

Fleeing from the Rattlesnake of Sin Psalm 38

Introduction:

1. If you are in your back yard and you see a rattlesnake a few feet away, what is your response? Do you talk to him and try to convince him that you are no danger to him? Do you stand there as he gets closer to you and weigh out your options?
2. What is the safest and most logical thing to do? Run! Flee! Get out of there!
3. Did you know the Bible teaches that you must deal with sin the same way you would a rattlesnake? You don't get close to it so you can check it out. You don't weigh your options. When faced with temptation, you flee. You run. 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:22
 - **Illustration:** Joseph and Potiphar's wife
4. In 2 Samuel 11, King David did not do this, and it cost him dearly. What happens when you play around with fire? You get burnt. David played with fire. He toyed with sin. He thought he could handle temptation.
5. The price tag was far higher than David thought it would be. Bathsheba ended up pregnant, and David got involved in a murderous plot to kill her husband. David was a man plagued with guilt. Psalm 38 records for us a prayer of David after his great sin.
6. If there is one lesson we should learn from David, it is this – flee from sin like you would a rattlesnake. This psalm - the prayer of a pitiful, guilt-laden man - reveals to us why it is crucial that we flee from sin and temptation.

First, because our sin displeases God - vs. 1-2

1. Do you know what the very last words are of 2 Samuel 11? *“But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.”*
2. David thought he had covered all his tracks, but there were two issues that he could not get away from: God and his own guilty conscience.
3. God loves us so much that when we sin He sends an arrow of conviction into our hearts (vs. 2a). When you trusted Christ, the Holy Spirit of God came to dwell within you. When a believer sins, it grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and produces conviction.
4. God doesn't cast us off as His children, but He does convict us and correct us as a loving Father. Isn't this the picture we see in verses 1-2? Did you notice the words David used here? *“rebuke... chasten... displeasure... presseth...”*
5. If you are a parent, you can associate with those words, can't you? We never quit loving our children, but there are times when their behavior displeases us and the words “rebuke, chasten,” etc., apply to our parenting.

Second, because our sin robs us of our strength – vs. 3-8

1. Sin and guilt wearies us. vs. 3
 - Have you ever noticed, when you are involved in sin, it is hard to rest peacefully? It is hard to concentrate. No wonder we can't get things done. No wonder we are so tired.
2. Sin and guilt weighs us down. vs. 4
 - **Illustration:** When I got saved, I felt like a weight had been taken off my shoulders.
 - After salvation, if we get caught up in sin, we carry a load that God never intended for us to carry. God has given us new life in Christ. Sin is now against our new nature.
3. Sin and guilt wounds us. vs. 5
 - The arrow of guilt had stricken David, and spiritually wounded him. David had brought this on himself. It was a self-inflicted wound – a festering, stinking wound. When sin and guilt wounds us, if allowed to continue, it will fester and get very grotesque.
4. Sin and guilt worries us. vs. 6
 - In 2 Samuel 11, David is a man who has lost his joy and is full of fear and panic. “What do I do now? Will anybody find out?” Sin robs us of true joy. You can't enjoy life.
 - There is no joy in a backslidden, sinful life. The most miserable person in the world is not a lost person, but a believer who is out of fellowship with his heavenly Father.
5. Sin and guilt wastes us. vs. 7
 - David had physical repercussions because of his sin. Some believe he may have contracted a sexually transmitted disease (vs. 7 - “*a loathsome disease*”).
 - Can this happen to a believer? Absolutely! You reap what you sow. God will forgive, but nature will not. Forgiveness won't take away the disease. There are physical consequences and repercussions attached to our sin.
6. Sin and guilt weakens us. vs. 8
 - The mighty warrior king is now turning, twisting, groaning, and crying out in pain. What might others have thought and said as they passed by his room, and heard his groaning?
7. Do you see why God says to flee sin like a rattlesnake? The guilt of sin weakens us physically, morally, and spiritually. It drains us completely.

Third, because our sin hardens our hearts – vs. 9-10, 12-14

1. I think one of the most dangerous aspects of sin is the way that it affects us internally. Sin creates a callous on our heart, and this affects everything about us and the way we relate to others.
2. As a believer knowingly in sin, you lose that sensitivity to the Spirit working within you, and working through others. We see this in David's life.

3. David became spiritually blind. vs. 9-10
 - As a king, he needed guidance and insight, but instead he was stumbling around in darkness. Have you ever noticed that when you are involved in sin, your Bible reading isn't as fruitful? You make bad decisions because sin has blinded you.
4. David became spiritually deaf. vs. 12-13a
 - David needed ears to hear (vs. 12), yet he was deaf to the danger around him. Sin makes us so vulnerable to the enemy. Sin deafens us to where we can't hear the words of wisdom and godly advice from others.
5. David became spiritually dumb. vs. 13b
 - David was Israel's leader and should have been speaking out for God, but sin and guilt had shut his mouth. Have you ever noticed that you don't feel like talking to others about Jesus when you are living in sin?
 - Sin had hardened David' heart and put him in a rather pitiful state. vs. 14

Fourth, because our sin distances us from our friends - vs. 11

1. David's friends did not want to be around him because he was not a pleasant person to be around. Look at David dealing with his friend Nathan in 2 Samuel 12:1-7.
2. David had become a hypocritical, judgmental, angry person. He was quick to judge someone else for a much lesser offence than his.
3. When believers are in sin, they can become quite miserable to be around. They are ill at ease, critical of others, paranoid, and pushing friends and loved ones away from them.
4. Sin and a guilty conscience will distance us from our friends.

In Conclusion:

1. There is nothing worse than when the window of our soul is covered with the grime of a guilty and condemning conscience.
2. The price tag on sin is always higher than we anticipated. This is why God's command is to flee, abstain, and run from sin.
3. As believers, we are capable of committing any sin that a lost person can commit. The difference is that we will not be able to enjoy it. It will bring conviction and guilt.
4. Maybe some of you are dealing with some serious temptations right now, and you have actually contemplated getting involved in some sinful choices. Today, God in His grace is warning you – like a flashing yellow caution light. God says, "Flee! The price is not worth it!"