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The  
Songs  
38

# PSALMS - The SONGS

Thirty-eight

After Sin - Cry to the LORD for Justice and Deliverance

## READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every reference to the LORD, or God, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every reference to the psalmist, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a blue capital "R+".

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every reference to enemies, along with all pronouns and synonyms (i.e. "those who...", etc.) with an orange capital "W".

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every reference to sin with an orange "do not" symbol.

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every reference to time with a blue box.

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every comparison with a pink equal sign.

Read through **Psalm 38** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal line.

Read through **Psalm 38** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Consequence of sin—physical illness
2. Consequence of sin—enemies rise up

# READ AND ANSWER

## Psalm 38:1-11

Who does David address?

What request(s) does David make of the LORD?

1.

2.

Why is the LORD wrathful and angry? (Hint: Read the entire **Psalm** to find the answer.)

How does David know the LORD's wrath and anger have come upon him?

1.

2.

What are the arrows that the LORD has sunk deep into David? What has the LORD's hand done to David as it pressed down on him?

1.

2.

Why is there no soundness in David's flesh?

Why is the LORD indignant?

Why has David's health been taken from him?

Does David picture his sin as an insignificant thing?

How does David picture his sin?

What are David's wounds? (Be careful here. Let the context give you the answer.)

Are David's wounds healing?

What is happening to David's wounds?

Why?

How does David describe himself and his situation?

1.

2.

3.

Why is he bent over and greatly bowed down? Why does he go mourning all day long?

1.

2

Why are his loins filled with burning?

Why is there no soundness in his flesh?

How does David describe himself and his situation?

1.

2.

3.

Why is David benumbed?

Why is David badly crushed?

Who crushed David?

Why does David groan?

Why is his heart agitated?

What is the LORD fully aware of?

1.

2.

How does David describe his physical and emotional condition?

1.

2.

3.

Are David's family, relatives, and friends standing by him and supporting him during this crisis in his life?

What have they done instead?

1.

2.

Just a reminder. Why is David experiencing this crisis in his life?

What does David call this crisis in his life?

**Psalm 38:12-22**

What group of people does David introduce at this point in the **Psalm**?

What is the intent of this group?

1.

2.

Who has laid snares for David?

Who has threatened David's destruction?

What method are David's enemies using in their plan to destroy him?



**The English word “treachery” is a very interesting word.  
It means betrayal through deceit.**

**Deceit in a relationship is heartbreaking.**

**Betrayal in a relationship is traumatic.  
But treachery (betrayal using deceit) is injurious beyond description.**

Although David's enemies were threatening to destroy him, did he hear them?

What does David compare himself to?

1.

2.

How is David like a deaf man?

How is David like a mute man?

**Verse 13** begins a contrast with the word "but"—what is the contrast?

Notice the four lines in **verses 13** and **14**. Let's name them 13a, 13b, 14a, and 14b.  
Which line is paired with 13a?

Which line is paired with 13b?

Why does David not open his mouth?

Why are there no arguments in David's mouth?



Point of Depth

**The Hebrew word for "hope" is *yachal* and means to wait patiently with hope.**

In Whom does David hope?

Who will answer David?

Why does David hope in the LORD?

What does this say about Who is in charge of all things?

What prayer will the Lord, David's God, answer? (Hint: Note the word "for" at the beginning of the next line.)

What verses contain David's prayer? (Hint: Be sure and read through the rest of the **Psalm**.)

In summary, what does David ask of the LORD?

Let's look specifically at what David prayed. Who would rejoice over David if given the opportunity?

What opportunity would cause them to rejoice over David?

What will David's enemies do if his foot slips?

Why might his foot slip? What is his situation?

Why is he ready to fall?

What never leaves David?

Why is David's sorrow continually before him?

It would appear that David's enemies are like predators following a wounded prey. They are ready to pounce on him as soon as he stumbles. The question becomes, "What, or Who, has wounded David?"

The second question is evident: Why has the LORD wounded David (as the first half of this **Psalm** shows us)?

What has David done concerning his iniquity?

Why is David full of anxiety?

In contrast (notice the word "but"), how are David's enemies doing?

1.

2.

Does David have a large or a small group of enemies?

Do David's enemies have a case against him?

What is the truth about David's relationship with his enemies? What has David done for them in the past?

If David has been good to those who are now his enemies, why do they oppose him?



**The Hebrew word for "follow" is *radaph* and means to run after.**

**It has the idea of chasing, putting to flight, hunting or pursuing.**

**How serious was David about doing what is good?  
How serious are you about doing what is good?**

David has made an appeal to his God—that his enemies not rejoice over him in triumph. He has declared his own iniquity along with his habitual behavior in life—to pursue good. He now pleads for God to take action. What does David ask of God?

1.

2.

3.

In spite of his past sin, David is confident that the LORD is the One (and only One) to go to in times of trouble. He believes that the LORD will take care of his problems—both his deteriorated health and his enemies. What does he ask the Lord to do?

What condition does David include with his plea for help?

What does he call the Lord?

Salvation from what?



**In this Psalm David calls his God multiple names:  
LORD (small caps), Lord, and his God.**

**The Hebrew word for “LORD” (small caps) is *YHWH*  
and is the Name of God which means Self-Existent or Eternal.**

**The Hebrew word for “Lord” is *Adonay*  
and is an emphatic form of *adown* and is used as a proper Name of God only.  
*Adown* is from an unused root meaning to rule.  
It has the idea of being sovereign, the controller of all, lord, master, or owner.**

**The Hebrew word for “God” is *Elohim*  
and refers to a plurality of “gods”.  
Here its plurality refers to the Supreme God—the only true God.**

## READ AND REASON

The idea of consequences for sin is not new to this **Psalm**, nor to the Bible itself, no matter which Testament you are reading. The consequences of sin permeate the Bible, beginning with its third chapter (**Genesis 3**). In this **Psalm** we see that David's health was directly affected by his own sin. We also see that enemies were rising up against David, seeking to injure him as much as they could.

We don't know for sure which sin was the catalyst for David's misery, but the **Psalm** clearly identifies God as the One Who took David's health because of it. And therefore it is important that we see David confessing his sin to God—the One Who judges sin and rescues the sinner from its consequences.

Even though believers today are in a different Covenant than David and all of Israel were, we do not have the freedom to forsake righteousness. The New Testament tells us there are still consequences for sinful behavior. In fact, it tells us that the Lord will discipline us because He has a purpose for us... The author of **Hebrews** quotes **Proverbs 3:11-12** and **Psalm 119:75** in **Hebrews 12:5-6**.

### **Hebrews 12:5-11**

*...and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*

God does not tell us that He will "get" us every time we sin, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (Instead He actually sends the needed rain for the just and the unjust.) But, He does tell us that:

1. All men have sinned and the wage of that sin is death.
2. Those in the Old Covenant would receive blessing, prosperity, and life for obedience and cursing, adversity, and death for disobedience.
3. Those in the New Covenant will be disciplined for our good.

Perhaps we would do well to study what the Bible has to say about the consequences of sin, both the original sin of mankind and our personal sins today. After all, it is the

wrath of God that brings us to the point of recognizing the good news of a Savior in the first place... and it is the grace of God that keeps us in good standing with Him...

## ~ Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.  
Ask God to help you.**

**Verses 1-11**

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**Verses 12-22**

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## ~ Purpose of Psalm 38

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 38.  
The purpose simply states “why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

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## ~ Theme of Psalm 38

**Try giving Psalm 38 a title by identifying its theme.  
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**

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