PSALM 38 vs 1

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Title and Subject: A Psalm of David. David felt as if he had been forgotten by God, and therefore, he recounted his sorrows and cried mightily for help. The same title is given to Psalm 70, where in like manner the Psalmist pours out his complaint before the Lord. It would be foolish to make a guess as to when in David's history this was written; it may commemorate his own sickness and endurance of cruelty; or, it may have been composed by him for the use of sick and slandered saints, without reference to himself.

Divisions: The Psalm opens with a prayer (1); continues in a long complaint (2-9); proceeds with a second tale of sorrow (10-14); and interjects another hopeful address to God (15); a third time pours out a flood of griefs (16-20); and then closes as it opened, with renewed petitioning (21-22) – Charles Spurgeon.



A Psalm of David, for a memorial



- ¹ O LORD, in Your wrath do not rebuke me: and in Your hot displeasure do not chasten me.
- ² For Your arrows stick deep in me, and Your hand presses down on me.
- ³ There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger; there is no health in my bones because of my sin.
- ⁴ For my crimes have gone over my head: and like a burden are too heavy for me.
- ⁵ My wounds are foul and festering because I was a fool.
- ⁶ I am bent over; and greatly bowed down; I go mourning all day long.
- ⁷ For my loins are full of burning pain: and there is no health in my body.
- 8 I am feeble and severely broken: I groan because of the troubles in my heart.

Think about it: The arrows came flying fast and furious; missiles from the hand of another, not his own; and swift and invisible they came at first. The victory lies not in escaping one or two. "they stick"... so the blow he felt and the wound he discerned, and with all this they stick to him; that is, in all of him, in his body and soul, in his thoughts and actions, in his sins and in his good works too; there is no part of him, in which they do not stick. Like a flood, he was drowning -- John Donne, 1573-1631.



- ⁹ LORD, all my desire is before You; and my groaning is not hid from You.
- ¹⁰ My heart throbs, my strength fails me: and the light of my eyes, even that is gone from me.
- ¹¹ My loved ones and friends stand aloof from my plague; even my relatives stand afar off.

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¹² They lay snares for me, who seek my life: and those who seek to injure me threaten destruction, and devise treachery all day long.

¹³ But I, like the deaf who do not hear; like the mute who do not speak.

¹⁴ Yes, I am like the one who doesn't hear; and in whose mouth are no arguments.

Think about it: Why should I hear when I did not mean to speak? And why should I speak when I knew beforehand I would not be heard? I knew by contesting I would provoke them, and make them more guilty, who were already guilty enough. Therefore, I thought it better for myself to be silent, than to set them roaring and make them grow outrageous – Sir Richard Baker, 1568-1645.



¹⁵ For on You I wait, O LORD: and You will answer, O LORD my God.

Think about it: for learning to wait on God, He will answer.

¹⁶ For I said, Hear me, may they not rejoice over me when my foot slips; and make bigger themselves against me.

¹⁷ For I am about to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me.

¹⁸ For I confess in my crime; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.

 $^{19}\,\mathrm{But}$ my enemies are vigorous and strong: and many are those who wrongfully hate me.

²⁰ And those who repay evil for good are my enemy; because I follow what is good.

Think about it: although wobbly, and about to fall over; it is a bold attempt to ding Satan out of his nest. If we conform to the manner of this world, we find peace with them; and they will not be discordant with us so long as we go their way; but to shame them with a faithful life... is an affront they cannot digest. A sleeping dog is quiet, but being stirred, quickly turns to barking and biting – William Struther, 1633.

²¹ Do not forsake me, O LORD: O my God, be not far from me.

²² Hurry to help me, O LORD my deliverer.

Think about it: Faith, the cautious suppliant, is now made faith triumphant - Franz Delitzsch, 1868.

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