

PSALM 38

A meditation on this psalm is highly necessary. No pain is so sharp, no misery so great as that which comes from a deep sense of sin. Who can bear a wounded spirit? But such wounds become useful if they produce contrition of soul, if they lead us to humble ourselves in the sight of God; for if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive them. He is the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort. And when earthly friends stand aloof, he supports us by his Holy Spirit. Let us fly to him for help!

A Psalm of David, for a memorial.

- 1 YAHWEH, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath!
- 2 For your arrows have sunk into me, and your hand has come down on me.
- 3 There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones because of my sin.
- 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head;
like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.

- 5 My wounds stink and fester because of my foolishness,
- 6 I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning.
- 7 For my sides are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh.
- 8 I am feeble and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

- 9 O Lord, all my longing is before you; my sighing is not hidden from you.
- 10 My heart throbs; my strength fails me,
and the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me.
- 11 My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague,
and my nearest kin stand far off.
- 12 Those who seek my life lay their snares;
those who seek my hurt speak of ruin and meditate treachery all day long.

- 13 But I am like a deaf man; I do not hear, like a mute man who does not open his mouth.
- 14 I have become like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth are no rebukes.
- 15 But for you, YAHWEH, do I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.
- 16 For I said, “Only let them not rejoice over me,
who boast against me when my foot slips!”

- 17 For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever before me.
- 18 I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.
- 19 But my foes are vigorous, they are mighty, and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
- 20 Those who render me evil for good accuse me because I follow after good.

21 Do not forsake me, YAHWEH! O my God, be not far from me!
22 Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!

PRAYER

Gracious Father, our sorrows are not hid from you, nor the many sins of which we are guilty. Our transgressions are a sore burden, too heavy for us to bear. But we trust in your merits, O blessed Jesus, that we may not stand guilty at that awful day of judgment. Receive our grateful thanks for your mantle of righteousness that has been cast over us, that we may sing our eternal hallelujahs to to you, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

PRAYER

O Lord, who knows all our desires and from whom our sorrows are not hid, we confess our many sins which we have most grievously committed--sins of thought, word, and deed. Our transgressions are a sore burden, too heavy for us to bear. But our trust is in your merits, O blessed Jesus. Let the mantle of your righteousness be cast over us, and so shall we sing eternal hallelujahs to your praise, you who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.