

The Dreadful Consequences of Sin Psalm 38

by Pastor Roy Hogan

In this Psalm 38, David is under the chastening hand of God. Likely, this Psalm was written by David, as directed by God, to record the seriousness of God's chastisement unto him for the affair with Bathsheba. You likely know well the story of David and Bathsheba. Not only was he involved with Bathsheba, he was involved with Uriah. He had Uriah, one of his best soldiers and Bathsheba's husband, sent to the front line so he would be killed. David sinned against God. His sin, as is all sin, was awful. All sin is bad for all sin is a transgression against Holy God. Yet, some sins seem to be more far-reaching. Such was the case of David's sin with Bathsheba. You may wish to review David's sin II Samuel chapters 11 and 12.

38:1-2

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.

Numbers 32:23 *But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.* Why does God know all sin? It is because sin is the breaking of his laws and commandments. Sin is not going against the will of some political party. Sin is not disagreeing with the Pope. Sin is a matter between the offender and God. Why else would God be so attentive to sin? He wrote the law. Men break the law he wrote. I do believe every sin of all ages and of all people will be reconciled with God in some fashion. Galations 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

Sometimes, we speak of people as getting aggravated about something, and say they "get hot under the collar." It seems from this verse that God can get hot under the collar. He can certainly be wrathful. We might say that God gets mad. God gets angry. God gets upset. God gets emotional.

I do not know if we can determine from the Bible how much time elapsed between the time of the affair and the fall of God's hand of wrath on David. I do not know God's timetable in administering judgment nor does any man. Judgment does not always follow on the heels of the sinful deeds. We find good knowledge in Ecclesiastes 8:11 which says *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* How many sinners thought they had gotten by only to wake up one morning to the hand of a wrathful God?

By the way, how does one explain the "God is only love" doctrine after reading Psalm 38? Psalm 7:11 *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.* God is love, but he can be as wrathful as he is loving.

38:3

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.

David was tormented by God's hand of wrath daily. He lived day-after-day with no rest. He speaks of his flesh being afflicted and also his bones. I do not think this verse is symbolic of some affliction to his soul or human spirit, which were also afflicted, but his flesh and bones hurt. I Corinthians 6:18 *Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.* We cannot dispute the Word of God. Yes, David ached inside and out. Sin cost him a great amount of suffering. I suppose he tossed and turned on his bed day and night seeking comfort. Sin is awful.

We live in a sexually immoral age. There are seemingly no bounds and no rules regarding sexual conduct. There is a price for such immorality. Take a look at the consequences of sexual perversion. There are more than twenty different sexually transmitted diseases identified by the medical profession. The consequences of these

diseases are awful. Sexually transmitted diseases affect the organs, the eyes, the brain, the skin, the bones, the teeth and many other parts of the body.

The fun David had for a day caused him to hurt for weeks and maybe months. Whatever pleasure and good feeling he had that one afternoon, hurt him inside and out. The wages of sin are awful.

38:4

For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

Have you ever stepped into water deeper than you thought, even over your head? In his sin, David got into water he could not tread.

Have you ever stooped and picked up an object and walked away sure you could carry it? The first few steps were easy. A few more steps and the stark reality set in- you had hold of something you could not carry. Such is the nature of sin. The first drink is no problem. Then comes the second, the third, and so on. The load becomes unbearable. No man is a match for the weight of sin. Samson is proof that even the strongest of men cannot cope with the sin's weight.

38:5-8

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.

The description David gives of his sin affliction in these four verses is disgusting. Why would David record the morbid details given in these verses? Surely, David wanted mankind to know what sin can do to a human being. The world needs to know. The children in the Sunday School class need to know. Moms and dads need to know. The rich and the poor need to know.

David, in these four verses, delves into the details of his sin wounds inflicted by the hand of a wrathful God. He begins by speaking of the affliction of his flesh. He records that his wounded flesh stinks. Only once, or maybe twice, I have been in the presence of decaying flesh. I passed out certificates some years ago in Lilongwe, Malawi, to believers who had attended a Bible training course. As the names were called, one attendee came to receive his certificate. I reached to shake his hand. He did not oblige. Instead, he moved his right arm and hand behind his back. Soon, I saw the reason. His hand looked as if it was being devoured by disease. A significant portion of the hand was gone. The site and smell were unbearable and unforgettable. How I wish I had had some hydrogen peroxide, Neosporin, and gauze to dress this poor man's awful wound. Sin cuts and gashes to body and leaves the wound to stink.

David speaks of being bowed over in verse 6. David stood tall before Goliath. David stood tall in his many conflicts with King Saul. He was an upright young man when anointed as king by Samuel. Now, look at him. He is stooped. He is no longer tall and upright. He looks like an old man. Why is this? The sin load he picked up weighed more than he was capable of carrying. Sin will bend you over. Imagine Samson blind and stooped as he ground at the devil's mill before the Philistines.

David was making a noise in verse 6. The Scripture says he made the noise all day long. Most all of us have been in a medical facility such as a hospital. It is not unusual to hear moaning, or, as stated in verse 6, mourning. Some sick folks are quiet. However, when the pain of the affliction gets out of hand, noise begins. I heard my dying sister scream in the last days of her life. Dear God, it was awful. It shattered my senses. It shook my nerves and my soul.

Look what sin has done to David! He is not speaking gently to the sheep in his father's pasture. He is not silent as he was while he

played the harp for King Saul. He is hurting, and the sound can't be helped. My wife and I, on more than one occasion, visited an inmate in the local jail who was a relative of a friend. We were granted access into the common area of the jail. The table where we were assigned to sit while visiting the inmate was adjacent to a holding cell. The cell was padded. An inmate had been placed in the cell. Apparently, the inmate was coming off some sort of illicit drug. The sounds were inhumane. The sounds were the sounds of a wild animal. The jailer who escorted us into the prison apologized for what we heard that day. Sin is awful.

The disease in David's loins, spoken of in verse 7, is described as loathsome. In this text, the word loathsome means burning. Perhaps David had a very high fever which burned throughout his body. David was inflamed. Some years ago, an acquaintance, while in Africa, was infected by a parasite carried by a mosquito. Malaria developed. He was hospitalized 30 days. A good portion of those days, he was packed in ice as the doctors sought to control his raging fever. Sin will burn you. When will God's children get serious about sin. This Scripture is recorded here to warn us about sin's consequences.

38:9-10

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.

A child of God, as was David, can get in an unbelievable mess as a result of sin. David is suffering immensely. He is bent over. He is mourning from pain. His loins are on fire. Sin has stripped him. Nevertheless, despite the harshness of his physical condition, he has retained his spiritual dimension. He stops mourning long enough to call on the Lord. The Lord seems to be all he has left for he says to the Lord "all my desire" is before thee. Such was the case with Job. His family was gone. He lost his possessions. His friends were few. His health was in shambles. Yet, he had contact with the Lord.

Even in times of chastisement, God has his eye on his children. He has his ear tuned to their *groaning*, as stated in verse 9. His heart is racing, verse 10. He is weak. It seems to me he is possibly on death-watch by the attendants in the palace. In times gone by, and still somewhat today, friends and family are called to come and sit with the dying loved one. Nevertheless, he retains his contact with the God of the universe. Evangelist Billy Graham became homebound and eventually was relegated to his bed. He made the statement, and I paraphrase, “Now, God has me in a condition where He is all I have left.” The promise is real, even in times of chastisement, Hebrews 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* The ol’time song says “standing somewhere in the shadows you’ll find Jesus.”

David’s has lost his vision. At least, he has lost his ability to see life as he knows it. Sin will blind you. It is no mystery that folks become addicted to substances. There is the first use. Then, the second time, and then, the third time. By then, they are blind and cannot see the cliff they are about to jump off of. They are blinded and go headlong into addiction. Sin blinds.

38:11-12

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.

Sin separates. David has lost his lover, his friends, and even his kinfolk. David is a sick and lonely man. Sin is awful. Some Bible scholars believe this verse points to David as having leprosy. Like a leper as described in the Bible, no one was to come near him. The word sore, used in verse 11, is the same word used in the Old Testament for the plague of leprosy. Had David not been king, he, like the lepers in the Bible, would have been forced outside the camp.

Sin is a separator. Men get caught for their sin. They are sent away to prison. Only occasionally, and then sitting behind a glass, can they have a brief visit with family or friends. They are away from their lover, away from their children, and away from friends. They will not see their children graduate from high school or college. They will not see their son or daughter in the little league. They will miss the big day, the wedding. Sin is awful.

David seems as though he is looking down the barrel of a double-barrel shotgun. Not only is he brutalized by disease brought on by his sin, but his enemies are still on his trail. He is hunted like an animal, though he is king of the land. How cruel is the devil? A man can be lying flat on his back afflicted by sickness head-to-toe, and his adversaries are still on his trail. The devil is not a decent character. He has no respect. The enemy did not care that David was king. The enemy, the devil, has no sympathy; he does not care that David is physically sick. The devil is a poor master.

38:13-14

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.

Sin made David a deaf mute. He was so sick he could not hear nor speak. Sin is awful.

38:15-16

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.

Though made a deaf mute by the chastisement for his sin, David can still speak to God. Once again, we are reminded, in verse 15, that he is so stripped by sin that all he has left is his relationship with the Lord. My, how David, in this chapter, reminds us of Job.

David knows he has no hope aside from the Lord. Unless the Lord intervenes, David knows his enemies and his sickness will “rejoice over me.” Sounds as if he may have a funeral on his mind. Sin’s wages can make a person want to die.

In time past, men in trouble with God because of misbehavior, would make the statement “God put me flat of my back so the only way I could look was upward.” Seems David is in this condition.

38:17-18

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.

We often speak of “coming clean” with God. David is ready to lay it all before God. He has suffered long enough. He is ready to confess his sin. Men are hesitant to do that in this age. Seems most people believe themselves to be perfect. How long has it been since you heard someone confess wrongdoing? The prodigal son came home and said “I have sinned against heaven and against man.” Don’t hold your breath waiting for someone to say that in this age.

I sometime visit inmates. They all have the same story. Everyone has mistreated them. They have been framed. They dare not admit to any wrong. We have condoned lying and covering-up so long that it is now the norm.

David declared his wrong and said he was sorry. This is amazing when compared to today’s norm.

38:19-22

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.

As with you and I, we wonder how folk that hate truth and right seem to prosper above and beyond those who walk with the Lord. David brings to God's attention that those that wrong him are being multiplied. They seem to be prospering. He points out that those that confuse evil for good hate him. He seems to be asking God "why do you even let folk like these live?"

We know something David most likely did not know. The sinners and the wicked do not necessarily get their punishment in this life. Their punishment will come in the next stage called eternity.