

Psalms 38:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Analysis

O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. David opens this penitential psalm (one of seven) with urgent plea—not to escape discipline, but to avoid divine wrath (הַמָּאֵן, chemah, burning fury) versus corrective chastening (יָסָר, yasar, discipline). The covenant name **LORD** (יהָה, YHWH) appeals to God's steadfast love.

The parallel structure—wrath/hot displeasure, rebuke/chasten—intensifies the plea. David distinguishes between a father's loving correction (Hebrews 12:6) and judicial condemnation. His prayer acknowledges deserved judgment while seeking mercy within covenant relationship.

Historical Context

Psalm 38 is a Maschil (instructional psalm) and one of seven penitential psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). The superscription 'to bring to remembrance' suggests liturgical use for memorial offerings. David likely wrote this during illness and social isolation caused by sin, possibly during Absalom's rebellion.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does understanding God's fatherly discipline differ from fearing His judicial wrath change your view of conviction?
2. When you experience consequences of sin, do you appeal to God's covenant love or try to negotiate your way out?
3. What does David's willingness to accept chastening (but not wrath) teach about proper repentance?

Interlinear Text

אָל	יְהִי הָ	בְּקָאָפָּנִי	תֹּזִיכִיתִנִּי	בְּפָנָמֶתְבָּךְ
O LORD	H408	me not in thy wrath	rebuke	me in thy hot displeasure
H3068	H7110		H3198	H2534
תִּסְרְבֵנִי				
neither chasten				H3256

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 6:1 (References Lord): O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Isaiah 54:8 (Judgment): In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

Psalms 70:1 (References Lord): Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.

Jeremiah 30:11 (References Lord): For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will

I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

Jeremiah 10:24 (Judgment): O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

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