

## PSALM 40

### *God Sustains His Servant.*

#### INTRODUCTION.

- A. A Psalm of David. "A Song of Praise and a Prayer for Help: A Glorious Prophecy of the Messiah."
- B. Roy H. Enoch (6-8-94).
- C. Ash points out the most unusual thing about this psalm is its structure. Psalms usually began with a complaint and end with a thanksgiving, but here the order is reversed: Thanksgiving and praise, (1-11) is followed by lament (12-17). The most memorable part of the psalm is verses 6-8 which is quoted in Heb. 10:5-9.
- D. Some have suggested that there are really two psalms here, w/the first being (1-11), and the second (12-17). One reason for this thesis is that Psalms 70 is almost identical to (13-17), and that (12) may serve as a transition.

#### COMMENTS.

- A. Thanksgiving for Deliverance (40:1-11).

I waited patiently for the LORD;

And He inclined to me and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay,

And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;

Many will see and fear

And will trust in the LORD.

4 How blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust,

And has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood.

5 Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which You have done,

And Your thoughts toward us;

There is none to compare with You.

If I would declare and speak of them,

They would be too numerous to count.

6 Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired;

My ears You have opened;

Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.

7 Then I said, "Behold, I come;

In the scroll of the book it is written of me.

8 I delight to do Your will, O my God;

Your Law is within my heart."

9 I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation;

Behold, I will not restrain my lips,

O LORD, You know.

10 I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;

I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation;

I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation.

11 You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me;

Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.

[v1] David begins by giving thanks for past deliverances.

[v2] Two words describe his distress: a "horrible pit," and "miry clay." This image brings to memory Jeremiah being cast into the mire of a dungeon where there was no water, but mud (Jer. 38:6).

[v2] Two terms also describe blessings: "set my feet upon a rock," and "established my steps." These descriptions form a vivid contrast as an antithetical parallelisms.

[v3] "He has put a new song in my mouth..." God's blessings should cause us to want to sing His praises.

[v4] "Blessed is that man..." The Hebrew word means "happiness" and is used in the masculine plural as an interjection, "how happy."

1. The man is happy who makes God his trust.
2. who does not respect the proud.
3. nor turn aside to lies.

**[v5]** Here is the real key to happiness, “Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works....” Gratitude for the blessings we have is the way to be content and enjoy life.

**[v6]** The most significant thing about this passage is that the Hebrew writer quoted it from the Greek translation and applied it to X. Coffman says that these verses could never apply to David, but there is a great similarity to his prayer of repentance in Psalms 51:15-17.

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire...” Man has difficulty understanding that it is the motive of the heart that God wants most, and therefore man often concentrates on the ritual. God does expect us to trust Him enough and love Him enough to follow His directions, but it is the love and trust behind the obedience that He values most.

“...my ears you have opened...” Since the author of Hebrews quoted from the Greek translation, it has, “a body You have prepared for me...” It is generally believed that the Hebrew text is more reliable, but the inspired writer here chooses the Greek variation.

**[v8]** “I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is w/in my heart.” This seems appropriate for David and is similar to many other statements he makes in the Psalms concerning his dedication to the Lord.

**[v9-11]** Some feel gratitude but never express it to the one to whom they are grateful, nor to others to give credit to the one who has blessed. Those who truly love the Lord, will want to use every opportunity to sing His praises and study His word.

B. A Lament for Sin and its Consequences (40:12-17).

For evils beyond number have surrounded me;

My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see;

They are more numerous than the hairs of my head,

And my heart has failed me.

**13** Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;

Make haste, O LORD, to help me.

**14** Let those be ashamed and humiliated together

Who seek my life to destroy it;

Let those be turned back and dishonored

Who delight in my hurt.

**15** Let those be appalled because of their shame

Who say to me, “Aha, aha!”

**16** Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;

Let those who love Your salvation say continually,

“The LORD be magnified!”

**17** Since I am afflicted and needy,

Let the Lord be mindful of me.

You are my help and my deliverer;

Do not delay, O my God.

**[v12]** For innumerable evils have surrounded me; my iniquities have overtaken me,...” David identifies his troubles as a result of his sins.

**[v13-17]** Virtually the same as the five verses of Psa. 70. Some have concluded that this is two psalms connected w/(12). Much of this last part is also in Psa. 35. This may indicate that writers sometimes used “standardized expressions” for some themes.

**[v14]** “Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion who seek to destroy my life;...” This seems to identify the danger as external in the form of evil men, like when Saul was trying to kill him. But David does not wish their death, but that they might be made ashamed of their behavior.

**[v16]** “Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You...” He frequently asks for the Lord’s blessings to be on those who do right and seek His will.

**[v17]** “But I am poor and needy;...” This did not describe David in the sense that the world thinks he was poor, but may well describe a contrite heart that recognized his sin.