

Psalm 38 helps us enter into the origin of our disorientation (B), or the disorientation of others.

Let the Spirit lead you into one “**CRISIS OF...**” and the words of the psalm evoke—bring to mind—an image, a memory, a feeling of a real experience of disorientation. Then, add your voice to the psalm, praying as boldy—and perhaps hyperbolically—as the psalmist, as you address the Holy One, inviting Him into the chaos as “an act of hope” in the awareness of your “utter dependence.”

Pray candidly from the **EDGE OF NEEDINESS**, ready to “tell your story of failure” until you are **PREPARED FOR COMMUNION**, ready to receive what God has prepared for you.

PSALMS OF LENT | Psalm 38 (Origins of Disorientation)

CRISIS OF FAITH

(B) Take a deep breath, God; calm down— don’t be so hasty with your punishing rod. Your sharp-pointed arrows of rebuke draw blood; my backside smarts from your caning. I’ve lost twenty pounds in two months because of your accusation.

CRISIS OF SELF

(B) My bones are brittle as dry sticks because of my sin. I’m swamped by my bad behavior, collapsed under gunnysacks of guilt. The cuts in my flesh stink and grow maggots because I’ve lived so badly. And now I’m flat on my face feeling sorry for myself morning to night. All my insides are on fire, my body is a wreck. I’m on my last legs; I’ve had it— my life is a vomit of groans. Lord, my longings are sitting in plain sight, my groans an old story to you. My heart’s about to break; I’m a burned-out case.

CRISIS OF RELATIONSHIP

(B) Cataracts blind me to God and good; old friends avoid me like the plague. My cousins never visit, my neighbors stab me in the back. My competitors blacken my name, devoutly they pray for my ruin. But I’m deaf and mute to it all, ears shut, mouth shut. I don’t hear a word they say, don’t speak a word in response.

ARRIVING AT THE EDGE OF NEEDINESS

I **wait and pray** so they won’t laugh me off, won’t smugly strut off when I stumble. **I’m on the edge** of losing it— the pain in my gut keeps burning. **I’m ready to tell my story of failure**, I’m no longer smug in my sin. My enemies are alive and in action, a lynch mob after my neck. I give out good and get back evil from God-haters who can’t stand a God-lover.

PREPARING FOR COMMUNION

Don’t dump me, God; my God, don’t stand me up. Hurry and help me; I want some wide-open space in my life!