

Tehilim Perek 39

Welcome to NachDaily, covering the entire TANACH one perek at a time. I'm Rabbi Shaya Sussman, and today we'll be discussing Tehilim, chapter 38.

Dovid opens with the words "Laminatzeach I'yeduson." Rashi brings the medrash saying that "yeduson" means dinim – judgment.

It is appropriate to say this perek when feeling judged, that one's life is embattled, or in emotional turmoil, feeling ridiculed, suffering from guilt, emotional grief, pain and anxiety.

Parenthetically, Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch goes into great detail about what the word means. He decided that its root is from the word "yad- hand." Yaduson means hands. This chapter therefore illustrates both God's hand in effecting the world as well as our hand in creating change.

The Meforshim explain that Dovid specifically said this kapital when he was physically ill.

This is among the most somber and sad perakim in the entire Tehilim. Dovid confesses the deep suffering and depression that he experienced.

"I've lost all desire to speak, even about good things."

This is Dovid's way of saying that it's better to remain silent than question God's ways.

Dovid is also explicit about man's futility in relation to God's greatness. In verses 5 and 6, for example, he pleads, "God, please tell me when I will die, because I seem worthless to You!" He expresses his grief over the fleetingness of this world, telling God, "You afflict man like a moth!"

Dovid's suffering causes him to take an honest look at human life, recognizing man's limitations, weaknesses, and eventual death.

In the final section of this psalm, Dovid ends on a more hopeful note by calling to God and asking for forgiveness and a second chance in life.

In verse 2 it says:

אֶמְרָתִי אֲשַׁמְרָה דְּרַכִּי מִחֲטָא בְּלִשׁוֹנִי אֲשַׁמְרָה לִפִּי מִחֲסוֹם בְּעַד רָשָׁע לִנְגֹּדִי:

I resolved I would watch my ways lest I sin with my tongue. I would keep my mouth muzzled while the wicked man was in my presence.

Says Rashi, when experiencing tsaros, pain, we need to be careful not to feel resentful towards God's midas hadin- trait of judgment.

Obviously, when upset, it can be very difficult to just be silent, especially when hurting on the inside.

No feeling lasts forever, however, because our emotions fluctuate from day to day. As they change, our experience of a particular situation changes as well. Every new thought carries with it a new feeling which allows us to experience our situation in a different light.

One day we might dislike a particular individual, but the next day we might think that the person is not so bad after all.

When feeling resentful, full of hurt and anger, therefore, it can often be helpful to just wait until feeling calmer to address the situation. There's no rush to share everything on our minds when feeling upset or insecure. Knowing that our feelings are temporary gives us flexibility to not be as reactive, be more patient, and hold on until our anger subsides. As it dissipates, we can see the situation in a whole new light.

Dovid understood very well that a thought left untouched will pass on its own. The best thing to do is to remain quiet and not question God's ways. When feeling heated, we need take a step back and cool off a bit until able to see the same situation with a greater level of clarity, perspective and insight.



That's why Dovid says he'll put a muzzle on his mouth. Dovid patiently waited for his feelings of negativity to subside. When we're feeling more like ourselves, it becomes easier to connect with God.

Let us merit not having any resentment towards God, to keep quiet in the face of embarrassment, and to connect with Him from a loving place.

Thank you for listening and have a wonderful day.