

STUDIES
BOOK
OF
PSALMS

PSALM 38-39
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TWO PRAYER'S ONE OUTCOME

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THESE TWO PSALMS!

Psalm 38

- 1) To note the physical consequences that may often follow sin.
- 2) To consider the connection David made between his illness and God's chastening for sin.

Psalm 39

- 1) To recognize the importance of guarding our ways, or rather being spiritually disciplined.
- 2) Recognizing our mortality.
- 3) The importance of prayer having an element of pleading.

SUMMARY

At the heart of both of these Psalms is the realization on David's part that sin unrepented, can have devastating effects on our life. It is only the foolish at heart that believes that they can sin without restraint, and that God won't respond in a way that reveals His displeasure of sinful behavior.

At the same time we must recognize that not all sickness is the result of sinful behavior on our part or on the part of our parents. Case to be noted:

“Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. John 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

John 9:3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.” (John 9:1–3 NKJV)

C. PERSISTENCE IN DOING GOOD (19-20)

1. His enemies are strong, those who hate him wrongfully are multiplied
2. They render evil for good, they are his adversaries because he follows what is good

CONCLUDING PLEA FOR HELP (38:21-22)

- A. TO NOT FORSAKE HIM NOR BE FAR FROM HIM (21)
- B. TO MAKE HASTE TO HELP HIM (22)

OUTLINE PSALM 39

Recorded in this Psalm are four progressive stages in David's overcoming his difficult experience. Incapsulated in this Psalm is David's prayer for Wisdom and Forgiveness.

- I. HE WAS SILENT - A BURNING HEART (VV.1-3)
- II. HE WAS DESPONDENT - A BURDENED HEART (VV. 4-6)
- III. HE WAS CONFIDENT - A BELIEVING HEART (V.7)
- IV. HE WAS REPENTANT - A BROKEN HEART (VV.8-13)

But on the same hand some of our physical problems can be the result of sinful behavior. One example is the man healed at the Pool of Bethesda;

"Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." (John 5:14 NKJV)

David doesn't question the legitimacy of his suffering, because in 38:18 he admits his sin, but he does wonder why his suffering is so severe. Like the Prophet Habakkuk, David wanted God to remember to be merciful toward him.

"O LORD, I have heard Your speech and was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy." (Habakkuk 3:2 NKJV)

The commentator Leupold suggests that Psalms 38 may have been written after Psalms 51 and 32, following the events surrounding David's sin with Bathsheba. While forgiven of his sin, David was told he would still suffer consequences ([2Sa 12:10-14](#)).

"Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' 2Samuel 12:11 Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 2Samuel 12:12 For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.' "

2Samuel 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.

2Samuel 12:14 However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.” (2 Samuel 12:10–14 NKJV)

Whatever the nature of his illness, these psalms are the penitent plea of a sick man who understood that he was suffering because of his sin and God's anger. David wanted God to remember him and grant forgiveness and healing. When God's people suffer the consequences of sin and feel the chastening hand of God, they must choose one of three responses to the hand of the Lord.

OUTLINE PSALM 38

INTRODUCTORY PLEA FOR MERCY (38:1-2)

A. THAT THE LORD NOT... (1)

1. Rebuke him in His wrath
2. Chasten him in His hot displeasure

B. FOR THE LORD HAS... (2)

1. Pierced him deeply with His arrows
2. Pressed him down with His hand

I. WE CAN FOCUS ON OURSELVES AND EXPERIENCE SIN'S PAINFULNESS (38:1-8)

A. ILLNESS BECAUSE OF SIN AND GOD'S ANGER

1. Because of his foolish sin and God's anger...
 - a. There is no soundness in his flesh, no health in his bones
 - b. His iniquities are a heavy burden
 - c. His wounds are foul and festering

2. Description of his illness

- a. Troubled, bowed down greatly, mourning all day long
- b. Loins full of inflammation, no soundness in his flesh
- c. Feeble and broken, groaning because the turmoil of his heart
- d. Heart pants, strength fails him
- e. The light of his eyes has gone from him

II. WE CAN FOCUS ON OTHERS AND EXPERIENCE SIN'S LONELINESS (38:9-14)

A. MISTREATMENT BY FRIENDS AND ENEMIES (11-12)

1. Forsaken by those close to him
 - a. Loved ones and friends stand aloof from his plague
 - b. Relatives stand far off
2. Plotted against by his enemies
 - a. Those who seek his life lay snares
 - b. Those who seek his hurt speak of destruction
3. His response to this abuse
 - a. Like a deaf man he does not hear
 - b. Like a mute he does not respond

III. WE CAN FOCUS ON THE LORD AND EXPERIENCE SIN'S FORGIVENESS (38:15-22)

A. OTHERWISE ENEMIES WILL REJOICE (15-16)

2. His hope is the Lord that He will hear
 - a. Since his enemies will rejoice if he falls
 - b. Since they will exalt themselves if he slips

B. SORROW AND CONFESSION OF SIN (17-18)

1. He is ready to fall, his sorrow continually before him
2. He will declare his iniquity, be in anguish over his sin