

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"Muzzle My Angry Mouth – *The Mouth in My Heart*"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Ps. 39; Jas. 1:18–20; Prov. 13:3; 15:1; Matt. 5:38–48; 12:36; Luke 6:45; Deut. 32:35; Ps. 19:15; 2 Cor. 10:5

Have you ever walked away from an argument without saying a word, but in your mind, you were still having the conversation? You kept your composure and held your tongue, but somewhere inside, the argument continued. You replayed what happened, imagined what you should have said, and perhaps even rehearsed what you'd say next time. Outwardly, you were silent, but inwardly, the fire was still burning. And the longer you thought about it, the hotter it became.

That's the situation David describes in Psalm 39. He sees wickedness before him and determines that he will not sin with his tongue. He's going to muzzle his mouth rather than allow his anger to lead him into sin. But David discovers something important: keeping his mouth shut doesn't necessarily quiet what's happening in his heart. In fact, his silence only seems to intensify the fire within. **It's not enough to muzzle the words coming out of our mouths. The mouth that needs to be muzzled first is the mouth in our hearts.**

1. GUARD YOUR MOUTH, BUT DON'T IGNORE THE FIRE IN YOUR HEART (Ps. 39:1–4)

David begins with a deliberate decision: *"I said: 'I will guard my ways, so I will not sin with my tongue. I will muzzle my mouth while the wicked are before me.'"* (Ps. 39:2). The Hebrew word *shamar*, translated *guard*, means to watch carefully or protect. David recognizes the wickedness before him, and he knows his response matters. But something happens as he remains silent: *"My heart was hot within me, while I was musing, the fire burned. Then I spoke with my tongue."* (Ps. 39:4). David has restrained his lips, but his anguish is growing. As he continues replaying the situation in his mind, the fire inside becomes hotter. He may not be speaking outwardly, but inwardly, his anger is very much alive.

We need to recognize this in ourselves. Sometimes we believe we've handled a situation well simply because we didn't say anything hurtful. And certainly, guarding our words matters. But there's a difference between exercising self-control and stuffing anger down where nobody can see it. We can walk away from conflict while continuing to rehearse words of criticism, bitterness, and self-justification in our hearts. And the more we meditate on those things, the more we feed the fire. David reminds us that silence alone doesn't make us righteous. **The question isn't simply whether I've kept my mouth shut. It's what is the internal monologue I'm allowing to burn in my heart while my mouth is closed.** Because, if we're not careful, eventually whatever is simmering or boiling within us will bubble over and find its way out.

2. BRING YOUR ANGER TO ADONAI AND LET HIM GIVE YOU PERSPECTIVE (Ps. 39:5–8)

What David does next is incredibly important. When he finally speaks, his words aren't directed toward the wicked person before him. Instead, he brings his anguish and frustration to the LORD Himself. He prays, *"Let me know, ADONAI, my end and what the number of my days is."* (Ps. 39:5). David isn't asking God to reveal everything about his future. He's asking for perspective.

In the present, he's become consumed with what's happening immediately before him, almost like a prisoner of the moment. So He asks the Lord to give him perspective—to help him remember how fleeting his life really is, that his days are mere handbreadths and his life is but a vapor. What seems overwhelming right now is incredibly brief when compared with eternity.

And isn't that something we desperately need today? We live in a world where everyone seems to be making an uproar, fighting to be heard, gathering possessions, and insisting they're right. But David comes to a remarkable realization: *"And now, my Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You."* (Ps. 39:8). That's where our focus needs to return. When wickedness is before me, and injustice makes my blood boil, I need to bring it to the Lord rather than take matters into my own hands. James reminds us that *"human anger doesn't produce the righteousness of God."* (Jas. 1:20). Even when my anger is directed toward something genuinely wrong, it doesn't automatically produce God's justice. Like a loving father who tells his children not to discipline one another, ADONAI calls us to bring our offenses to Him. His judgments aren't clouded by sinful motives or bitterness. **Forgiveness is, in many ways, the daily act of taking that offense and saying, "Here, Lord, it's Yours."**

3. ASK THE LORD TO DELIVER YOU FROM YOUR OWN TRANSGRESSIONS (Ps. 39:9–14)

There's a remarkable shift in David's prayer. He began by focusing on the wickedness before him, but now he prays, *"Deliver me from all my transgressions."* (Ps. 39:9). He started by looking at what others were doing wrong, but now he's asking God to deal with his own sin. The Hebrew word *natsal*, translated *deliver*, carries the idea of being snatched away or pulled out of something. David is asking ADONAI to pull him out of his own rebellion and defiance. He's no longer simply concerned with what someone else has done. He's bringing his own heart before God. As the psalm continues, he acknowledges God's correction, cries out for mercy, and asks the Lord to hear his tears. He recognizes his complete dependence upon the Lord.

This is where the Lord wants to bring us as well. Yeshua taught us to love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us, and refuse retaliation (Matt. 5:38–48). None of that comes naturally! But the issue isn't merely outward obedience. It's about becoming like our Father in heaven. Yeshua says, *"For from the overflow of the heart his mouth speaks."* (Luke 6:45). Whatever comes out of my mouth is the result of what's been cooking in my heart. Angry words don't simply come from nowhere. Somewhere inside, those thoughts have been simmering, perhaps emerging in an explosion of anger or through passive-aggressive criticism hidden behind a smile. Rather than simply saying, "I didn't mean to say that," I need to ask the Lord why those words were there in the first place. Our prayer should be, *"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, ADONAI, my Rock and my Redeemer."* (Ps. 19:15). **The Lord doesn't simply want to change our words. He wants to transform what's happening in the deepest recesses of our hearts.**

CONCLUSION

Words matter. My words matter. But the words coming out of our mouths begin somewhere. They begin with the thoughts we entertain, the conversations we rehearse, and the offenses we hold on to. We can muzzle our lips for a while, but if we continue allowing anger and resentment to simmer within us, eventually those things will spill over. The aim isn't simply to become better at hiding our anger. It's to become like our Father, who is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love and truth. As Paul reminds us, *"We are taking every*

thought captive to the obedience of Messiah."(2 Cor. 10:5). That means allowing the Lord to deal with what's happening inside before it becomes words or actions.

So today, I encourage you to bring your heart honestly before ADONAI. Perhaps someone has hurt you or treated you unjustly. Maybe you've kept your mouth shut, but inwardly you've continued having that argument. The question isn't simply whether someone else has sinned. It's what you're allowing to take root in your own heart. Will you surrender that offense to the Lord and trust Him to deal with it in righteousness? Will you allow Him to search your heart and reveal any bitterness or self-righteousness hiding there? We need more than restraint; we need transformation. We need Yeshua to make us new from the inside out. So come before Him today and pray, "Lord, don't just help me keep my mouth shut. Suffocate the fire of anger in my heart. Let Your Word wash over me. Purify my thoughts and transform my heart. I want to become like You." Let that be our prayer, not simply today, but moment by moment.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Ps. 39:1–4, David guards his tongue, yet his anguish continues to grow. What does this reveal about the difference between outward self-control and inward transformation?
2. David asks ADONAI for an eternal perspective. How can remembering the brevity of life change the way we respond to offenses and injustices?
3. Why is David's shift from focusing on the wickedness of others to asking God to deliver him from his own transgressions so significant?
4. Think about your recent disagreements, conversations, or social media interactions. Are there words or attitudes that suggest anger, criticism, or bitterness has been simmering in your heart?
5. Is there someone whose actions you've been replaying in your mind? What would it look like to surrender that offense to ADONAI and allow Him to replace your anger with His character?

CLOSING PRAYER

Abba Father, we come before You recognizing how desperately we need You to search our hearts. You know the injustices we've witnessed, the hurts we've experienced, and the conversations we've continued having inwardly, even when our lips remained silent. Forgive us for allowing bitterness, resentment, and self-righteousness to simmer within us. Forgive us for thinking that because we didn't say something outwardly, we had dealt with it inwardly.

ADONAI, we surrender our offenses to You today. Give us an eternal perspective and remind us that our hope is in You. Deliver us from our own transgressions. Let Your Word wash over our hearts, and by Your Holy Spirit, extinguish the fires of anger within us. Teach us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in Your sight. We don't simply want to appear righteous outwardly; we want to become more like Yeshua in the deepest places of our hearts. Purify us, transform us, and help us reflect Your mercy, compassion, and love in everything we say and do.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.