

# THE SAINT'S TRIUMPH OVER TROUBLE THROUGH TRUST, Psalm 40

## INTRODUCTION:

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Psalm 40 consists of two parts. The first (vss. 1-10) relates to God's mercies in former times of trouble; the second (vss. 11-18) is a cry for help and deliverance from a new calamity. The psalmist is certain that God in His kindness will deliver him again as He had done formerly.

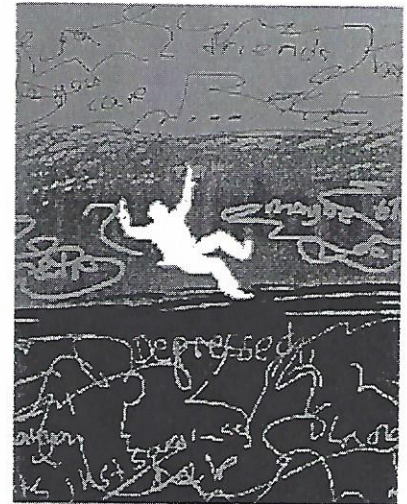
### 1A. THE PSALMIST'S MISERY 1-2

- 1b. The psalmist's exigency: 1
  - 1c. Patient endurance:
  - 2c. Divine dependence:
- 2b. The psalmist's enablement: 2
  - 1c. Extracted from a desperate dilemma:
    - 1d. A horrible pit:  
A deep chasm into which roaring waters rush.
    - 2d. A hopeless quagmire:  
Miry clay, deep mud at the bottom of a pit.
  - 2c. Established him on a firm foundation:
  - 3c. Enabled his continued commitment:



### 2A. THE PSALMIST'S MELODY: 3-5

- 1b. The composition of a new song: 3a
  - 1c. The content of the song: 3a Praise
  - 2c. The consequences of the new song: 3b
    - 1d. The audience of David's song:
    - 2d. The awe at God's goodness:
    - 3d. The acknowledgement of God's power:
    - 4d. The appropriation of God's salvation:



2b. The concern for the congregation: 4

1c. Reliance on the Lord:

2c. Rejection of the proud and liars:

The proud rely on their own goodness and parade their self-righteousness.

Merrill Unger has well characterized the proud as:

... lapsing into falsehood of salvation by faith plus works, or salvation entirely on works (the basic error of all heresy and cultism). (*Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 2002, 802).

3b. The content of the new song: 5

Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

1c. God's wonderful works: 5a

2c. God's personal thoughts: 5b

1d. God's thoughts are indescribable:

Isa. 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

2d. God's thoughts are innumerable:

They are uncounted and uncountable.

### **3A. THE PSALMIST'S MINISTRY: 6-10**

<sup>6</sup>Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

<sup>7</sup>Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

<sup>8</sup>I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.

1b. Negatively: Avoidance of offense:

Routine requirements of sacrifices: Psa. 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

The psalmist declares the valuelessness of sacrifice and blood sacrifice apart from faith and obedience.

2b. Positively: Action in obedience: 6b-10

1c. Obedient service: 6b

Ryrie's comments on the expression "mine ears hast thou opened" summarizes well the issue:

Instead of external ceremony only, David realizes that God wants his Heart. In effect, he is saying, "here I am to do what is prescribed to me as my duty in the law, but to do it from the heart." (The Ryrie Study Bible, note on Psalm 40:6).

The phrase, "mine ears hast thou opened," applied in type to Jesus Christ in **Hebrews 10:5-7**, speaks of a divine communication that will be received and obeyed.

2c. Biblical service: 7

3c. Heartfelt service: 8

Christ is clearly envisioned here with delighting to do God's will and God's law in the heart, but the "innumerable evils" David refers to are not Christ's but ours, laid on Him by imputation.

This clear reference to Christ is not necessarily a direct prophecy, but a prophecy in type. One is inclined to agree with Perowne:

The great principle of a typical predictiveness in all Jewish history is the most satisfactory principle of interpretation in this and in all similar cases. (*The Book of Psalms*, I, 1966, 332).

4c. Public service: 9

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.

1d. The psalmist's public testimony: 9a

2d. The psalmist's persistent testimony: 9b

5c. Extensive service: 10

I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

1d. Publishing of God's righteousness:

2d. Declaring God's faithfulness:

3d. Proclaiming God's salvation:

4d. Testifying to God's lovingkindness (**chesed**, i.e., "loyal love"):

5d. Proclaiming God's truth:



#### 4A. JEHOVAH'S MASTERY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: 11-17

1b. Request for permanent preservation: 11-12

Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

<sup>12</sup>For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

**How many hairs are on the average human head?**

**100,000 hairs**

1c. The request stated: 11

Answer: You are born with about **100,000** scalp hair follicles to start with, but it varies with natural hair color. Blondes have an average of **150,000 hairs**, the average redhead has 90,000. Those with black or brown hair average **110,000 to 100,000 hairs**. Feb 12, 2014

2c. The request explained: 12

1d. The preservation from external evils: 12a

2d. The preservation from internal iniquity: 12b

3c. The request repeated: 13

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Verses 13-17 are virtually identical to Psalm 70. Most commentators believe that these last verses were separated from Psalm 40, with slight changes, to compose a separate psalm.

2b. Request for the punishment of the wicked: 14-16

1c. The description of the problem: 14

Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

1d. Mortal threats: 14a

2d. Malicious terror: 14b

3d. Mocking taunts: 14c

2c. The desire for punishment:

1d. The enemy demoralized: 14

2d. The enemy driven back: 14

3d. The enemy desolate: 15

Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

The exclamation, “Aha, aha” is one of *Schadenfreude*, i.e. rejoicing over another person’s misfortune.

- 3b. Rejoicing over preservation: 16-17
  - <sup>16</sup> Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.
  - <sup>17</sup> But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.
- 1c. A call to the dedicated:
  - 1d. Personally:
  - 2d. Publicly:
- 2c. A confession of destitution: 17a
- 3c. A conviction of deliverance: 17b
- 4c. A cry of desperation: 17c

### **Conclusion:**

- \*\*The 40<sup>th</sup> Psalm affords a glimpse into the vicissitudes of David’s life.
- \*\*His dreadful dilemma prompted a cry for help and deliverance.
- \*\*It seems that God graciously answered the payer – but only after David waited patiently.
- \*\*David’s deliverance prompted him to praise the Lord and publicize God’s goodness.
- \*\*The “innumerable evils” (v. 12a) besetting David are outweighed by the innumerable blessings (v.5)
- \*\*David proclaims his deliverance far and wide to his nation (v. 9) and through this psalm to all men.
- \*\*David appeals to the Lord again for help when a second emergency strikes (vss. 12-17)
- \*\*In the midst of terrifying and taunting enemies, David magnifies the Lord (v.16)
- \*\*David does not ask “why me, Lord?” or “why again, Lord?” but is convinced of God’s righteousness and loyal love (v. 9-10).

May the believer, like David, trust in God amidst his trials, who hears our cry, has innumerable kind thoughts toward us and is willing and able to help us!

Excerpt (Hymn) From  
**"The Psalms of David"**  
by Isaac Watts

**Psalm 40**

**Psalm 40:1. 1 3 5 17. First Part. C. M.**  
**A song of deliverance from great distress.**

- 1 I waited patient for the Lord,  
He bow'd to hear my cry;  
He saw me resting on his word,  
And brought salvation nigh.
- 2 He rais'd me from a horrid pit  
Where mourning long I lay,  
And from my bonds releas'd my feet,  
Deep bonds of miry clay.
- 3 Firm on a rock he made me stand,  
And taught my cheerful tongue  
To praise the wonders of his hand,  
In a new thankful song.
- 4 I'll spread his works of grace abroad;  
The saints with joy shall hear,  
And sinners learn to make my God  
Their only hope and fear.
- 5 How many are thy thoughts of love!  
Thy mercies, Lord, how great!  
We have not words nor hours enough  
Their numbers to repeat.
- 6 When I'm afflicted, poor and low,  
And light and peace depart,  
My God beholds my heavy woe,  
And bears me on his heart.

**Psalm 40:2. 6-9. Second Part. C. M.**  
**The incarnation and sacrifice of Christ.**

- 1 Thus saith the Lord,  
"Your work is vain,  
"Give your burnt offerings o'er,  
"In dying goats and bullocks slain  
"My soul delights no more."
- 2 Then spake the Saviour, "Lo, I'm here,  
"My God, to do thy will;  
"Whate'er thy sacred books declare,  
"Thy servant shall fulfil.
- 3 "Thy law is ever in my sight,  
"I keep it near my heart;  
"Mine ears are open'd with delight  
"To what thy lips impart."
- 4 And see the bless'd Redeemer comes,  
Th' eternal Son appears,  
And at th' appointed time assumes  
The body God prepares.
- 5 Much he reveal'd his Father's grace,  
And much his truth he shew'd,  
And preach'd the way of righteousness,  
Where great assemblies stood.
- 6 His Father's honour touch'd his heart,  
He pity'd sinners' cries,  
And, to fulfil a Saviour's part,  
Was made a sacrifice,

PAUSE.

7 No blood of beasts on altars shed  
Could wash the conscience clean,  
But the rich sacrifice he paid  
Atones for all our sin.

8 Then was the great salvation spread,  
And Satan's kingdom shook;  
Thus by the woman's promis'd seed  
The serpent's head was broke.

**Psalm 40:3. 5-10. L. M.**  
**Christ our sacrifice.**

- 1 The wonders, Lord, thy love has wrought,  
Exceed our praise, surmount our thought;  
Should I attempt the long detail,  
My speech would faint, my numbers fail.
- 2 No blood of beasts on altars spilt,  
Can cleanse the souls of men from guilt,  
But thou hast set before our eyes  
An all-sufficient sacrifice.
- 3 Lo! thine eternal Son appears,  
To thy designs he bows his ears,  
Assumes a body, well prepar'd,  
And well performs a work so hard.
- 4 "Behold, I come," (the Saviour cries,  
With love and duty in his eyes)  
"I come to bear the heavy load  
"Of sins, and do thy will, my God.
- 5 "'Tis written in thy great decree,  
"'Tis in thy book foretold of me,  
"I must fulfil the Saviour's part,  
"And, lo! thy law is in my heart!
- 6 "I'll magnify thy holy law,  
"And rebels to obedience draw,  
"When on my cross I'm lifted high,  
"Or to my crown above the sky.
- 7 "The Spirit shall descend, and show  
"What thou hast done, and what I do;  
"The wond'ring world shall learn thy grace,  
"Thy wisdom and thy righteousness."

**ISAAC WATTS**  
**1674-1748**

