

Psalm 38

"David's Anguished Reliance upon Yahweh Because of Discipline for His Sin"

A Psalm of David, for a memorial.

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A1 DAVID'S ANGUISH BECAUSE OF YAHWEH'S DISCIPLINE OF HIS SIN 38:1-12

B1 David's Opening Plea to Yahweh Not to Rebuke Him in Anger 38:1

C1 {1} O Lord, rebuke me not in Your wrath,

C2 And chasten me not in Your burning anger.

B2 David's Description of Yahweh's Rebuke 38:2-12

C1 As the Personal Discipline of Yahweh 38:2

D1 {2} For Your arrows have sunk deep into me,

D2 And Your hand has pressed down on me.

C2 As Caused By His Sin 38:3-4

D1 Affecting his health 38:3

E1 {3} There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation;

E2 There is no health in my bones because of my sin.

D2 Overwhelming his whole being 38:4

E1 Drowning in his sins: {4} For my iniquities are gone over my head;

E2 Over-burdened with his sins: As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.

- C3 As Deeply Affecting His Body 38:5-10
 - D1 Festering Wounds 38:5
 - E1 The description of his wounds: {5} My wounds grow foul *and* fester
 - E2 The cause of his wounds: Because of my folly.
 - D2 Bowed Down with Grief 38:6
 - E1 {6} I am bent over and greatly bowed down;
 - E2 I go mourning all day long.
 - D3 Burning abdomen: {7} For my loins are filled with burning,
 - D4 Unhealthy body: And there is no soundness in my flesh.
 - D5 Paralyzed: {8} I am benumbed
 - D6 Crushed: and badly crushed;
 - D7 Groaning with anxiety : I groan because of the agitation of my heart.
 - D8 Yearning with heart-felt sighing 38:9
 - E1 {9} Lord, all my desire is before You;
 - E2 And my sighing is not hidden from You.
 - D9 Palpitating heart: {10} My heart throbs,
 - D10 Failing strength: my strength fails me;
 - D11 No spark in his eyes: And the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me.

C4 As Alienating People from Him 38:11-12

D1 His friends and relatives withdraw from him 38:11

E1 {11} My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague;¹

E2 And my kinsmen stand afar off.

D2 His enemies plot his destruction 38:12

E1 {12} Those who seek my life lay snares *for me*;

E2 And those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction, And they devise treachery all day long.

A2 DAVID'S RELIANCE UPON YAHWEH 38:13-22

B1 Refusing to Respond to His Adversaries 38:13-14

C1 Like a deaf - mute 38:13

D1 Deaf: {13} But I, like a deaf man, do not hear;

D2 Mute: And *I am* like a mute man who does not open his mouth.

C2 Like a deaf man who remains silent 38:14

D1 Deaf: {14} Yes, I am like a man who does not hear,

D2 Silent in self-defense: And in whose mouth are no arguments.

B2 Hoping in Yahweh 38:15-18

C1 His Affirmation of Hope in Yaweh 38:15

D1 His affirmation: {15} For I hope in You, O LORD;

D2 His confidence: You will answer, O Lord my God.

¹ 38:11 - plague: *nega'* (5061) in multiple occurrences in Lev. 13 refers to an *infection* or *sore*; in Lev. 14 to a *mildew* (NIV) appearing in garment or home; in Deut. 17:8 and 21:5 to an assault causing a *wound* on someone's body. It is possible, therefore, that God, in discipline, had afflicted David with an infectious skin disease. On the other hand, 1 Kings 8:38 speaks of the *afflictions* of one's own heart; 2 Chron 6:29 speaks of each person praying desperately to God knowing his own *affliction* (paralleled with grief). So it is possible that Psalm 38:11 is more figurative than literal, portraying God's discipline as a blow or wound from God, rather than as a literal skin disease or illness. This figurative view is further substantiated in Psalm 39:10, where both KJV and NIV compare *nega'* to a blow from Yahweh's hand. In 38:5, however, David graphically describes his wounds as foul and festering. We must opt, therefore, for some sort of infectious skin disease as a disciplinary judgment from God. Just exactly what that disease was we do not know. Obviously, the combination of David's guilt and Yahweh's discipline left him physically debilitated and clinically depressed. Even his friends and relatives avoided him!

- C2 His Plea to God not to Let His Enemies Gloat over Him 38:16
 - D1 {16} For I said, "May they not rejoice over me,
 - D2 *Who*, when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me."
- C3 His Desperation 38:17
 - D1 His near-surrender: {17} For I am ready to fall,
 - D2 His perpetual sorrow: And my sorrow is continually before me.
- C4 His Confession of His Sin 38:18
 - D1 {18} For I confess my iniquity;
 - D2 I am full of anxiety because of my sin.

B3 Lamenting His Adversaries 38:19-20

- C1 Their vigor: {19} But my enemies are vigorous *and* strong,
- C2 Their misguided plurality: And many are those who hate me wrongfully.
- C3 Their perversity: {20} And those who repay evil for good,
- C4 Their opposition to good: They oppose me, because I follow what is good.

B4 Pleading for Yahweh's Help 38:21-22

- C1 His Plea for Yahweh Not to Leave 38:21
 - D1 {21} Do not forsake me, O LORD;
 - D2 O my God, do not be far from me!
- C2 His Plea for Help: {22} Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!
38:22

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 38
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