Psalm 38: A Cry for Deliverance and Restoration Now. In verses 1, **David** wrote, “O Lord, rebuke me not in Your wrath, and chasten me not in Your burning anger.” We do not know when David wrote Psalm 38, but it is clear to see that he had done something very wrong and he was suffering the consequences of his actions. Some believe that he wrote this psalm after he was accused of his sin with Bathsheba. If this is true, then this psalm is one of several that he probably wrote during that time.

The words of David sound hauntingly familiar. In many ways, the first few verses sounded like the pleas of a child before his, or her, father. “I’m sorry! Don’t punish me! I didn’t mean it! I won’t do it again!” Sound familiar? As children, most, if not all of us, echoed the same sentiments when we faced a stern father or mother because we did something wrong. Usually, the punishment was still administered and it was not pleasant at all!

Psalm 38: A Cry for Deliverance and Restoration Now

However, that perspective changes, when we become a parent. Now, that son or daughter stands before US, and they are guilty of doing something that they knew was wrong. That familiar plea is made, and WE have to decide to punish or not punish the child. The easy way out would be to let the child go, but then the lesson of facing the consequences for wrong actions would have been lost. So, out of love, the appropriate punishment is administered.

Usually, the problems that people find themselves facing come from their own actions. In David's case, he was experiencing great anguish over what he had done, because he KNEW that it was contrary to the Lord's will. He was overwhelmed with his guilt!

Psalm 38: A Cry for Deliverance and Restoration Now

Guilt will affect a person mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Unresolved guilt can contribute to a person sliding into a deep depression. Guilt can be a harsh taskmaster that never lets up. In verses 3-8, David wrote, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation; there is no health in my bones because of my sin.

For my iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. My wounds grow foul and fester because of my folly. I am bent over and greatly bowed down; I go mourning all day long. For my loins are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am benumbed and badly crushed; I groan because of the agitation of my heart."

Yes, unresolved, or unforgiven guilt is a terrible thing to have to deal with. David finishes the Psalm by writing, "Do not forsake me, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me! Come quickly to help me, O Lord my Savior." It is clear that David had thrown himself upon the mercy of God, and was begging for forgiveness.

Advertisements

Psalm 38: A Cry for Deliverance and Restoration Now

In reading David's plea to the Lord, we, as Christians, can say, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" As long as we love Him and walk in His light, we KNOW that we are cleansed from all sin. That does not mean that we will be free from the feelings of guilt. If we have deliberately turned from the way the Lord wants us to go, we will, and we should, feel guilt!

When that happens, we can pray to our Father for help and forgiveness. Then, we can follow the words of David when he wrote, "I wait for you, O Lord; you will answer, O Lord my God". At such times, God may let us "stew" awhile before the burden is lifted. But, as His children, we can approach the Throne of Grace with confidence.

There is another good point that David made in his psalm, "I confess my iniquity…" To confess means to acknowledge. When Nathan rebuked David for his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, David did not try to hide from what he had done, and he did not try to act as if it had not happened. Instead, he acknowledged it, and placed himself at the mercy of God. David's last words in Psalm 38 were, "Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!"

As Christians, we would do well to follow that example. Forgiveness cannot occur without acknowledging sin, and that acknowledgement

must be sincere. A casual “forgive me for anything that I might have done” attitude is not true repentance. With repentance will come forgiveness, but the consequences of those actions will probably still remain.

Of course, we know that the Lord did indeed help David, and we also know that He loved him, and that love did not change. By the same token, we also know that God loves us as His children. There will be times when we will experience the same kind of anguish that David faced, there will be times when WE cry out much as David did, and we will also place ourselves in the hands of our Lord.

Psalm 38: A Cry for Deliverance and Restoration Now

When those times occur, we need to remember the words of David. His inspired words will help us keep the right perspective. Yes, we will face trials. Yes, we will be disciplined; but our Lord loves us. That love will be with us as long as our love and trust are placed in Him. Remember, as His children, we can approach the Throne of Grace with confidence.