

## **PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS**

### **Psalm Thirty-Eight: When We Have Badly Sinned, And Are Suffering Because Of It (Psalm 38:1-22)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Life is somewhat academic when things go badly not due to our fault, but to the fault of others around us. However, when things turn sour and we have no one else to blame but ourselves, and we are under God's discipline, life is unbearable. We want to dig a hole, hide in it and pull the hole in after us!
- B. Psalm Thirty-Eight is a psalm of **God's GRACE**, a psalm for the sinning saint who is under divine discipline, and he feels terrible! It guides the sinning saint out of his hole back into God's sunshine!

#### **II. When We Have Badly Sinned, And Are Suffering Because Of It, Psalm 38:1-22.**

- A. As David begins this psalm, he describes his intense **personal** sufferings due to sin, Psalm 38:1-8:
  1. David was under divine discipline for sin when he wrote this psalm, for he begs God not to rebuke and chasten him in God's anger and wrath respectively, and notes that God's arrows and hand had already inflicted their pain upon him, Ps . 38:1,2.
  2. Consequently, David was **personally** in deep suffering, Ps. 38:3-8:
    - a. David's physical health had left him due to God's discipline, Ps. 38:3a,4.
    - b. The expression of a lack of soundness in David's "bones" refers to the experience of much pain, Ps. 38:3b, Bible Knowledge Com., O.T., p. 823 with 795. See also Ps. 38:7a.
    - c. David also feels humiliated, and goes about in emotional grief, Ps. 38:5-6.
    - d. David feels drained of energy, and emotionally depressed, Ps. 38:7b-8.
- B. David's problems also included **relationship** conflicts due to his sin, Ps. 38:11-14:
  1. Because of his suffering, David's friends and neighbors stood at a distance, fearing lest his suffering somehow involve pain for them as well, Ps. 38:11.
  2. His enemies use the opportunity provided with David's weakened state to set traps and plot for the ruin of David on a continual basis, Ps. 38:12.
  3. Consequently, he is inhibited by way of his weakened state and the heightened pressures of his enemies to be unable to defend himself emotionally or mentally before these enemies, Ps. 38:13-14.
- C. Yet, in hope, David calls out his repentance to God and invokes His gracious forgiveness and deliverance:
  1. In the midst of his suffering, David acknowledges that God, His Master, is aware of all of David's desires and sufferings and weaknesses, Ps. 38:9-10.
  2. He also trusts that God will hear him in grace, Ps. 38:15.
  3. Accordingly, David unloads unto the Lord his petition of repentance and deliverance, Ps. 38:16-22:
    - a. He asks God to hinder his enemies from defeating him in his weakened state, Ps. 38:16-17.
    - b. He confesses his iniquity to the Lord out of being troubled at its sinfulness, Ps. 38:18.
    - c. He tells the Lord that his enemies are taking unjust advantage of David's down state to hate him without a cause, to repay his good with evil slander when David is trying to pursue the good, 38:19f.
    - d. With urgency, David requests a speedy deliverance as he feels he doesn't have much time to hold out against the many, powerful enemies that are attacking him in his weakened condition, Ps. 38:22-23.

***Lesson:*** *When the believer sins, and feels the judgment of God that puts him into a physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually weakened condition, it complicates his relationships with friends and gives his opponents an opportunity to do real harm to him. His only recourse is to repent and to do so thoroughly and quickly, calling upon God for deliverance!*

***Application:*** *(1) If we are suffering harmful setbacks physically, mentally and emotionally, and our friends are abandoning helping us and our enemies are taking the opportunity provided them to plot our ruin, we need to check Scripture to see if SIN is the problem as priority number one! We MAY just be suffering for righteousness' sake (see 2 Tim. 3:12 or 2 Cor. 12:7-10), but we need to be SURE! (2) If the problem IS sin, repent ASAP, calling upon God to restore us and TRUSTING that He is gracious enough to forgive us and to purge us from all unrighteousness, 1 Jn. 1:9!! (3) If the problem is NOT sin, trust the Lord's grace and apply 2 Cor. 12:7-10 et al.*