

# "Thy Faithfulness and Thy Salvation"

## Psalm 40

### **Title is found in the middle of verse 10**

This psalm bears a familiar title - "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David." We've seen this often and nothing more needs to be added.

The occasion for the psalm is not given but there are numerous scholars that say it is placed in order of sequence to the previous two because of the content. It acts as an answer to the 38<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> psalm, seen in the first verse - "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."

There are several very familiar verses in this psalm that have been a comfort and help to believers down through the ages, showing the timelessness of its content.

There are two things to note before we get into the text. First, the psalm is divided into two distinct sections, causing some to think that it might have been two separate psalms combined into one: verses 1-10 are seen as a psalm of thanksgiving while verses 11-17 are a lament and prayer for deliverance. Second, verses 13-17 are repeated (almost verbatim) in the 70<sup>th</sup> psalm, showing the importance of the subject.

Although there are two clearly defined parts to the psalm, we can divide it further based on the content. Something that makes this psalm unique is that there are given pauses and stops in the Hebrew that make dividing this psalm a little easier.

As we noted in our recent study of the book of Hebrews, this psalm contains a remarkable prophecy of the incarnation and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 6-8).

That being said, some of that prophecy also applied to David's life at the time and fits in the context of this psalm.

## **I. DELIVERANCE - vs. 1-3**

### **A. Asked for - vs. 1**

1. "I waited patiently for the LORD"

The Hebrew word for "waited" and "patiently" are the same word, demonstrating his perseverance in waiting on the Lord.

"It was not a single, momentary act of expectation or hope; it was continuous; or, was persevered in. The idea is, that his prayer was not answered at once, but that it was answered after he had made repeated prayers, or when it seemed as if his prayers would not be answered. It is earnest, persevering prayer that is referred to; it is continued supplication and hope when there seemed to be no answer to prayer, and no prospect that it would be answered."

2. "And he inclined unto me, and heard my cry" - the LORD was listening with intent to answer.

### **B. Answered - vs. 2**

1. "He brought me up also out of..." - no matter how far down we go, even if we are stuck in the muck and mire of the world where we can't find any firm footing, the LORD is waiting for us to cry out to Him for deliverance and He will answer.
2. "And set...and established"
  - a) Once out of the pit, the LORD set Him on the

rock. This is in stark contrast to "the miry clay." Although I believe this is speaking of a believer coming back to the Lord in repentance and restoration, it is also very true of a lost person coming to Christ. The "rock" would be Christ, upon which our salvation and hope is anchored.

- b) "And established my goings" - once back in fellowship with the Lord, David was able to walk on solid ground again. What a tremendous blessing it is to know that once we are saved, we no longer need to live in the pit of misery that is the world. And even if we get to living in that misery again, once restoration is made through confession and prayer, we have firm ground upon which to walk.

### **C. Acknowledged - vs. 3**

- 1. In praise - "praise unto our God"
- 2. In practice - "shall see it"

## **II. DECLARATION OF GOD'S BLESSINGS - VS. 4-5**

**A. On those that trust in the Lord without regard to others and what they think and do - vs. 4**

**B. Verse five (5) is an absolutely wonderful verse, declaring the many things that God has done for His children.**

- 1. "Wonderful works"
- 2. "Thoughts which are to us-ward"
- 3. "More than can be numbered" - think about that! If we consider all we have in Christ, and all that waits for us in eternity, we really would be hard pressed to account for the wonder of

being a child of God!

### III. DEDICATION TO OBEDIENCE – VS. 6-10

#### A. Verses 6-8 are the prophetic utterance concerning the Messiah, clearly stated as such in Hebrews 10:5-7.

1. Verse six (6), however, also speaks of David's understanding of the need for obedience to the Lord rather than just ritualistic sacrifices. This is seen in the clause, "mine ears hast thou opened," indicating that he was made very aware of what the Lord required from His children.

In respect to the Messiah, the Old Testament sacrificial laws were insufficient to redeem man. What was required was the final sacrifice of Christ. The phrase in Heb. 10:5 – "but a body hast thou prepared for me" – is in the place of "mine ears hast thou opened" in verse 7, indicating the passage in the psalms is about the Messiah, but also relates to David.

2. Verse seven (7) as it relates to David, he is reflecting on his own call to kingship and his role as the servant of God. "In the volume of the book it is written of me" is speaking of David's kingship being part of God's revealed will.

As to the Messiah, the text is clear – it was prophesied before He was born that He would come, and we have the record of the details in the Bible.

3. Verse eight (8), relating to David, shows his desire to do the will of the Lord, understanding the word of God is given so he would know

how.

We know that the Son of God came to do the will of the Father, a truth found throughout the Gospels, nowhere clearer than in the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

**B. Verses nine and ten (9-10) are tremendous verses and are just as necessary now as they were 3,000 years ago when they were penned.**

Considering the three previous verses and the prophecy and reference to the Messiah, and the consideration of the quote being in the book of Hebrews in the context of the necessity of a new covenant to replace the old, we can draw a very clear point from this text that it isn't the righteousness of the Levitical Law that was being preached but a forward-looking message of the sacrifice of the Saviour that brings righteousness "within my heart" that is being preached.

**Romans 1:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

<sup>17</sup> For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

**Romans 3:22-26**

<sup>22</sup> Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

<sup>23</sup> For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

<sup>24</sup> Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

<sup>25</sup> Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation

through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

<sup>26</sup> To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

#### **IV. DESIRE FOR FURTHER DELIVERANCE - vs. 11-17**

The nature of the psalm now changes to a further plea for mercy and recognition of the sin nature that can lead the child of God astray if we are not constantly aware of our need and God's mercy.

##### **A. There is a continual need for deliverance - vs. 11-13**

1. The deliverance isn't a one-time event that's alluded to in this psalm. Although we have eternal, ultimate deliverance (eternal salvation), we are still going to be in need of continued deliverance from the flesh and the temptation of the world.
2. Vs. 11 - the word for "tender mercies" (רחם) is one that speaks of the womb of a mother in the singular, and when in the plural, as it is here, it speaks of the love, compassion, and tenderness a new mother has for her child.
3. Vs. 11 - the word for "lovingkindness" is a synonym for "tender mercies" and connects the mercy of God with His faithfulness to His word ("truth"), especially as it applies to His children. This is to be seen as something that will never change - it is an eternal part of the love of God for us!!
4. Vs. 12 - faced with the fact that we are still

sinner (yet saved by grace), we need to consider the issue of sin and the need for the continued mercy of God.

5. Vs. 13 – a common plea by the psalmist (David), asking the LORD for deliverance and help.

**B. There is a continual enemy from which to be delivered – vs. 14-15**

**C. There is a continual praise to be given for deliverance – vs. 16-17**

1. Vs. 16 – the child of God is to “continually” praise Him for His salvation and the joy that should bring to our lives.

The key here is “those that seek” the LORD. We are not likely to be very happy nor content with our lives if we don’t care to seek Him or be around those that do. Too many of God’s children are so consumed with their own issues that they are miserable – and it’s obvious to most people around them.

The praise we give should magnify the LORD – as we’ve seen before in our study of Psalms, we are to make Him great – and no one else, no matter who they are.

2. Vs. 17 – we will be more inclined to praise God for who He is and what He’s done if we understand who we are and how needy we can be.

Conclusion: Deliverance is needed; declaration of God’s blessings in deliverance; desire and need for further deliverance – these principles are only possible because of the Lord’s faithfulness to His word and His salvation.