all of this really was! Well, if you don’t turn to God for direction in the smallest of circumstances, you’re never going to trust Him with the big issues. Only when we attain a relationship as David had can we discover that the true meaning of life is to glorify Christ. How you glorify Him and how I glorify Him are two different things — but that’s the meaning of life — you can write it down.

David wanted to be a good example; and that’s the main reason he didn’t express many of his thoughts during his lifetime except for in praises to God. I think if we had known David on the throne, he would have been a man of *VERY* few words. We’re talking about a man who felt the undeniable discipline of the hand of God in his life. David recognized there was a purpose for his suffering. When we get a proper perspective of life, we realize the grave is not our goal. From dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return was *NEVER* spoken of the soul. Our glorified bodies never die, either. The man and woman reading this report is in for one very long journey — with eternity ahead for us — one way or another! That can be a glorious anticipation, or it can be a devastatingly frightening prospect.

Many people paint themselves into a corner of life, arranging the scene with smart-gadgets and bright colors that make it seem like such a permanent arrangement. Then they reach for an external security blanket, curl up, and take a nap. Well, we are total and complete strangers on this earth – and that’s how we ought to be living this life. We are seeking a city Whose Builder and Maker is the Lord God Almighty. David says, “*my hope is in Thee.*” Is your life being lived in a way that causes men and women to contemplate their eternal destiny? You are either drawing men to God, or you are turning them away from God. I hear so much chatter

about witnessing, and I hear people talk about how we need to pigeon-hole people for Jesus – but what about *our* lives? Is anyone turning to God because of the way you are living? Let me tell you: they won't turn to God simply because of what you say – that's just never going to happen. If we don't have a life to back up our profession — then it's meaningless. Probably blasphemous.

XL ~ (To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David)

1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

4 Happy is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

~ The Genesis section of Psalms concludes with two beautiful Messianic Psalms. A Messianic Psalm is one that is quoted in the New Testament as speaking of Christ. These three Psalms are a cluster that belong together; because there is a continuity that follows through in them. I believe these were written at a time when David fled from Absalom; but that's not the entire story. Psalm forty is quoted in the Book of Hebrews chapter ten verse five in a very remarkable way. It refers to the law concerning servants and masters in Exodus chapter twenty one; and I'll not revisit that at this time. Psalm forty is a stark prophetic praise that sets forth the resurrection, triumph and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. The 'cry' in verse one is the cry of Jesus on the cross. Verse two means the horrible pit of destruction.

See, you and I cannot even conceive of how horrible the death of Christ truly was. Verse three brings us that “new song” again – the song of redemption that we considered very carefully in previous Psalms. The thing that many shall see, and fear and trust is the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ....

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

14 Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

17 But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

XLD ~ (To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David)

1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

2 The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

3 The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish?

6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.

7 All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt.

8 An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

10 But thou, O LORD, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.

11 By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

12 And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.

13 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition with Psalm forty-one, which begins with “*blessed*” and ends with “*blessed*.” Blessed means “*happy*!” Interestingly, this Psalm has in it the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot. Verse nine is a fulfilled prophecy quoted of Judas in the Gospel John chapter thirteen verse eighteen. That makes this a Messianic Psalm. Verse ten refers to the resurrection of Christ. The death of the Lord Jesus on the cross saves *NO ONE*. Only the death *AND* resurrection completes our salvation. Christ being raised from the dead is the most critical aspect of the Gospel. In fact, without the resurrection, there is no Gospel. Everyone talks about Jesus today, and they all have some shallow opinion of Him. Ask one hundred people who Jesus is, and you’ll get ninety-seven different answers! Who do you say Jesus is, friends? ~

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