

## LORD, MAKE ME to KNOW MY END

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*"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. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good (to no avail); and my sorrow was stirred, My heart was hot within me, while I was musing (meditation) the fire burned: Then spake I with my tongue, LORD make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psalm 39:1-5).*

The heart desire of this writer for this study lesson is to analyze the advice and the admonishment contained in some of the words and phrases of the cited above verses' of Psalm 39. There is great valued wisdom contained therein and it will be of benefit to us to know the deeper meanings. And we are obligated to accept them and let them be a part of our lives as we walk with the LORD. Amen!

Notice that David the Psalmist begins with a confession (vv. 1-3) and here is where we'll begin analyzing some of the words...to look to their significance. The first word expressing what he promised to do was to "heed (guard)" his ways. Heed is "to give" or "to take". Take heed, implying more especially an intent, earnest contemplation, is rendered "take heed", the sense of vision (Vine's p. 299).

Be convinced that taking heed or guarding our way is for the blessed purpose of gaining or finding wisdom to have understanding and not be as one devoid of understanding, (cf. Proverb 10:13). The Psalmist asked God the question, which he answered himself, *"How can man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word"* (Psalm 119:9).

Only through obedience to God's will which is expressed in His word can our way be pure. God's expressed will (a commandment to us) must have its way in our life with much care. If we take heed according to the word we will be involved in love and service to one another, note the principle of what we should do as said in Galatians 5:13.

*"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another"* (Galatians 5:14:15). Please read Galatians 5:19-21. Listed therein are the works of the flesh. After reading and pondering them, let us confess and ask God for forgiveness for those we are guilty of turning from our sins and heed our way. This writer is not making any accusation; only that where sin exists—forgiveness is the right way, the only way, to cleanse one's way.

Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the Spirit. "What a blessing!" How can we study His word and not read and ponder the fruit of the Spirit? *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and do you know also? "Against such there is no law. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"* (Galatians 5:22-25).

Now let's analyze this apostolic message from God: *"I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase (the growth). So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives (causes) the increase (growth). Now he who plants and he who waters are one and each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we, (Paul & Apollos), are God's fellow workers. You (we) are God's field (God's temple), God's building. According to grace of God given to me (Paul), like a wise master builder I have laid the foundation and another is building thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 3:6-11).

This is a great example of mission work, going to areas where no one has gone with the gospel. Teaching Christ (the foundation), helping in converting and growing the church, (remember God gives the increase), then encouraging and teaching, (watering) new converts. We, Christians, receive our reward as well as them, based upon faithfulness to Christ and the truth of the gospel. The message that we are to take to all (entire) the world is the foundation of our salvation and we are, as said in v. 10, to take heed how we builds. If we are negligent and do not build it is a terrible and damning sin...danger of eternal damnation of hell!

Another confession, [promise], David made in Psalm 39:1 was the promise to guard his ways. He was concerned about the danger of his tongue, what he would say, under certain conditions, if he did not restrain his mouth. There are lessons for us in these few words of admonishment.

Let's look at what is involved in "guarding our ways." The question comes to mind, "What are my (our) ways?" Here are some of the problems of man as recorded in the Bible. *"Man is double-minded (doubting) and unstable (hesitating) in all his ways"* (James 1:8). This being true and we know that it is, God's inspired word is applicable to all humankind, and even if one will not accept the truth it doesn't make it untrue or not applicable.

Now, stop and think about sin within us. In order that we guard our ways, it is a given, we must know the way and be on or in the way. We must be in Christ's way leading to the Father. I am confident that you know it by heart, nevertheless hear what Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6).

Note some of what is said of "God's Way." *"Who is wise? Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD (God) are right..."* (Hosea 14:9). Not only are God's ways right, but also they are true. *"...praise and extol (praise highly; laud) and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are true, and His ways justice..."* (Daniel 4:37).

Not only are God's ways right and just, but also His ways are true; and I'm sure we know and confess to that. Read the words of "The Song of Moses and the Lamb" in (Revelation 15:3). I am convinced there is a need for all humankind to not only heed their ways, but to improve in them also, to develop Holiness and Christlikeness in our actions and manifest them in our life.

We should not, we must not, sin with our tongue. There are times when we should keep our mouth shut; bridle our mouth (zip the lip) so to speak. Do you know the best and most successful way to do that? I submit to you the answer is "Keep your heart right with God" What say ye? Our Biblical heart (our mind) is what I am speaking of. Our mind is what controls us. Do we see and understand the importance of study. We must know what God demands of us, and that it is a great, great need of man. And say, a demand, (a command), from God is a blessing...and yes, we must possess the great blessing of knowledge that we heed/guard our ways, diligently and in love.

It is said in James chapter 3, that we all offend (stumble) in many ways; that the tongue is a fire; the source of the tongue's evil ways is the devil, a world of iniquity, (see also John 8:44). The scripture says that the devil is a liar and the father of it.

In Psalm 39:3 David also said, "*My heart was hot within me, while I was musing (meditating) the fire burned...*" Part of his confession; he was meditating in his anger and maybe there was self-chastisement involved, which is good for anyone. Good then and good now!

We will find Psalm 39:4-5 very interesting. David made requests by prayer in these two verses and we need to note what he prayed for. The purpose of analyzing these verses is thought provoking and challenging and we can learn by doing so. Have you ever been bold enough to request of "*the LORD, to make me know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail (weak) I am*" (Psalm 39:4)?

If we knew (our end) how many days we would live here on this terrestrial globe, would it make any difference? God blesses us with life. We can agree on that! And by being so blessed with life we know that our end will be...and I am speaking of physical death. We must look at it rationally and come to realize why we are here. You know the age-old question? The how, why, what, where and when!

To begin, we know that we are one of God's creatures, and "*everything created by God is good*" (I Timothy 4:4). I once heard or read a short statement about life or time and the admonishment was...know and realize that the most important aspect was to make sure we use what ever time (length of life) God blesses us with, doing that which is right and doing it each day of life as if it was our last day. There is no promise of tomorrow, however if tomorrow comes, use it as if it was the first day of the rest of your life.

What I have been thinking is, there is good cause for us to consider and discuss some scriptures that reference life and life-doings. Life is living, *“for it is God who works in you both to will and do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I (Paul) may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain”* (Philippians 2:13-16).

How are we to use God’s gifts? And that includes life itself, as already noted in scripture; GOD is the giver of life. The answer to how we are to use God’s gifts in life is to use them in Christlike ways—see Romans 12:3.

There are multiple thoughts on principles cited in Philippians 2:13-16 and I want us to consider them, thus these are set forth to give us study thoughts. Please open your Bible and read and study them. These are listed for us to consider and ponder:

*“There are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all”* (1 Corinthians 12:6).

Do not argue over doubtful things, see (Romans 14:1), and let Christ judge another’s conscience.

Let the life that you live be a light that shines before men and know and realize that ye are the salt of the earth, see Matthew 5:13-16).

Do not let your labor in life be in vain, see (1 Thessalonians 3:4-5).

Live a life of gladness and joy, see (2 Corinthians 7:4)

“The Bible does not divide human life into physical, intellectual, and spiritual compartments, as we tend to do. But view it as a unity, the totality of activities and experiences of an individual or a community. To be sure, we read of soul and spirit, but these are to be understood as the principle of life and personal identity, not unlike that of animals. When the soul (spirit) ‘leaves a man’, he cannot be said to continue to exist in a disembodied form. Thus, the soul and spirit, as well as the body, are mortal and the present life is life unto death. There is a life, which is higher than the mere existence, a life nourished on obedience to the word of God. Jesus came that we might possess this life ‘which is life indeed.’ As a consequence of His redemptive activity, our lives are transformed by faith from lives of rebellion and pride to lives of grateful surrender to His will. In contrast to natural human life, which ends at death, this new, true life is indestructible. In fact, the blessings, we now enjoy as reborn men are but an installment of the life which is to come. The continuation of this new life is set forth not in terms of the Greek concept of the immortality of the soul, but in terms of the doctrine of personal bodily resurrection, based on the resurrection of Jesus. “Life the Gift of God: See (Genesis 2:7; Job 12:9-10; 27:3; Psalms 36:6; Acts 17:25, 28). “Long Life Promised: See (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:33; and Proverbs 3:1-2)

“Life’s Vanity, Brevity, and Uncertainty: See (Job 7:1; 9:25-26; 14:1; Psalms 39:5-6; 89:47; 90:4-6; Ecclesiastes 6:12; Isaiah 38:12; James 4:13-15; and 1 Peter 1:24).

“Right Mode of Living: See (Luke 1:75; Romans 12:18; 14:7-8; and Philippians 1:21-22).

“Spiritual Life: See (Romans 6:4; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:1; and Colossians 3:3).

“Eternal Life: See (Psalms 133:3; John 3:14-16, 24-26; 6:27,54; 10:28; 17:2-3; Romans 2:6-7; 6:23; 1 John 1:2; 2:25; Jude 1:21; Revelation 2:7; 6:21:6)” (The Layman’s Bible Encyclopedia, pp. 470-472).

I am listing additional scriptures which give notice for Biblical manifestation in other areas of the Christian’s life. These and the ones listed above are not all that are in the scriptures. In all there are over two hundred and should cause all of us to realize the blessings in life and respected responsibility that is ours when we take note of (James 2:10), which reads, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” The “righteous” life is a serious (grave; solemn) stewardship for us...life came from God, we belong to God, and we must be lived according to God.

Life that is pure in heart, see (Psalms 34:13; 1 Peter 3:10-12).

Proper care of life: See (Proverbs 6:9-11; 12:14; 13:2-4; Hebrews 14:4-6; 27:34; Acts 14:4-6; 27:34; and 1 Timothy 5:23).

How to Spend Life: See (Luke 1:74-75).

Life synonymous with soul: See Psalms 7:5; 33:19).

Value of life/soul: See (Matthew 16:26; Luke 9:25; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:9, 18, 19).

This study started with citing Psalms 39:1-5. There are a couple of thoughts in verses’ 4 and 5, which are note worthy, and the text says, “*LORD make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold (Indeed), thou hast made my days as a handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity*” (Psalm 39:4-5). The statement in v. 4, “*that I may know how frail I am*” provokes thought for us to consider how short our life is. Think...is there any physical or spiritual strength in a shadow? And how much strength is there in vapor? These are mere examples describing the uncertainty of human existence. A handbreadth, which is the width (distance) across a man’s palm, on average, about 4 to 5 inches, is used to illustrate the length (breadth) of man’s life. There is no comparison in view of eternity.

To illustrate the trustworthiness of men of the world (enemies of God) note this, *“Surely men of low degree are vapor (vanity) men of high degree are a lie; if they are weighed in the scales, they are altogether lighter than vapor”* (Psalms 62:9). (cf. Job 7:16; Isaiah 40:17).

There is much to know about life through scriptures. Scriptures tell us about ourselves, what we don't know, and even what we will never know. Here is how it is expressed in the scripture, *“For who knows what is good for man in life, all the days of his vain life which he passes like a shadow? Who can tell a man what will happen after him under the sun?”* (Ecclesiastes 6:12).

It is true, God has set the limits of human life and we cannot alter them. With our knowledge being limited by God, we cannot know what will happen on earth either in our future days, or after we die. This should give us more incentive to seek God's will in our daily lives as we walk in His Ways

There is a proper way to plan, and yea deal with tomorrow, note this, *“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make profit; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? (There's that question again.) ‘It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that’”* (James 4:13-15).

We must not ignore the brevity (briefness) of human life. We must consult (talk) to the Lord, yea in daily life, and in our plans, that both (all of life) be as the Lord's will. We must know the Lord's will for our life. Yes, His will must be done in all things.

*“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin”* (James 4:17). There is the sin of omission (lapse, slip, error, really it is just sin, plain old failing to NOT do) and can be as serious as sin of commission. See Luke 12:47-48.

When we read and ponder (think over) the advice and loving commandments in which our Lord begs us to manifest in our life it is normal and yes, God sanctioned that we also think about death. When we die and the spirit leaves our earthly physical body it is a beautiful thing...to me. I say this because I know that physical death is a part of God's overall plan. In Hebrews we read, *“And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment”* (Hebrews 9:27). The question that we need to ask ourselves is: “whether our eyes were fixed on the Promised Land when we were alive and living here on the good earth: (cf. Colossians 3:1-2)?

Yes, it is appointed unto man once to die. And we know there will be grief and sorrow. There can be rejoicing and yea longing for us individually to be called to our heavenly home. When we walk with the Lord and hold to God's unchanging hand, I myself have longed for the greatest of blessings; that of being called home. Heaven holds all for me! I long for my heavenly home. Even though I know my time here on earth is under His control and I have an appointment, I rejoice and praise God for that blessing.

Life often ends before we are ready for it to end. Someone may say that we're not worn out. *"His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated"* (Deuteronomy 34:7). It may be said that mentally he wasn't ready for life to end. There are still things he wanted to do. (Death can come as a disappointment for us). It can come before we are ready. The Bible repeatedly warns us that life is brief. Please note the following which is a Prayer of Moses the man of God.

*"For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they are fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away...so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"* (Psalms 90:9-10, 12).

Our life is likely going to end before we want it to. For some, it will sadly even end before they are ready. We should constantly remind ourselves that when we die we would be in God's hand. May we walk with the Lord and be prepared to meet our Maker, as are the ones referenced in (Hebrews 10:31; Luke 16:22; John 10:28-29).

The scriptures and commentary that have been set forth in this lesson have been prepared to help all of us. Scriptures cited, and the thought presented and discussions were to motivate true and honest hearts. Gaining knowledge will help us grow and be stronger in the faith. It is my prayer that you read and study this lesson, that you will accept the truth presented herein and that it will be a conscience server (a helper) to you and me.

I invite you to view other writings on the Website, [www.geocities.com/dubbyt](http://www.geocities.com/dubbyt). There are several writing posted on the Website. I recommend, and I am sure you will want to view the writing, titled, "The Church of the Bible, Christ's Church", it has a two-page enclosure, which has the title, "What Must I Do To Be Saved." Please study both of these, with an honest and receptive heart, for truth and obedience. You will be blessed! God bless you for reading and studying this lesson. God loves you! I do too.

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