



Sermon Summary

May 25, 2025

Short Life Psalm 39

The brevity of life hits us at certain times in our life. For example, a day like Memorial Day when we remember soldiers' lives cut short, a funeral, a medical diagnosis or severe illness. David was in a painful place because of God's discipline. It's likely he felt like he was going to die, and it made him think.

David Suffered in Silence (vv. 1-3)

Although we don't know what David was suffering, it was likely something physical that threatened his life since he contemplated life's shortness. We do know why. God was disciplining David for his sin. Like a good father, God disciplines his children (Hebrews 12:5-11). David suffered in silence not wanting to sin with his speech especially when the wicked were in his presence. Possibly David didn't want to say things he would later regret or didn't want to speak badly of God in the presence of unbelievers so that they could use his words against God. But as he stayed silent, his mental condition got worse. *Suffering in silence usually isn't the best way to deal with pain. Learn from suffering, even if it's discipline.*

David Prayed (vv. 4-6)

David finally talked to God and asked "make me aware of my end and the number of my days so that I will know how short-lived I am." The prayer could be a literal one - "How many days until I die?" During intense suffering we want to know how much longer. Sometimes it seems like death is the only way the suffering ends. Or it could be a philosophical one "Help me understand how short life is." David described life as a vapor (breath) and its length as mere inches (literally "handbreadths" a handbreadth was the width of four fingers). Its length is nothing compared to the eternity of God. David described people as shadows - we're here today and gone tomorrow. Moreover, life for most is vanity because they frantically gather possessions that go to someone else when they die. *To rightly live with the knowledge of a short life we must (1) put life in perspective. We're alive on earth for years. We're in heaven or hell for eternity. (2) humble ourselves and put our lives in God's hands. We won't live forever, and no matter how secure we think we are, life could end now. (3) Be mindful of life's purpose and see the forest instead of just the trees. When life is too task oriented without seeing our greater purpose of giving glory to God life becomes meaningless and moves quicker. (4) Seek God rather than worldly needs or pleasures.*

David Put his Hope in God (vv. 7-13)

During his pain David finally put his hope in God, asked for forgiveness, and asked for God's mercy by removing His discipline. David wanted to be right with God again so he could enjoy his life in the short time he had left. Probably the best metaphor for life is to understand we are "aliens" or "temporary residents". Earth is not our home. We were made for an eternity with God in heaven. So don't get attached to this world or what it offers.