Wisdom in Words: Unlocking Psalm 39’s Hidden Gems Now. Some of the themes in Psalm 39 are very similar to those written in Ecclesiastes. Like his son would do one day, David was trying to understand the vanity and problems of life. There he was, absolute king of a large, rich and powerful kingdom. Armies moved at his command, and servants were ready to meet his every need.

He even enjoyed a special relationship with God. But he STILL had to deal with personal suffering due to the consequences of his personal actions, and life in general.

In Psalm 39, David reflected upon the problems he had to deal in his life, and how he would like to verbally strike out at the people who caused some of them. But from the psalm, it’s clear that David had decided on a different path.



“I said, ‘I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth as long as the wicked are in my presence'”. Today, we might warn someone in a similar situation and say, “Well, you’re just going to have to bite your tongue.”

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David’s resolution was well intentioned. He was going to control what he said, especially when his enemies and political opponents were with him. However, that kind of decision is often easier said than done! David went on to write, “But when I was silent and still, not even saying anything good, my anguish increased.”

David certainly had the right idea on practicing discipline in what he said, but he obviously felt the pressure building up inside of him like a pressure-cooker. How often have we felt like we were going to “blow up” if we don’t say something? How often have we been in a “bad mood”, or we have been filled with anger over what has happened to us?

Too often, the result of such pressure is that we lash out in anger and frustration. Unfortunately, the person that gets “dumped on” may have had absolutely nothing to do with the situation at all! Sadly, that other person is often a loved one.

As king, David’s case was a little different. He had to deal with different kinds of people. Many did not like him, and were his enemies. David described some as being “wicked”. Still others would try to gain his attention or trust to fulfill their own ambitions.

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It would have been very easy for David, as king, to lash out at those that he did not care for. But David knew that such outbursts would have been a sin, so he was determined to hold his peace.

However, as the pressure inside built up, it began to affect him physically. Finally, David could contain it no longer, and he let his thoughts and emotions pour out. But he did not do it before the people in his court, he poured out his heart before the Lord.

David’s example is very important, because too often today, we reverse the order. Many people spend long hours crying about their problems to other people, yet they never take their petitions, their thoughts, their feelings to the one being that can truly help – the Lord.

Such actions are especially bad when a Christian complains about what is happening to a non-Christian. As God’s children, and as His ambassadors, we must be careful as to what we say, and to whom it is said. Like David, at times WE must resolve to put a muzzle upon our mouth, and NOT say what we would just LOVE to say!

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Now, to state that we should take our petitions to the Lord first does not mean that we cannot go to another Christian when we are facing great problems. ***The encouragement and love that Christians can give one another is one of the great blessings of the local congregation***.

However, we should never be reluctant to express what we feel before the Lord! After all, He knows what is in our hearts; and we might as well get it out so that it can be dealt with.

In the psalm, David wrote. "Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life". Two thoughts come out of this passage. First, it seems like David was saying, "Lord, this is so bad that I just want it to end!" During the hard trials that are faced, it is not uncommon for Christians to say, "Lord, I can't take it anymore – I want it to end!"

Many writers in both the Old and New Testament scriptures had such feelings. Life can be such a burden that all one wants is an ending. However, at such times, we must remember Paul's words to endure, persevere, and run the race. As one man said, "Life is a task to be done – not a vacation to be enjoyed". Today, we must be about the Lord's work. We must always remember that God will help us, and He will relieve the burdens we face.

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The second thought from ***verse 4*** is that during the time we are dealing with trials, they seem to go on FOREVER. However, after that time is past, we look back on what we faced and see that it made us stronger. Intellectually, David knew that the things he faced would run their course, but in his heart, he needed the assurance of the Lord.

In our times of great distress, we need to remember that this life and the problems of this life are only temporary. As long as we understand how short this life really is, we will be able to master the trials we face, and keep our eyes upon the goal we want – ETERNAL LIFE!