

This is a great Psalm because this Psalm teaches that no matter how low you have been or how sad you have been or how depressed you have been, it is possible for you to “smile again.” No matter what sin(s) you have committed, it is possible for you to “smile again.”

Psalm 39 is a Psalm of David written specifically for Jeduthun, the choir director. Jeduthun was a Levite, a chief singer and an instructor (I Chron. 9:14-16; 16:38-42; II Chron. 5:12; Neh. 11:17). David wanted Jeduthun to not only know this important truth personally, he wanted it communicated publicly. It is possible to smile again no matter how emotionally low or physically low one may have been.

Now as believers, we have several problems that block the road to us smiling. **First** of all, we have a God who wants us to be happy, but He also knows in order to be happy, we cannot be sinful. Our problem is we are sinful and it is our sinfulness that becomes a key road block to our happiness. **Secondly**, God chastises us when we are sinful and when we are in that state we cannot possibly be happy.

So here is our problem. God wants us to be happy and we want to be happy and to be happy we must not have any taint of sin; and yet we are sinful so there are times when we do sin which negate our being happy. So the big question is how can we smile when we are sinful? How can we smile when we are chastised by God? Those questions are answered in Psalm 39.

EVEN THOUGH WE AS GOD’S PEOPLE SIN AND EVEN THOUGH GOD WILL CHASTISE HIS PEOPLE FOR THEIR SIN, IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO BE HAPPY IN LIFE IF WE WILL LEARN THE LESSONS GOD WANTS US TO LEARN AND RESPOND FAVORABLY TO HIM AND HIS WORD.

One of the principles of the constitution of the United States is that we have the right to pursue happiness. I don’t know of one person who does not want to be happy. It seems that this is the quest of most people. People will do bizarre things to try to find happiness, including stick a needle in their arms or sniff stuff up their nose. None of it works. The key to smiling in life is one’s relationship with God and Psalm 39 makes that point clear.

Now the primary point of the Psalm is seen in the final verse. David wanted to be able to smile again. He has sinned and he experienced the chastisement of God for it and he wanted to smile again. Here is the blue print pattern to follow to smile again. This is a simple blue print pattern comprised of three parts and if you try it, you will discover it will work:

BLUE PRINT PATTERN #1 – Guard our ways. 39:1a

When people sin, the attitude may be well I have blown it so what is the use. I let my guard down and it’s over. That is exactly the opposite way to find happiness. A key to happiness is to keep your guard up. The word “guard” means to carefully guard you from doing something that could bring further guilt or punishment.

In other words, a key to finding happiness when one has sinned is to immediately stop doing the things that will make you guiltier of more deserving of more punishment. Learn the lesson and guard yourself from doing the thing that put you into depression.

BLUE PRINT PATTERN #2- Guard our speech. **39:1b**

What we say or don't say is a key to our happiness. Our speech and the ability to muzzle our speech is a key to our own happiness. It is obvious that God does not want us shooting off our mouths. In fact, the image of a muzzle is the image of a mouth that is shut. Charles Spurgeon said, "Tongue sins are great sins; like sparks of fire, ill-words spread and do great damage."

According to Dr. Louann Brizendine, a clinical professor of psychiatry, it is estimated from the time you get up until the time you go to bed the average woman speaks 20,000 words per day and the average man speaks 7,000 words per day. A critical key to being happy is guard what we say with those words.

God knows that a key to our happiness is found in what we say about Him, about others and about ourselves. Guard your tongue.

BLUE PRINT PATTERN #3 – Communicate with God. **39:2-13**

This is a major key to smiling again—prayerful communication with God. The tendency for a believer who has sinned and who is being disciplined is to stop communicating with God; to stop praying.

According to **verse 2**, that is exactly what David did. He stopped praying and his sorrow grew worse and according to **verse 3** his heart was burning and prompting him to pray and talk to God.

When God's people sin and their world starts to cave in, typically they will talk to other people, but not God. People will go to others who will give them an empathetic ear. But the problem is that will never put the smile back on the face or the song in the heart. That comes by talking with God. There were six requests David made to God:

Request #1 - David asked God to make him know the transient nature of his own life. **39:4-5**

Now most people think that the key to happiness is being told how successful and healthy they are. However, the key to happiness is to realize how weak and frail we are. Happiness comes by knowing the brevity of life and anticipating its end.

Why would this be a key to happiness? Because if you constantly think about the fact that I will leave this world one day, it tends to have a purifying effect on what you think, do and say. When you live life carefully focused on what you think, do and say in light of eternity, you are happy.

The fact is the most miserable people you will ever meet are people focused on the here and now.

Think about this fact. Most people alive right now will be gone in 50 years or less. When we go to a funeral we expect to hear a sermon, but actually we see the sermon. The person who died is the sermon. What the sermon says is that life is brief. Realizing that is a key to happiness

One Bible teacher used to say if you told most people they had one month to live they would weep. Yet most live life without even a thought that they may not make it through the day. Happy people are eternally focused people. They stay focused on the temporality of life and the eternity that follows.

Request #2 - David asks God to make him know the nothingness of the goals of humanity. **39:6**

Almost every man who goes through life tries to make some uproar for nothing. The big uproar is to try to accumulate wealth, thinking this will make him happy. The truth is no matter what you have, you have no idea who actually will end up with it. So you can work and save and even put some will together, but then you die and do you really know what will happen?

For example, someone builds a home with plans and dreams of living in a nice neighborhood. When the home first goes up it is exciting. It is like a dream house, what the person always wanted. However, 20-30 years later what does the house actually mean. Eventually the home is sold to someone who doesn't even remember the name of the people who originally built it. So at one time this home was the primary focal point of a family of whom you do not even remember their names.

Request #3 - David acknowledges to God that he is waiting on Him. **39:7**

No matter what we are facing, there is always hope in God. God can always turn things around no matter how bad they look. A key to putting a smile back on our face is rekindling our hope in God and telling God that. When all is said and done, the great moments and happy moments of our life will be when we have trusted God for something and then seen God do what we trusted Him to do. There is no greater happiness than that.

Request #4 - David asks God to deliver him from all his sins. **39:8**

This is a very powerful and very practical verse. David sees the key to smiling and happiness as directly connected to sin, his own sin. In order to be happy as a believer, one must have deliverance from all sin and in order for that to happen, God, in His grace, must do the delivering.

Happiness will never be found in the way of the foolish. The way of the foolish is that they think pursuing sinful things will make them happy, when in fact it will make them miserable. The further away we move from sin the happier we will be.

Now how do we get deliverance from sin? Through confession (I John 1:9). This is what David is doing here. He is talking to God about his sin. He asks God to deliver him so that he would not end up a reproach to enemies.

Sin will never bring happiness. It will bring guilt, fear and depression. Sin will leave you lonely and miserable. It will not put a smile on your face. So when you sin, confess it to God and you will smile again.

Request #5 - David acknowledges that he is in no position to criticize God. **39:9**

You will never end up with a smile on your face if you criticize and question God. David knew that his problems were due to himself, not God. David knew God had every right to pull the plug on his happiness.

Request #6 - David asks God to remove His chastisement . **39:10-11**

The chastisement of God is a theme that is to be taught to God's people in the church.

God can and does put misery in our lives and He also can and will put joy on our lives. We need to understand this point. God's opposition and misery does not come against us to consume us, but to consume our sin. In other words, when God chastises us, he does it for the benefit of us. He wants sin out of our lives.

God can send a plague or calamity into our world to get our attention. He uses these things as teaching tools to instruct us to not walk in evil ways.

What David did here was ask God to remove His chastisement. God's chastisement for sin was like a moth. One little moth can ruin something beautiful so you must get rid of the moth. This is the way it is with sin. Sin starts damaging a child of God so God brings various things into the life of His child so that will get rid of the sin.

The key is not to criticize God, but learn the lesson and then ask God to remove the chastisement. Here is where true happiness may again be found.

“Selah”—stop and think about it.

As David closes the Psalm in **verses 12-13**, he asks God to hear and answer his prayer. There is a place for tears of sorrow. When those tears are genuine over sin, it does mean something to God.

David was shedding tears and he wanted to smile again so He went to the one Person who could make that happen. He went to God.

Three Keys to Putting a Smile on your face:

- 1) Guard your ways.
- 2) Guard your speech.
- 3) Communicate with God.