



Psalms 37-39

Psalm 37-39
Tape #7178
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to the 37th psalm. David in this psalm gives us a series of exhortations to begin with.

As I said, whether or not David was really addressing this psalm to us or addressing it to himself is not really certain. David had a way of talking to himself about spiritual things. About his feelings. He would encourage himself in the Lord. He would say, Look, David, the Lord is able. The Lord will do it. And he would encourage himself. And so it could be that this psalm is one of those places where David is sort of just encouraging himself in the Lord.

But what he is saying is good for us. As he tells us,
Fret not thyself because of evildoers (37:1),

Fretting, worrying. There are words that express this common characteristic of man. In the New Testament, the word is translated careful which is actually full of care. Be careful for nothing. That is, "be full of care for nothing; but in all things with prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). So here we are exhorted really not to worry because of evildoers. Evildoers are a consternation. We are prone to fret over those that are troubling us. Maybe someone has got it in for you. They are doing their best to really get you in trouble. To make you look bad. Lying about you. Don't worry. Don't fret concerning the evildoers.

neither be envious against the workers of iniquity (37:1).

Asaph, the chief musician of David, wrote Psalm 73. And he spoke about his being envious when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. He almost tripped up over this issue. Sometimes when we see the workers of iniquity, how foolish it is to be envious of their possessions, the things that they have. Because the wicked are going to be cut off.

For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and they will wither as the green herb (37:2).

Life is but a vapor. It appears for a moment and then vanishes. And the time that you may be here on earth in comparison with eternity is just as nothing. It's like a breath. And it's amazing how people take this short time that we have and waste it so tragically. People who live for this life only are missing it completely. This life is nothing compared with eternity. And yet where we spend eternity is being determined on how we live this life. There's only one life, it will soon be past. And only what you do for Christ is going to last. The rest is wood, hay and stubble. It's going to burn.

Trust in the LORD (37:3),

Second of the exhortations. Don't worry. The cure for worry is trust. "Trust in the Lord,"
and do good; so shalt you dwell in the land, and verily you will be fed (37:3).

If we trust in the Lord, the Lord will take care of us. Now Jesus put these two things together in the sermon on the mount. As He told us that we weren't to take anxious thought for tomorrow. What you're going to eat, what you're going to drink, what you're going to wear. For after all of these things do the heathen worry. But if you will seek first the kingdom of God, His righteousness; these things will be added to you (Matthew 6:26-33). And then He tells us to consider the birds of the air. They don't worry about eating. They just go out and eat. And your Father feeds them. They don't plant or gather into barns. Your Father feeds them. Your Father will feed you. Trust in the Lord, you'll be fed. The thing that we often worry about is our food. "But trust in the Lord, so shalt thou be fed and you will dwell in the land."

Delight thyself also in the LORD (37:4);

I love this scripture. If we delight ourselves also in the Lord, if the Lord is our delight, the joy of our life, we just love fellowshiping with Him, consciousness of His presence. Just that delighting in the Lord. If you "delight yourself also in the Lord;"

he will give you the desires of your heart (37:4).

This is not a carte blanche as so often people, I think, sort of seek to use God for their own ends. And the thing is, if I am delighting myself in the Lord, He is truly the joy, the delight of my life, then the desires of my heart are for Him and for the things of the Lord. For this relationship and for the development and the deepening of my fellowship with Him. That's the desire of my heart. The interesting thing for the child of God is that the Lord writes His laws in our hearts.

To the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord said to Jeremiah, in the day that is coming I will no longer write my law on "the tables of stone but in the fleshly tablets of their heart" (2 Corinthians 3:3). The way God leads us as His children today is very unique in that the way God reveals His will to my life. When I'm walking in real fellowship with God, when I'm seeking God, when He is first, I'm delighting myself in Him, what He does is in my heart He places His desires so that I desire to do a certain thing. And then I think, Oh my, that would just be tremendous. Oh, if I could only do that. And the glorious thing is I discover that's exactly what God wants me to do. So that the doing of the will of God is never a burden.

The doing of the will of God is always just a fulfilling joy. It's just a glorious thing to be doing the will of God because He has written His law on the fleshly tablets of my heart. And it's just blessed. David said, "I delight to do Thy will" (Psalms 40:8). And so it is for everyone truly walking with the Lord as He puts His desires in my heart, I really delight doing the will of the Lord. It's the joy, the delight of my life. Nothing I'd rather do.

While we were singing and worshipping tonight, I. You know, when you get over the hill you start thinking about retirement maybe someday and I thought, Oh, what would I want to do if I retired? And I couldn't think of anything that I enjoy doing more than what I'm doing. So why retire? Retire from what? It's just a joy, a delight to serve the Lord, be doing what God wants you to do. And so as you delight yourself in the Lord, He gives you the desires of your heart.

Commit thy way unto the LORD (37:5);

So trust in the Lord. Delight in the Lord. Commit thy way unto the Lord. The focus of your life is on the Lord. That's the whole secret is focusing yourself on Him. "Seek first the kingdom of God, His righteousness." Focus in on the Lord. And as you focus in on the Lord, He takes care of everything else. Life is glorious. It's just wonderful joy when you're focused on the Lord, committing your way unto the Lord.

There is in commitment a rest and you cannot really rest always in faith. Because many times we struggle with faith. Because sometimes we seek to have faith for something that isn't the will of God. And that puts me within an inner turmoil. I'm desiring something that the Lord doesn't really want for me. And I am believing the Lord for it. There are a lot of people that are in this struggle of trying to somehow generate faith to get things to satisfy their own flesh. And God knows better. And so they struggle.

Faith and prayer were never intended by God as instruments to accomplish your will on the earth. They were instruments by which God allows us to come in harmony with Him in the accomplishing of His purposes on the earth. That's really where it's at. As Jesus said, "Nevertheless not what I will, Thy will be done" (Mark 14:36). And in that commitment to God's will, there is rest. But not until.

So the Lord oftentimes in the issues of life allows us to come to the place where we can do no more. We've struggled with it, we have come up against that spot where I can't go any further. There's nothing more I can do. I am helpless.

Sometimes God lets us get to the place where man is helpless. The doctor says I am sorry, there is just nothing that we can do. Medical science can't help you. That's all there is. And there are many people at that point that just go absolutely to pieces. Oh, it's terrible, the doctor said there's nothing to do. And we just go to pieces. But I believe that many times the Lord allows us to come to that place of the end of our resources and man's resources that we might discover the glorious resources of God. Brings us to that place where we can do nothing but commit. Well Lord, it's in Your hands. I'm just going to trust in You, Lord, to work out whatever You want in my life. If You want to take my life, Hey, I'll be with You. If You want to leave me around here for a while, Lord, I'm going to serve You.

As Paul said, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). And when you come to that commitment to the Lord, where it really doesn't matter anymore, then I'm resting. Whichever way it

happens, alright Lord, it's in Your hands. It's Your will. You accomplish Your will and I can always rest in God's will being done because I know that God's will is best even though I may not understand it. I know it's best.

And so it's always great when I am brought to that place of commitment where I cease from my trying to work it out or figure it out and I just say, Okay, Lord, whatever. You work it out. He's brought me to that place so many times during the time of the growth of the church. When there were just issues that were beyond us. And just commit it to the Lord. Lord, it's Your church. It's not really mine, why should I fret over it? Why should I worry about it? I'm just a flunkie around here. You're the One that's going to stand or fall. Your problem.

When you learn to turn it over to the Lord. Just hey, Lord, Your problem, You take care of it. You just rest because you know that He is able to take care of it and He will take care of it. So "commit your ways unto the Lord,"

trust also in him; and He'll bring it to pass (37:5).

His will, He'll bring His will to pass in the situation. So that whatever comes is what God wants and that's what I want, too.

And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday (37:6).

God is for righteousness and God is for justice. And as I commit these issues to the Lord, God will work it out in the right, just way. And then if I have committed, the next exhortation really isn't necessary because it's the natural outcome of commitment.

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him (37:7):

That's the natural result of commitment is rest. And then back to this fretting,
fret not thyself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass (37:7).

Don't fret over the evil. God will take care of them, too. We don't need to fret over them. We don't need to worry about them. God is going to take care. And I have found the Lord is perfectly capable of defending Himself. When you see yourself as a defender of the Lord, you see yourself in a peculiar light, I'm sure. He doesn't really need me to defend Him. He's perfectly capable of defending Himself.

I think that many times we make a mistake in trying to defend the Bible against the attacks. The Bible is like a "sharp two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). You don't defend a sword, you use it. Instead of trying to defend the Bible, use it. Just quote the scriptures and use the sword. Don't defend the sword. I've got a sharp sword here. This sword is Sheffield steel. Honed to the finest edge and it's Sheffield steel, this sword is. And you're defending the sword. You don't need to, just use it. Don't have to defend the Bible. You don't have to prove that it's the word of God. You don't have to prove that it's inspired. Just use it. Quote it. The word of God itself is like a sharp two-edged sword. Not to be defended but to be used.

Cease from anger (37:8),

Don't be stewing. Don't be upset.

and forsake wrath (37:8):

Not going to do any good to get angry over that situation.

I have a tendency towards this. I read of some of the things that are going on and I have a tendency to get angry, to get upset. I was reading in the paper today. There is a school and I was trying to remember just where it was, it's in the area of Southern California here. Long Beach, it was in Long Beach. There's a school in Long Beach where they are building now a ten-foot high block wall around the school to defend the children or to protect the children from the stray bullets that are always flying from the neighborhood next door. And so the school principal said, This wall is long overdue because in this housing development next to the school, there is almost daily gunfire. And, he said, it's just sort of the sign of the times, the age that we're living in.

Oh, my Lord! When we have to build walls around the schools to protect the children from stray bullets, what kind of a world are we living in? When you can't send your child to the store to buy a loaf of bread without fear of their being assaulted, kidnapped or abused. What kind of a world are we living in?

And I can just read a newspaper and get pretty angry at the conditions of the world. "Cease from anger,

forsake wrath.” I have to read this quite often.

fret not thyself in any wise to do evil (37:8).

That I have to do when I read these things because I could easily get involved in a vigilante group.

But evildoers shall be cut off (37:9):

You find yourself on the same boat.

but those that wait upon the LORD shall inherit the earth (37:9).

I do believe that we as Christians can’t just stand by and wring our hands and say, Oh, isn’t it horrible the way evil is prevailing in this world. And feel that there’s just nothing we can do. Yes, there is something we can do and should be doing. Recognizing that evil comes from Satan. It’s a spiritual thing. There’s a spirit of evil. We need to stand against it with the spiritual weapons that God has given to us which is prayer.

I think that one of the greatest problems in our society today is that though conditions in the world around us are desperate, the church isn’t desperate before the Lord in prayer. And I think the time has come when we need to recognize, we are in a real spiritual battle. And we must begin to enter into this battle with the weapons that the Lord has given us. But it isn’t going out in a vigilante group to bomb the abortion clinics or whatever. It is getting together and praying. And through prayer, tear down the strongholds of the enemy. How we need to pray. “They that wait upon the Lord” (Isaiah 40:31). We need to do that. “For evildoers shall be cut off but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.”

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be (37:10):

The wicked are going to be cut off. They don’t last.

yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be (37:10).

Look at some of the wicked people. Look at their place. They’re not around anymore.

But the meek shall inherit the earth (37:11);

Jesus said this, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5), quoting from this. “The meek shall inherit the earth;”

and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the just (37:11,12),

At this point, he’s going to start making contrast between the wicked and the righteous. We’re going to get a lot of contrast here. So “the wicked plots against the just,”

he gnashes on him with his teeth. But the Lord shall laugh at him: for he sees that his day is coming (37:12,13).

I get comfort in that, too. When I see the wicked and they just seem to be so blasphemous against God, I think, Well man, your day’s coming. Now I know that that isn’t a totally right attitude. I should be praying for them more.

The wicked have drawn out the sword, they’ve bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, to slay those that are of an upright life (37:14).

But God will turn their sword against them.

It will enter into their own heart, their bow will be broken (37:15).

This I love.

A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked (37:16).

Paul, in the New Testament said, “But godliness with contentment is great riches” (1 Timothy 6:6). Want to know what real riches are? Just walking with God and being content. Because you see, those that possess so very, very much quite often are not satisfied with what they have. They’re spending their whole life to get more.

There was a man who, back in the days when we were building the little chapel, a very wealthy man, was fascinated with the hippies that were coming to church. Was fascinated with the life changes. How God was just transforming these kids. And he is probably the wealthiest man that I’ve ever known. In fact, I saw in a magazine the other day that his wife is now one of the ten wealthiest women in the world because he died and left it all to her and made her one of the ten wealthiest women in the world.

But this man was a driven man. He would work sixteen to eighteen hours a day, seven days a week. Actually died ultimately of high blood pressure, heart attack, because he was always trying to get more. Always trying to squeeze a little more out of a deal. He spent half of his time in court because he was always

being sued because he just was on the edge. But yet he had more money than he could possibly ever spend.

He kept over a hundred million in liquid assets in case a good deal came along. And yet never satisfied. And I wouldn't want to enter into a deal with him because he would skin me. And he didn't mind skinning the poor. It was an obsession with him and never could he sit down and say, Well, my soul, take thy ease. You have enough to be happy. He never had enough to be happy.

I am richer than he was. Far richer now than he is because there were no U-Haul trailers following his hearse so he could take it with him. He left it all here. But the contentment that I have as a child of God makes me rich. It's sort of interesting to be able to go through a Sears catalog and not want a thing. I don't need any of it. Godliness with contentment, that's really rich. "A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked."

For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholds the righteous (37:17).

So notice the contrast: "Wicked, righteous. Little the righteous man, better than the riches of many wicked. Arms of the wicked be broken: the Lord will uphold the righteous."

The LORD knows the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever (37:18).

The riches I have are forever. The eternal riches, the treasures that I've laid up in heaven, they're mine forever. I'm not taking it with me, I've sent it ahead. Deposited, it's there.

They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied (37:19).

The Lord will take care of you. You put Him first in your life.

But the wicked [contrast] shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away (37:20).

When they would offer the sacrifices, as they would butcher the lamb, the priest would take the fat and the entrails of the lamb and place it upon the fire of the altar. And as the fat of the lamb was placed upon the fire of the altar, of course, the oil and the fat and all would just really flame up. It begins to have quite an intense flame. And the smoke ascends up. And he said, So is the wicked, they are like the fat of the lambs. They're just going to be consumed into smoke. They'll just consume away.

For the wicked borrows, and he doesn't pay back: but the righteous shows mercy, and gives (37:21).

Contrast again.

For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that are cursed of him shall be cut off (37:22).

And this is an important verse, I love it.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delights in His way (37:23).

I use that scripture a lot. "The steps of a good man are ordered," God orders our steps. And then God delights as we walk in His way. "And God delights in His way."

Though he fall (37:24),

And who hasn't fallen?

he shall not be cast down (37:24):

In other words, you don't lie there. I've often said the sin really isn't so much in falling, it's in lying in the mud. You may fall in the mud now and then but you don't lie there. You don't stay there. "Though he falls, he will not be utterly cast down:"

for the LORD will hold him up with his hand (37:24).

The Lord will pick you up with His hand. He takes you by the hand and lifts you out.

I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread (37:25).

David said, I'm now an old man. Been around. And I've never seen God forsake the righteous. I've never seen God's seed begging bread.

He is ever merciful, and He lendeth; and His seed is blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; and you'll forever, you'll dwell for evermore. For the LORD loveth judgment, and He will not forsake His saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off (37:26-28).

Oh, what contrast. And that is where the real contrast comes—in the eternal. And that's what we need to look at. The eternal effects of the righteous life. The eternal results of the righteous life and the eternal

results of the wicked life. The wicked is cut off. The righteous is preserved.

The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever (37:29).

That promise of eternal life.

The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, his tongue talks judgment. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. But the wicked watches the righteous, and seeks to slay him. But the LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. So wait on the LORD, keep his way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land (37:30-34):

Oh, it's a beautiful promise. We just wait upon the Lord. Keep the Lord's ways. Keep our heart in His path. "We'll inherit the land:"

and when the wicked are cut off, you will see it. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off (37:34-38).

What is the end of this path? Where is it leading me? The path of righteousness, the end of it is peace. The path of wickedness, the end of it is being cut off. The transgressors will be destroyed together. The end of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him (37:39,40).

An awful lot to digest in this latter portion of Psalm 37. In the contrast of the righteous and the wicked. The contrast of the lifestyles and the contrast of the end results of a life of wickedness versus the life of righteousness.

And as you read this and as you meditate upon it, you can only come to one conclusion and that is, It pays to live a righteous life. And it is folly to walk in wickedness.

This 38th psalm is one of the penitential psalms. It declares that it is a psalm of David and it is thought that it was written by David about the time just before Absalom rebelled. And that, among other things, David had contracted some kind of a sexually communicated disease. Whatever it was, it was a rather miserable thing as David writes about it and he sees that which he has, his disease in his body, he sees it as the result of his sin. He looks upon it as sort of a judgment of God against him for his sin. So he declares,

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure (38:1).

As parents sometimes we make a mistake of correcting our children in our wrath. And we over punish. Usually it is when we have been frightened by the activity of our child and we are reacting emotionally because they ran out into the street and they were almost hit by a car. We thought they were going to be hit and we are just so in turmoil, angry that they would run out, that they would jerk free and run out in the street and so we have a tendency in those points to overreact.

And so David is saying, Lord, cool down before You take care of me. "Don't rebuke me in your wrath, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure." David is doing what we so often do, and that is, we carry our feelings over towards God. And we think that God maybe responds as we respond. But God is merciful. David is feeling really the heavy hand on him right now.

For Thy arrows stick fast in me, and Your hand is pressing hard against me (38:2).

He really felt the heavy hand of God on him and the arrows of God sticking him and so he's saying, Lord, take it easy.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin (38:3).

David is aware of his sin. His whole body is weary.

For my iniquities are gone over my head: as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me (38:4).

And so he feels this tremendous pressure upon him and he knows that he has done wrong. He is aware of his sin. And he said,

My wounds stink, they are corrupt because of my foolishness (38:5).

Our foolish actions. How foolish is man! And the consequences that a man often pays because of his

foolishness. I think of a fellow who, in his foolishness would, say, go out on Harbor Boulevard and pick up a prostitute. And the things that the sexually contracted diseases that are so prevalent. And how foolish! It could be that David has done some kind of foolish thing like that. He said,

I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long (38:6).

I'm bent over. And I'm mourning all the day long.

For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease (38:7):

So he's got these crazy, running sores. Loathsome.

and there is no soundness in my flesh (38:7).

He repeats that.

I am feeble, I've been broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart is beating, it's palpitating, it's pumping, my strength fails me: as for the light of my eyes, it's gone from me. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen, my family members, stand afar off (38:8-11).

Really, he's in a miserable condition.

They also that seek after my life are laying traps for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and they imagine deceits all day long. I am as a deaf man, I heard not; I was as a dumb man that opened not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: that You will hear, O Lord my God (38:12-15).

Desperate straits. He has sinned. He has been foolish. He's paying the consequences in his physical body. He's suffering and describes so vividly this suffering that is there. And so the only recourse that he has is just to put his hope in the Lord. Cast himself upon the Lord. Place himself before the Lord, confess his sin and just seek the mercy of God and the help of God. My hope, Lord, is in you, that You will hear me.

For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slips, and they magnify themselves against me (38:16).

My enemies who are plotting against me.

For I am ready to halt, my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare my iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. But my enemies, they're lively, they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied (38:17-19).

As Absalom went to Hebron and began to form this army to come against David, multitudes from Israel joined with Absalom in the rebellion against David. So they that are against me are multiplying. And David perhaps was thinking about that great army of people that had gone to Hebron to join with Absalom to overthrow David from the throne.

They also that render evil for good are my adversaries; because I follow the thing that is good. Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation (38:20-22).

David's plea. It's a penitential psalm. A prayer unto the Lord. And of course, that last portion, "Make haste to help me, O Lord." Hurry up, Lord. Don't delay. Make haste to help me. I think that we pray that quite often, don't we? Lord, hurry. I'm going down. Don't delay, Lord. You're my salvation.

The 39th psalm, David said,

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 (39:1).

The Bible says concerning the tongue that it is one of the hardest things to tame. We can sin so easily with our tongue. Using it to hurt, using it to cut. So we need to guard our tongue. So David said, "I'll take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." That I not use my tongue for evil. To cut someone down. "I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me."

I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred (39:2).

David was watching this situation and he was just keeping quiet. Not wanting to get his tongue involved in the thing but he describes what so often happens when you try to keep quiet.

My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned (39:3):

I wasn't saying anything but man, inside, while I was thinking on this, the fire was just really burning hot within me.

and then I spoke with my tongue, LORD, make me to know my end (39:3,4),

Lord, help me to see things in the right perspective. Help me, Lord, to always keep the eternal perspective in view. The judging of a situation according to the eternal perspective. What are the eternal consequences of this? Is there any eternal value or is it only for now? Lord, keep me with the proper perspective. Help me to know my end.

and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am (39:4).

There is, interestingly enough, sort of a feeling of immortality by man. None of us are really expecting to die within the next week or within the next month or within the next year. We each sort of have a sense of immortality. Like, yes, I know that death is coming but it's down the road yet a ways. And we don't really realize how frail we actually are. And thus we go on thinking, One day I'll take care of that. One day I'll get right with God. One day I'll really think about serving the Lord. But Lord, "help me to know my end, the measure of my days." How long I have. And help me to realize how frail I really am.

Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth (39:5);

God says, Okay, you're going to live that long. There is the limitation to my days.

my age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity (39:5).

Now here you are at your best state. Now I've passed that a long time ago. But even at that, it was nothing. Man at his best state. As Shakespeare said, Man, poor man, so ignorant in that which he knows best. At your best state, it's an emptiness.

Surely every man walks in a vain show (39:6).

You can see them everytime they have the Oscars. The TV playing in the limousines as they pull up and all of these smiling people in there. The vain show.

I think of what vanity. Every man walks in a vain show.

surely they are disquieted in vain: for they've heaped up riches, and they really don't know who's going to spend them (39:6).

Because you're going to leave them.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? because my hope is in You. Deliver me from all my transgressions: and do not make me the reproach of the foolish. I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because You did it (39:7-9).

I'm aware, God, that You were the One involved and thus I didn't say anything about it.

But remove Your stroke from me: for I am consumed by the blow of Your hand. When You with your rebukes correct a man for iniquity, You make his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity (39:10,11).

The emptiness of a life of sin.

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 (39:12).

And so the psalmist sees that his life is just, hey, I'm passing through. I'm just a sojourner here, as my fathers. They passed through. So Lord, hear my prayer. Be touched. Be moved by my tears. It's an interesting thing but tears have a way of touching a person's heart. Whenever I see a person crying, I'm moved, I'm touched. God is also touched by the tears.

Spare me, Lord, that I may recover strength, before I go from here, and am no more (39:13).

So Lord, I don't want to go out sick. Let me at least recover and before I get to that place where You take me.

That is a psalm to Jeduthun, who was one of the chief singers and an instructor. You can read about him in First Chronicles chapter nine verse sixteen. And he's mentioned in this psalm and in Psalm 62, Psalm 77. His name was also called Ethan.

Continue on next week reading psalms. We're going to move next week, Psalm 40 through 43. And so get on into them. There's just so much. Forty-two is one of my favorite of all psalms. And we've got an awfully lot of good stuff to consider next week.

Father, thank You for Your word, the blessing of being able to gather to study Your word. And Lord, to hear David as he opens up his heart and expresses himself to You. And how he touches, Lord, so many times

on the issues of our own hearts. So Lord, we with David are guilty of folly. And the consequences often of that folly. We thank You, Lord, that You are merciful and that You are gracious. And that You're a loving, forgiving Father. As we come before You seeking that forgiveness, You are faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Lord, help us this night to trust in You. To delight in You. To commit the issues of our lives to You. That we might rest, Lord, in that peace of the children of God who are living in harmony with the Father. Lord, help us, strengthen us. You are indeed the strength of our life. Strengthen us for those things that we will be facing this week. Give us Your power to overcome temptation. Give us Your strength that we might live a righteous, holy, godly life before Thee. Walking in the fear of the Lord and bringing forth fruit unto our Lord Jesus Christ. In His name we pray, Amen.