

Psalm 39:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence,
and be no more.

Analysis

O spare me, that I may recover strength (הַשֵּׁעْ מִמְּנִי וְאֶבְלִיגָה, hasha' mimmenni ve-avligah)—Sha'a means gaze away, look away; balag means brighten up, be cheerful, recover. **Before I go hence, and be no more** (בְּתֶרֶם אֶלָּךְ וְאַיִןִי, be-terem elekh ve-einenni)—Terem means before; einenni means I will be no more.

Psalm 39 wrestles with life's brevity and divine discipline. David asked, "How long do I have?" (v. 4), confessed sin (vv. 8, 11), and now pleads for momentary relief before death. This isn't a request to avoid God forever, but for temporary respite—a chance to breathe before dying. Job 7:19 and 10:20 echo this plea. It expresses raw humanity: "I'm not ready to die; grant me a moment." God honors such honesty.

Historical Context

Psalm 39 was written during severe illness or divine chastening, when David felt death approaching. Ancient Israelites had limited revelation about afterlife compared to New Testament believers, making death seem like total cessation of relationship with God—"Sheol" was shadowy existence, not conscious fellowship.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse model honest, almost desperate prayer rather than pious platitudes?
2. What does it mean to ask God to "look away" temporarily, trusting his ultimate gaze is merciful?
3. How does Christ's resurrection transform the fear of "being no more" that David expressed?

Interlinear Text

מַתָּא	בַּיִ	חִשְׁעָ	וְאַבְלֵל	יְגַה	בְּפָנֵי	רַם	אַל	נִ
O spare	H4480	me that I may recover strength	H1082		H2962	before I go hence	H3212	
H8159								

אַתְּפִי:
H369

Additional Cross-References

Job 7:19 (Parallel theme): How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?

Genesis 42:36 (Parallel theme): And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.

Genesis 5:24 (Parallel theme): And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.