



**The Insidious Nature of Sin
No Matter What We May Think –
God's Grace Will Not Let Us Get Away With It
Psalm 38**

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Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He has never changed his tactics since Genesis 3, they are always the same and it tends to always begin with a leading question that on its own, isn't bad. But for many of us, we are not able to leave it there. And we nurse the question.



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And another thing right up front before we get too far into this psalm. Satan will lie to us and hint that illness is always because of sin. That is not the case, in fact it is a lie. He would love nothing more than for us to believe that the God we love and serve, has a mean streak and at times, will zap us because of sin. Don't go there.

Never forget, we live in a fallen world.

But we are going to learn that there is a connection between the physical and the spiritual realms. Job learned that lesson. So did Hezekiah.

Let's visit King Hezekiah. He was a good king, and revival took place in his administration. He did indeed sin at times, we all do, but he was a good king who served the Lord. But at a time in his life, just as God was in the process of performing a massive miracle on the behalf of His people, one that resulted in the saving of Israel from the Assyrian army, he became deathly ill.

Isaiah 38:1–3

"In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, **"Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die, you shall not recover."** Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, and said, **"Please, O LORD, remember how I have walked before you in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight."** And Hezekiah wept bitterly." (ESV)

But Hezekiah prayed, he looked to the Lord and realized just who he has been serving and leaned into His grace.

Isaiah 38:4–6

"Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: **"Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city."** (ESV)

Yes, he did sin and there were some rather significant issues leading up to the international problem he inherited from the previous King, but he was a good King.

The questions that come up from that passage in Isaiah are pretty much the same ones we will encounter here in Psalm 38.

As we get into this psalm, there are some who "will dismiss the idea that sickness is an expression of God's wrath as intellectually outmoded and theologically unhealthy. A close reading of the psalm, however, along with a careful consideration of how physical, social, and spiritual realms interrelate suggests that this psalm has much to teach contemporary Western readers. Sickness has a spiritual dimension in that it represents human weakness and mortality...Sickness also separates the sick from the larger society, especially from the fellowship with members of the worshiping community. Without the immediate support of those who love and trust in God, the sick person is left with only the voices of opposition and accusation, those who seek to do harm. Psalm 38 recognizes this larger reality of sickness that readers who are more scientifically minded may miss. (Creach 2021, 111)

One other consideration for us as well before we get into this psalm. David is also a prophet and many times, what he lives out in his life prophetically points to those things that Jesus will go through.

Yes, David will repent of and admit the sin in his life. That is indeed in this psalm. "But taking our cue from psalms quoted in the NT that definitely point to Christ, and in which David acknowledges personal sin we



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see this psalm also as prophetic. What David the man of faith experienced as a sinner becomes prophetic of what our Lord the sinless one endured on behalf of sinners. He who ‘knew no sin became sin for us’. He became the sinners’ substitute and therefore experienced the ultimate wrath of God that sinners deserve.” (Eveson 2014-2015, 244)

With this introduction, let’s dig in.

Psalm 38:title–22

“A Psalm of David, for a memorial. LORD, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, And do not punish me in Your burning anger. For Your arrows have sunk deep into me, And Your hand has pressed down on me. There is no healthy part in my flesh because of Your indignation; There is no health in my bones because of my sin. **For my guilty deeds have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. My wounds grow foul and fester Because of my foolishness. I am bent over and greatly bowed down; I go in mourning all day long. For my sides are filled with burning, And there is no healthy part in my flesh. I feel faint and badly crushed; I groan because of the agitation of my heart.** Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You. My heart throbs, my strength fails me; And the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me. **My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; And my kinsmen stand far away. Those who seek my life lay snares for me; And those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction, And they plot deception all day long.** But I, like a person who is deaf, do not hear; And I am like a person who cannot speak, who does not open his mouth. Yes, I am like a person who does not hear, And in whose mouth are no arguments. **For I wait for You, LORD; You will answer, Lord my God. For I said, “May they not rejoice over me, Who, when my foot slips, would exalt themselves over me.” For I am ready to fall, And my sorrow is continually before me. For I admit my guilt; I am full of anxiety because of my sin. But my enemies are vigorous and strong, And those who wrongfully hate me are many. And those who repay evil for good, They become my enemies, because I follow what is good. Do not abandon me, LORD; My God, do not be far from me! Hurry to help me, Lord, my salvation!”** (NASB 2020)

Every time I read this psalm I identify with the heart of David and fully agree with what I have seen in my own life as I begin to turn back to the Lord.

The word that is translated “memorial” is literally same word we see in Leviticus 2:2 as the memorial portion. This “was part of a sacrificial food offering, linked to incense (and hence, to prayer), crying to God to remember and act in mercy in accordance with his covenant (cf. Lev. 24:8).” (Ash 2024, 469)

Even as David begins his prayer here, he is making it clear to the Lord that this is him bringing to the Lord’s remembrance, thinking in terms anthropomorphically, of what suffering he has gone through as a result of his sin. In contrast, since we have also tied this into the suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on the cross, we see His remembrance of the same for us and the Father.

So, what sin is David referring to here?

Psalm 38:1

“LORD, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, And do not punish me in Your burning anger.” (NASB 2020)

Has David identified for us here in Psalm 38 some specific sins he has committed that are the cause the suffering he is discussing here? I wish I could say yes, because then we could take action to never find ourselves in the same place, but no, he is pointing back to what happened in the fall in Genesis 3. Paul pointed that out as well.

As a member of the human race, meaning a descendant of Adam and Eve, we all have a sin problem.



Romans 5:12–14

“Therefore, just as **sin came into the world through one man**, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.” (ESV)

The sin that causes the suffering being discussed in this psalm is the sin nature, what all of us are, unfortunately, privileged to carry around with us on this side of the rapture of the church.

This was not a big deal for us before we came to Jesus. But now that we know Him, we are very much aware of continuing predilection we have, to engage in sin. We are all rebels by nature, even though we are redeemed.

I find myself looking forward to an event that Jesus has promised to do, He said He would come back for us.

John 14:1–3

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (ESV)

Once that event, which we call the pretribulation rapture of the church occurs, then we are in our glorified bodies. The magnificent news, we will no longer be subjected to the sin nature because we will no longer have that as part of our makeup.

But for now, all of us suffer due to sin. Believer as well as non-believer. But for those of us who believe, we have a future to look forward to.

1 Corinthians 15:50–53

“I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.**” (ESV)

We know, also thanks to Paul, that this was the predicament that Jesus came to resolve for us. His work on the cross provided the required redemption to set us all free if we accept His generous offer.

Romans 5:18–19

“Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so **one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.**” (ESV)

Here in Psalm 38:1, we discover from David, what God thinks of sin. Everything that we see after this verse is because of sin and God’s wrath is intended to come upon sin and all of those who engage in it. This is why David appeals to YAHWEH, using the covenant name of God upfront. He is claiming the relationship side of the equation and looking to not be punished with all those who sin.

When you and I experience the discipline of our loving Lord, we may think that, along with David, that we are experiencing His wrath. HE continues to talk in terms that he feels like he is being punished, not disciplined.



Psalm 38:2–3

“For Your arrows have sunk deep into me, And Your hand has pressed down on me. There is no healthy part in my flesh because of Your indignation; There is no health in my bones because of my sin.” (NASB 2020)

As followers of Jesus, we are part of His family now and because of that, there are expectations of how we are to live.

Proverbs 3:11–12

“**When the LORD corrects you, my son, pay close attention and take it as a warning. The LORD corrects those he loves, as parents correct a child of whom they are proud.**” (GNB)

Those Jews who were faithful followers, just as those of us who follow Christ, we all are privileged to learn just how much He loves us.

Romans 8:16–18

“**For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children.** And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.” (NLT)

As His children, we discover that comes with great benefit as well as great privilege and great opportunities to follow Him. But that also means He will conform us to be like His Son, Jesus Christ and that, does include what David is talking about here. The uncomfortable privilege of being disciplined by God when we go off on our own and are not obedient to Him. The technical term for that by the way is sin. As members of His family, as His kids, He disciplines us in order to have us understand how we are supposed to behave in this new family we find ourselves in. David also enjoyed the same privilege that we do as ones who belong to Him.

Hebrews 12:7–11

“**As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children.** Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn’t discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn’t we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. **But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.**” (NLT)

When we come to Christ, we bring the years of collected baggage, bad habits, stinking ideas, and horrible practices that we have learned from others around us who were doing like we were at the time, living for self. Then we come to Christ and learn we need to become more like Jesus. That is not a before thing, because in the flesh it is not doable. It is only achievable through the Holy Spirit.

John 16:7–15

“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I am going away. For if I do not go away, **the Advocate** will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. And **when he comes, he will prove the world wrong concerning sin and righteousness and judgment**—concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But **when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.** **For he will not speak on his own authority, but will speak whatever he**



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hears, and will tell you what is to come. He will glorify me, because he will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what is mine and will tell it to you.” (NET 2nd ed.)

When we come to Christ, we are not put into a sheep pen and then told, go for it. Not hardly, we now have a loving shepherd who will take care of us better than we can of ourselves.

John 14:18

“**I will not abandon you as orphans**, I will come to you.” (NET 2nd ed.)

David knew that God was with him, but that does not stop him from praying and reminding the Lord of what it felt like as he encountered doing life as a sinner. It is overwhelming to realize how much grace God has given us just for us to be called His kids.

Galatians 3:26–29

“**For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith.** For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female—for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Often, when we feel like the Lord is against us or is angry with us, the reality is that he is just disciplining us for our own good. He is protecting us, correcting us, molding us, and working in us. If you are a child of God, there is always love in the discipline of the Lord. (Smith and Akin 2022, 279)

Taking a step back from this and looking at it through the prophetic lens that Daivd provides, we see how God had to do something to deal with the sin nature. His wrath was indeed poured out on it and Christ took it all on our behalf.

When David says there is “no health in my bones because of my sin,” he is making a statement of fact of what the ultimate destruction the sin nature brings to us all. The word used is shalom. There is no shalom, no peace, no health in any part of us. None at all.

Sin is a deadly infectious 100% fatal problem for all of us. It kills, all of the time. The sin nature prevents us from being whole and who it is the Lord wants us to be. It makes it difficult if not impossible for us to be His imagers unless we are filled with the Holy Spirit, as He has required us to be (Ephesians 5:18). David continues with his lament on who we all are without the Lord.

Psalm 38:4–8

“For my guilty deeds have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. My wounds grow foul and fester Because of my foolishness. I am bent over and greatly bowed down; I go in mourning all day long. For my sides are filled with burning, And there is no healthy part in my flesh. I feel faint and badly crushed; I groan because of the agitation of my heart.” (NASB 2020)

If this sounds familiar, it is because Paul used some of the same terms to discuss his personal battle with the sin nature.

Romans 7:21–25

“The Law has shown me that **something in me keeps me from doing what I know is right. With my whole heart I agree with the Law of God. But in every part of me I discover something fighting against my mind, and it makes me a prisoner of sin that controls everything I do. What a miserable person I am. Who will rescue me from this body that is doomed to die?** Thank God! Jesus Christ



will rescue me. So with my mind I serve the Law of God, although my selfish desires make me serve the law of sin." (CEV)

David Dickson stated it clearly almost 200 years ago.

One sin will waken the memory of more sins, till they present themselves as an innumerable army; my iniquities are gone over my head. How light soever sin may seem when it is committed, it will be found insupportably heavy, when God pursues for it; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. (Dickson 1834, 210)

First Satan tempts us and leads us to believe that we can get away with it and the thing we want to do will meet our needs.

But it doesn't, and we feel empty and defeated because, well, we got suckered. And that is just the beginning of the game for the enemy. Now it is all about keeping you and me away from turning to the Lord and exercising 1 John 1:9. Satan wants us to be defeated, condemned and unable to rise up. He sure doesn't want you to remember Romans 8:1.

Romans 8:1

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (ESV)

Satan wants to keep us in a place David describes. Essentially, useless to the Lord as we sit on our pity pot.

Psalm 38:7–8

"For my sides are filled with burning, And there is no healthy part in my flesh. I feel faint and badly crushed; I groan because of the agitation of my heart." (NASB 2020)

I have counseled with folks who are running from God, and they explain how they feel almost in those exact terms. Sin will never bring us peace. Never.

David has now completed giving us a description of his emotional and physical state, because of the sin nature, and entertaining it. David cries out to the Lord.

Psalm 38:9–10

"Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You. My heart throbs, my strength fails me; And the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me." (NASB 2020)

One of the things many of us have become quite good at is wearing masks. To the world, we reflect what appears to be a calm surface, nothing going on here, move along and find someone who is really going through it. That is learned behavior, it is done to create the impression that we are just fine. In reality, it is just another form of pride popping up because we think we can handle things on our own without the Lord and without our brothers and sisters.

But the reality is, we are all really going through something, all of the time. It comes with living in human bodies on a fallen planet in a cursed universe. I have learned that when hurting people argue with you, it is to give them something to forget hurting for a little while as they argue with you and boost their own pride. A point for us to remember, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are not here to win arguments, but to win souls.



Online, there are those who live for the argument, they want to prove their theology, and intellectual prowess far exceeds that of anyone else. There are many today who truly believe they are the repository of all knowledge and wisdom about the Bible.

When confronted by someone who wants to attack verbally and argue, I begin to dig and find out just why this person is doing this. Every so often you discover the damage done by someone else and this is some of the scar tissue. Do people notice the hurt?

In other words, do we get away with wearing the mask and practicing hypocrisy for awhile? Per David, not really.

Psalm 38:11–12

“My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; And my kinsmen stand far away. Those who seek my life lay snares for me; And those who seek to injure me have threatened destruction, And they plot deception all day long.” (NASB 2020)

Those who know you, those who love you, they know. How do we treat those in the fellowship who are hurting.

This is also a picture of Jesus as He went to the cross. There were indeed those who laid a snare for Him, the Sanhedrin with the co-conspirator Judas Iscariot. This was a plot that had been sometime in the making and when it was exercised, it was done solely because Jesus challenged Judas with His knowledge of the plot.

As things unfolded in the Garden, the disciples left. John and Peter tagged along but Peter failed. And at the cross, only John was there. All the others were in hiding.

His loved ones, most of them gone, family, standing in the distance and watching.

Psalm 38:13–14

“But I, like a person who is deaf, do not hear; And I am like a person who cannot speak, who does not open his mouth. Yes, I am like a person who does not hear, And in whose mouth are no arguments.” (NASB 2020)

David is using himself as the example here, however, he is also prophesying about Jesus on the cross. Isaiah would later say a similar prophecy.

Isaiah 53:7

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, **and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.**” (ESV)

Matthew 27:12–14

“But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, **he gave no answer.** Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?” **But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.**” (ESV)

David has made a decision; he is trusting in the Lord to defend him. Jesus did so as well and David, with his decision, is prophesying what Jesus would do. In our current culture, it is tempting to attack, in fact social media glorifies those who do attack when offended and wronged. And yes, there are in some cases legal remedies that we should avail ourselves of, Paul sure did.



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But at the end of the day, as we find ourselves wronged and lied about, rather than attack, we decide to take the direction that Jesus took and follow His guidance.

Matthew 5:43–48

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. **But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.** For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (NLT)

Why would David do this? He knew who he really was. As Harry Ironside puts it, “it is a great thing to come to the place where you have no fault to find with anybody but yourself. Many of us spend so much of our time finding fault with other people. We can see other people’s faults and can magnify their sins, but we are so unconscious of our own faults and sins. When people accuse us we get so indignant and forget that if our worst enemies knew all that we know about our own hearts and the sins of our own lives, they would say far worse than they do say. David here bows his head before God and has nothing to say because his own conscience is accusing him worse than any of them. (Ironside 1952, 224-225)

Jesus did nothing since He went to the cross in our place and He was not guilty of anything. But I find that like David, I should probably remain silent.

Psalm 38:15–16

“For I wait for You, LORD; You will answer, Lord my God. For I said, “May they not rejoice over me, Who, when my foot slips, would exalt themselves over me.”” (NASB 2020)

For David, he does not respond because he is trusting in the Lord. He has demonstrated that he is one who does indeed wait on the Lord and the Lord’s timing. He knows God will answer his prayer.

As we do life, do we have that same confidence? As we wait on the Lord, do we know, I mean really fully understand that God is indeed a God who answers our prayers?

David tells us that he waits, because God will answer his prayer. The reverse of that is how many of us act though. We stop waiting because we no longer believe that God will answer our prayers, so we decide to try and help God out along the way. Moses reminds us why we should stay out of it and wait. As the number one military power in the world pressed down on them, he reminded the people why waiting on the Lord is superior to freaking out.

Exodus 14:13

“But Moses said to the people, **“Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will perform for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again, ever.”** (NASB 2020)

In verse 16, it sounds as if David is being self centered. That is not the case. He has already stated his faith in the Lord and that the Lord will respond to his pleas. Because God is a promise keeping God and David’s use of YAHWEH tells us he is trusting in the one who has made all the promises that he has made to Israel to answer.

What he states, in that light, is concern for the honor of YAHWEH. If they rejoice, then God has failed, but God will never fail so even if they take a momentary event as a sign of weakness and begin to celebrate, the reality is, they have already lost.



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Psalm 38:17–18

“For I am ready to fall, And my sorrow is continually before me. For I admit my guilt; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.” (NASB 2020)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we have an awareness of who we are in Christ. We know that we have a sin nature, but we also know that as we are yielded to the Holy Spirit who is in us and empowering us, we can be more than conquerors (Romans 8:37).

Because of that, we too know we are prone to stumble, just like David. Sin in his life produces more than simply feeling bad, he experiences a Godly sorrow and a desire to not do sin again, ever. SO, he confesses and admits his guilt.

We are all sinners saved by grace. None of us are perfect and all of us are prone to sin. Yes, there have indeed been times in my life where I really believed I had conquered the problem of sin, but I learned quickly, that was not the case. Even in our strength, Satan, if we are not being observant and on guard wearing His armor as required, can tempt us.

1 Corinthians 10:12–13

“Therefore **let the one who thinks he stands watch out that he does not fall**. No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.” (NASB 2020)

Temptation works like rocks in a harbor; when the tide is low, everybody sees the danger and avoids it. But Satan’s strategy in temptation is to raise the tide, and to cover over the dangers of temptation. Then he likes to crash you upon the covered rocks. (Guzik 2013, 1 Co 10:11-13)

And when that happens to us, we tend to start off by excusing ourselves by implying the temptation we gave into was seriously unique. Nope. It wasn’t. The sooner we understand that there was indeed an out that we simply decided not to choose, then we can admit our guilt and repent exercising 1 John 1:9.

Psalm 38:18

“For I admit my guilt; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.” (NASB 2020)

We are always being watched, by those who are brothers and sisters, and then also by those who want us gone.

Psalm 38:19–20

“But my enemies are vigorous and strong, And those who wrongfully hate me are many. And those who repay evil for good, They become my enemies, because I follow what is good.” (NASB 2020)

Satan is our number one enemy and he never rests. We do, he doesn’t. We tend to forget that.

1 Peter 5:8–10

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are. In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.” (NLT)

There are a few things to remember too. The only power Satan has is that which we give him. Jesus defeated him on the cross. “Don’t make the common mistake of assuming that God and Satan possess



the same power—or that the power of Satan is equal to the power of God. Nothing could be further from the truth. Cast out of the heavenly realms to roam the earth, Satan has been given power, but only to the degree that the Lord allows.” (Hunt 2008, 14)

Remember

1. Satan cannot be everywhere at once. (Job 1:7)
2. Satan has no absolute power over a believer’s possessions. (Job 1:8-11)
3. Satan has no absolute power over a believer’s body. (Job 1:12)
4. Satan has no absolute power over a believer’s life. (Job 2:3-6)
5. Satan must obey Jesus. (Matthew 4:10-11)
6. Satan must ask permission to tempt a believer. (Luke 22:31)
7. Satan must leave if he is resisted. (James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:9)
8. Satan cannot protect his followers. (Matthew 25:41)
9. Satan cannot prevent his own demise. (Revelation 20:10) (Hunt 2008, 14-15)

One angel, Michael, will personally cast Satan and all his fallen followers out of heaven and ban them to earth at the mid-point of the Tribulation. (Revelation 12:7-12)

He and his followers are not impersonal forces, but intelligent evil in rebellion to God.

All of that is in readiness for what it is we must do. Be sober and alert, we are all equally under attack, but the solution is simple. Resist him.

We are given, by God, all the defensive tools we need, resisting is something each of us must do individually through the power of the Holy Spirit. Here we are commanded to resist the devil. Because Satan is a defeated foe, resistance is possible. In James, we are promised even more as we resist.

James 4:7

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**” (NRSVue)

The goal of the enemy is to devour us. To assimilate us back into the world and destroy any witness we may possibly have. He is a thief and a counterfeiter. His goal has been the same since Genesis 3, our destruction.

And yes, he will encourage those who do not know Jesus to think the worst about us. Who cares. We have Jesus.

John 10:10

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” (NRSVue)

Psalm 38:21–22

“Do not abandon me, LORD; My God, do not be far from me! Hurry to help me, Lord, my salvation!” (NASB 2020)

David expresses confidence in the Lord to resolve his situation and to help him. We do as well. But prophetically, we are drawn once more to the cross and the moment that our Lord and Savior became sin for us.



Matthew 27:45–46

“Now from noon until three, darkness came over all the land. At about three o’clock Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”” (NET 2nd ed.)

We find that we can agree with David and lament the things sin has done to us, and the discipline that we have gone through because of it, and the high cost paid by Jesus to save us from it. “And in heaven we shall see that we had not one trial too many, or one pang too severe. A sense of sin shall melt into the joy of salvation; grief shall lead on to gratitude, and gratitude to joy unspeakable and full of glory.” (Spurgeon n.d., 203)

Let’s pray.

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