

Psalm 38

1 A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance. O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. 2 For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. 3 There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. 4 For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 5 My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. 6 I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. 7 For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. 8 I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.

9 Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. 10 My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me. 11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off. 12 They also that seek after my life lay snares for me: and they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long. 13 But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. 14 Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

15 For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God. 16 For I said, Hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoice over me: when my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves against me. 17 For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. 18 For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin. 19 But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong: and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. 20 They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. 21 Forsake me not, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me. 22 Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.

Introduction notes:

1. David is the writer according to the inspired heading in v.1.
2. “to bring to remembrance” (matches another Psalm, Ps. 70:1). He assigns this Psalm as one of “record” (זָכַר – *zakar*) according to 1 Chr. 16:4. Some Psalms are for “thanks,” others are for “praise” but these two are for “remembrance.”
3. David laments his sins (similar to Ps. 6, 32, and 51). David keeps his sins and failures in front of the nation as a reminder of man’s failure and the LORD’s mercy.

Outline:

- A Prayer for Removal (vv.1-8)
- A Prayer for Submission (vv.9-14)
- A Prayer for Hope (vv.15-22)

Observations:

1. David prays to God addressing him as LORD (v.1) – Jehovah; Lord (v.9) – Adonai; Lord my God (v.15) – Jehovah Elohim.
2. Sin brings divine judgment. Sorrow always follows sin.
3. Some of David’s sins include His sins against Uriah and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:4ff) and in numbering the people (2 Sam. 24ff). But apparently, David was recalling his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba, which David attempted to hide but God exposed (2 Sam. 12:12).
4. God’s judgment against sins in the lives of His people are severe (1 Cor. 11:30).
5. David stops complaining about the severity of God’s judgment and accepts it.
6. (v.11) David typifies Christ as forsaken by all (Obadiah 1:12; Lk. 23:49).
7. (v.13-13) David typifies Christ as resigned to the will of God in his sufferings (Isa. 53:7; 1 Pet. 2:23).
8. How we respond to our enemies reveal what type of believers we are – if we render evil for evil, we are evil. (1 Pet. 3:9-12).
9. David knew that if God doesn’t step in to forgive him that he would die. BUT GOD stepped in and forgave him – therefore, David ruled for another many more years (after his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba).

Lesson: Pray for mercy in the midst of God’s judgment (Lk. 15:10; 1 Jn. 1:9).