

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Psalms 40:1-5.**
- B. Ash points out that 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 (v1-11) is followed by lament (v12-17).
- C. The most memorable part of the psalm is v6-8, which is quoted in Heb. 10:5-9.

## VERSE BY VERSE LOOK AT THE 40TH PSALM.

- A. Verses 1-3:
  - 1 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.
  1. (v1) David begins by giving thanks for past deliverances.
  2. (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).
  3. (v2) Two phrases also describe blessings: "set my feet upon a rock," and "established my steps." These descriptions form a vivid contrast as an antithetical parallelism.
  4. (v3) "He has put a new song in my mouth..." God's blessings should cause us to sing His praises.
- B. Verses 4,5:
  - 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.
  1. (v4) "Blessed is that man..." The Hebrew word means "happiness" and is used in the masculine plural as an interjection, "how happy."
    - a. The man is happy who makes God his trust.
    - b. The man who does not respect the proud.
    - c. The man who does not turn aside to lies.
  2. (v5) Here is a 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.
- C. Verses 6-8:
  - 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."
  1. (v6) The most significant thing about this passage is that the Hebrew writer quoted it from the Greek translation and applied it to Christ. There is a great similarity to his prayer of repentance in Psa. 51:15-17.

2. (v6) 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.
3. (v6) "...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.
4. (v8) This seems appropriate for David and is similar to many other statements he makes in the Psalms concerning his dedication to the Lord.

D. Verses 9-11:

- 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.
- (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.

E. Verses 12-17:

- 12 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.
1. (v13-17). This is virtually the same as the five verses of Psa. 70. This may indicate that writers sometimes used "standardized expressions" for some themes.
  2. (v12) David identifies his troubles as a result of his sins.
  3. (v14) 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.
  4. (v16) He frequently asks for the Lord's blessings to be on those who do right and seek His will.
  5. (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.

## CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Several things to remember from this psalm:
1. Christians need to know how they stand, and what their foundation is.

2. Some thoughts on how to be happy.
  3. Love and obedience are more important than ritual and sacrifice.
  4. We must always praise the one to whom we are grateful.
  5. We shouldn't seek the death of our enemies, but that they repent of their evil.
- B. May we turn to Jesus, who is our atoning sacrifice, that we might obey Him.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.