

Psalm 40

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Date: 08 February 2015

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[0 : 00] I have said several times when we come to the Psalms we really have a threefold focus.

! Three ways of looking at each Psalm. This Psalm starts off telling us it's a Psalm of David. So there's the context. It's something in David's life. What in David's life we'll discuss in a minute. But then all of Scripture we know points to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. So all Psalms are in some measure more or less messianic.

And this Psalm we know is definitely messianic because the verses starting from verse 6 are quoted in the book of Hebrews and applied directly to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then of course there is the focus of the application of the Psalm to us. What are we to learn from the Psalm? What are we to do applying it to our lives?

[1 : 11] As we look through the verses of this Psalm we shall see that triple focus. What is it here about David? About our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And about us.

Now this is a well known start to this Psalm. I waited patiently for the Lord. And it's got a similar start really to two other Psalms which we shall just briefly look at.

Psalm 69 from which I quoted in our call to worship. Psalm 69 starts, Save me O God for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire. See the parallel here.

Where there is no foothold. I have come into deep waters and the flood sweeps over me. I am weary with my crying out. My throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.

More than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause. So you can see some parallels there. Psalm 40, Psalm 69.

[2 : 21] And also Psalm 116. Psalm 116 starts in a similar way to 40.

I love the Lord because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me. Therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

The snares of death encompassed me. The pangs of Sheol laid hold on me. I suffered distress and anguish. Then I called on the name of the Lord. O Lord I pray deliver my soul.

Gracious is the Lord and righteous our God is merciful. The Lord preserves the simple. When I was brought low he saved me. Return O my soul to your rest. For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. In both of those psalms 69, 116. The psalmist is up against it. But can give thanks to God for God's great deliverance.

[3 : 24] Psalm 40 divides easily into three parts. The first is verses 1 to 5. Which we will call Thanksgiving.

The second part. Verses 6 to 10. Obedient witness. And then the last part. 11 to 17. Confidence in trial.

As I said let's look at these with regards to David and our Saviour and ourselves. Now when is it likely that David was writing that he'd waited patiently for the Lord.

And the Lord had inclined as heard his cry. The commentators suggest the time that's described around the end of the book of 1 Samuel.

David had been pursued by Saul. His life had been at risk. The madness of King Saul against him. David had sought help among the Philistines.

[4 : 37] Well sought refuge among the Philistines. To hide himself there. And he failed being mad when he was among them. But that was a very risky place to be.

And then Saul was killed by the Philistines. David sang the lament about Saul and his best friend Jonathan.

But even with Saul gone and he got away from the Philistines. Things weren't easy. The followers of the house of Saul were still in rebellion against David.

His own tribe crowned him king. But the others they were still fighting against him. So David really he went through it. But he went through it all his life.

He never had a bed of roses. In fact the only time when he was at ease he got himself into very big trouble. With Bathsheba.

[5 : 38] But most of the time he was facing very different enemies. Whether it was Saul. Philistines. The house of Saul. Even his own family.

And this was David's testimony. David could say I waited patiently for the Lord. He inclined to me and heard my cry. In these first verses here.

These first four verses. We read first of all that God hears. Verse 2 that God saves. The second part of verse 2 that he secures.

And then verse 3 that God rejoices. Makes David rejoice. And this was David's testimony.

And this is what he sang. And this is what he told the congregation of God's people. He knew that his God was a saving God.

[6 : 43] Life was not easy. Life was hard. But he knew he had a saving God. Who had heard his prayers. Who had brought him up.

From destruction. From a place that was insecure. To one that was secure. Set his feet upon a rock.

And he gave him a song of praise to God. A song of praise to God that would result in others coming and seeing. And fear in God.

And so David could say. Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust. Who does not turn to the proud. To those who go astray after a lie.

David personally knew the blessedness of trusting in God. This he describes at the start of this psalm. And then think about our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 43] The Son of God himself. Had to wait patiently. For the Lord. The Lord his Father.

I meant to look it up. I didn't get a chance to look up. How many times in the Gospels. Particularly in John's Gospel. It says his hour had not yet come.

He had to wait for the time. That God was going to act. The time that he was going to give up.

His life for our salvation. Many times he went aside to pray. So this is true of our Saviour. He waited patiently for the Lord.

And he knew that his Father heard. He said my Father always hears. His Father heard his cry. And of course we know of our Saviour.

[8 : 47] That God drew him up from the pit of destruction. That he was buried. He died. But God brought him back.

To life again. Set my feet upon a rock. Making my steps secure. Having defeated death. Never more.

To die again. And many saw. What the Lord Jesus Christ had been through. Saw him resurrected. And put their trust in him.

And many today still. Put their trust. In the Lord Jesus Christ. I've just read. In the past week or so. Three books about the history of mission.

In Nigeria. And the mission I worked with. Sudan United Mission. Started in the north of Nigeria in 1904. There were no Christians.

[9 : 48] 1904. And now just the church alone. That's come out of that work. Has three and a half million Christians. In the north of Nigeria.

Many have seen and feared. And put their trust. In the Lord. And applying this. To a more contemporary. Looking at.

A more contemporary situation. Of someone who waited patiently for the Lord. One of those books I read. Was the biography. Of a lady called Johanna Winstra.

She was the first missionary. From the Christian Reformed Church. Of North Africa. To come and work. With the mission we worked with.

The Sudan United Mission. In the north of Nigeria. And her life. Her early life. Was indeed waiting patiently. For the Lord. She believed the Lord.

[10 : 46] Was calling her to serve him. When she was. Still a teenager. Um. Around. Uh. 1914. And she sought advice. From a minister.

And he advised her. To go to some missionary. Training institute. In New York. Which she did. Conditions were pretty spartan. For three years.

She was still waiting. For the Lord. To direct her. And at the end. She was pretty certain. God was directing her. Uh. To go. To the north of Nigeria. Which then. As I said.

Was totally. Un-evangelized. So she approached. The Sudan United Mission. Which was still. Very much. In its infancy. Um. Because this is the second decade.

Of the 20th century. And it just started. In the first decade. And when she went. She was. By then. Uh. 22. And she was told.

[11:41] Straight away. 22. No. You can go. Single. To Nigeria. You must be 25. So she had to wait. Patiently. Doing church work.

In. North America. For three years. With a Christian reformed church. Before. In 1919. She could set sail. From New York.

To London. Got to London. And she had to wait. Patiently. Some more. She was told that. This was post war. Post the first world war. First world war. And there were very few. Passages available.

And she had to wait. Some months. Waiting patiently. For the Lord. Before she could get. A ship.

To Lagos. From Lagos. She then got a steamer. Inland.

Up the Niger. To Lokojo. At the confluence. Of the. Niger. And Benway rivers. And then. And this is what amazed me. She then had a two week journey.

[12:36] By herself. With twelve Africans. No language in common. In a canoe. Up the river Benway. Being pulled.

Up the river. For two weeks. Till she met up with a missionary. At a place called Ebi. Which was the headquarters. Of the mission. From there.

She was told. Where she was to go. Seventy five miles. Trek. Further inland. I think to be with another missionary. Among a tribe of people. Who were known.

To be. Cannibals. Afterwards. She was asked. Wasn't she afraid. She said. She wasn't afraid. Of the cannibals. She was certain. That God would protect her.

But she was bothered. About the leopards. Because at that stage. There weren't a tenth. Of the people. That there are in Nigeria. Now. But there was.

[13:32] Vast more numbers. Of wild animals. And the leopards. Used to come down. At night. Into the compounds. To see. What. They could get. But. Johanna Veenstra.

That life. Just to me. Waiting patiently. For the Lord. And. She did see. Fruit. From her labor. Not many. The converts.

Were few. At first. And. I was amazed. To find. That. In the Christian. Reformed church. And. Their converts. And.

Professed faith. They waited. Two years. Teaching them. To read. And write. And catechizing them. Before they would. Baptize them. I think.

The converts. Also. Would be waiting. Patiently. For the Lord. But. From. That work. And those small beginnings. A great work.

[14:28] Developed. And eventually. Her denomination. Took. On. At work. In that part. Of Nigeria. So that was a modern story.

Of waiting patiently. For the Lord. Him inclining. And hearing a cry. And. Reading. Those missionary. Biographies.

You did read. Of people. Drawn up. From the pit of destruction. Out of the miry bog. And their feet. Being set. Upon a rock. Making their steps.

Secure. So that. God gave them a song. That. There had been. Blessings of the gospel. And people had come to faith. In Christ. So there we are.

First. Five verses. Concerning. Thanksgiving. Blessedness. Of making the Lord. Our trust. Not going. Astray.

[15:24] Turning to the proud. Not following. Not following. Human ways. Not going astray. After a lie. For there are many. Lies. And deceitful things.

In the world. Around us. Thanksgiving. That God. Has been. At work. Wondrous deeds. And thoughts. Towards us.

Who can compare. With you. Oh Lord. I will proclaim. And tell of them. There are more. Than can be told. Do we.

So give thanks. To God. That those. Around us. Know. That we are. Thankful. Christians. Now the second part.

Of our psalm. From verse. Six. Onwards. Talks about. Obedient. Witness. In sacrifice. And offering.

[16:21] You have not desired. But you have given me. An open ear. Burnt offering. And sin offering. You have not required. Then I said. I have come. In the scroll. Of the book.

It is written of me. Now before we look. And see how that's. Directly applied. To our Lord. Jesus Christ. By the writer. To the book of Hebrews.

The prophet. Micah. Micah. Also. Says something. Very similar. In Micah. Chapter six. And verse six. Micah says.

With what shall I come. Before the Lord. And bow myself. Before God on high. Shall I come before him.

With burnt offerings. With calves. A year old. Will the Lord be pleased. With thousands of rams. With tens of. Thousands of rivers of oil.

[17:17] Shall I give my firstborn. For my transgression. The fruit of my body. For the sin of my soul. He has told you. Oh man. What is good. And what does the Lord.

Require of you. But to do justice. And to love kindness. And to walk humbly. With your God. Micah realized.

That what God. Really required. Was not a multitude. Of sacrifices. But obedience. To God's word. And so.

Similarly. We read. The writer to the book of Hebrews. Hebrews. Chapter 10. Hebrews 10.

Speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ. And says. From 10. 4. It is impossible. For the blood of bulls and goats. To take away sins. Consequently.

[18:16] When Christ came into the world. He said. Sacrifices and offerings. You have not desired. But a body. Have you prepared. For me.

In burnt offerings. And sin offerings. You have taken no pleasure. Then I said. Behold. I have come to do your will. Oh God. As it is written of me.

In the scroll of the book. When he said above. You have neither desired. Nor taken pleasure. In sacrifices. And offerings. And burnt offerings. And sin offerings. These are offered according to the law.

Then he added. Behold. I have come to do your will. He does away with the first. In order to establish the second. And by that will. We have been sanctified.

Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. Once for all. Every priest stands daily at his service. Offering repeatedly. The same sacrifices.

[19:13] Which can never take away sins. But when Christ has offered for all time. A single sacrifice for sins. He sat down at the right hand of God.

Waiting from that time. Until his enemies. Should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering. He has perfected for all time. Those who are being sanctified.

God gave Moses. All manner of instructions. About sacrifices. Burnt offerings.

And sin offerings. But. The writer to the Hebrews tells us. These can never take away sin. They pointed to one offering.

That of the Lord Jesus Christ. Himself. Jesus came with an open ear. An ear to be obedient. To God's will.

[20:10] To do God's will. To do God's will. And this is what Jesus did. We couldn't obey God's law. We stood condemned by it. For we have broken God's law. In so many ways.

But when Jesus came. He said that he had come. To delight. In doing God's will. With God's law. Within his heart. We know. That this. Can't primarily apply. To David. David. David delighted. To do God's will.

But. He fell. So far short. An adulterer. And a murderer. And a murderer. At times. A very unwise king.

In the way he dealt. With his family. It isn't David. Primarily in view here. It is our savior. The Lord Jesus Christ.

[21:05] Because he has come. And he has obeyed. On our behalf. He has produced. A perfect obedience. Perfectly obeying God's law.

He delighted. To do God's will. Verse 8. I delight. To do your will. Oh my God. Your law. Is within. My. Heart.

Where was the law originally? It was written on tablets of stone Jeremiah talked about a new covenant When the law would be written on the heart Jesus brought that new covenant The law was written on his heart And so from his heart he obeyed We fail in our obedience Jesus

succeeded We are all sons and daughters of Adam Who being commanded by God did not keep God's command But disobeyed God's law Jesus is the second Adam Who perfectly on our behalf fulfills God's law His law is written within his heart Jesus is the great saviour He is the one who takes our sin and gives us his righteousness His righteousness from perfectly obeying God's law Jesus took our sins in his body Up to and onto the tree of Calvary He gives us his righteousness The righteousness of the perfect law keeper This psalm speaks to us directly of the Lord Jesus Christ And his keeping God's law for us And so there is a telling The glad news of the glad news of deliverance He told something of God's people As they met together As they met together Of course there wasn't any temple then There was a meeting at the tabernacle David praised God Praise God We thank God for all these praises that David produced Because they have been recorded for us And we can use them to praise God today David says he hadn't hidden God's deliverance within his heart

He'd spoken of God's faithfulness and God's salvation I have not concealed your steadfast love And your faithfulness from the great congregation Have you concealed God's salvation?

[23 : 51] Have you hidden God's salvation? Or have you shared it? Have you shared it with those around you? The loss of healing and of your family?

Well finally And our third section Is from verse 11 to the end And I've called this Confidence in trial Confidence in trial David is still not free of a difficult situation But he is confident of God's salvation His argument as ever is God has saved me in the past And rejoicing in that salvation I can be confident Of his salvation In the future As for you oh Lord The words are in capitals It's the covenant God The God of steadfast love and faithfulness You will not restrain your mercy from me Your steadfast love and your faithfulness Will ever preserve me Steadfast love and faithfulness These two will ever be with us

Because the covenant God is with us He is our God Steadfast love and faithfulness Will follow us All the days of our lives And we will dwell In the house of the Lord Forever But The situation was not a rosy one Around him What does David tell us?

Evils have encompassed me beyond number My iniquities have overtaken me I cannot see They are more than the hairs of my head My heart fails me Be pleased oh Lord To deliver me Oh Lord Make haste To help me He felt his own Sins were overcoming him And he had enemies Encompassing Of course Our Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ If he was burdened by sins They were not his own He was bearing our sins But we know there were those around him Who mocked him Even as he bore our sins And suffered On the cross So David calls out For deliverance As the Lord Jesus Christ Called out To his father For deliverance Be pleased oh Lord To deliver me Oh Lord Make haste To help me Now you know What did we start with?

I waited patiently For the Lord And here Oh Lord Make haste To help me Of course We want God's salvation To come quickly But sometimes He says Wait Patiently Now time Is The one dimension In life That is beyond Our Control It is the dimension In life That is totally 100% Under the control Of the sovereign God So we must often Wait patiently Though we cry out Oh Lord Make haste To help me And then David says Lord don't let me Let the side down Let not those Be put to shame And disappointed Altogether Who seek Sorry Let those Be put to shame

[27 : 24] And disappointed Altogether Who seek To snatch Away my life He prays That These enemies Of God's purposes God's covenant Should be Frustrated Let those Be turned back And brought to dishonour Who delight In my hurt Let those Be appalled Because of their shame Who say to me Aha Aha But here is the contrast Those who are seeking The Lord May all who seek The Lord Rejoice And be glad In him May those Who love your salvation Say continually Great is the Lord We often hear These reports Of the Islamists Shouting out That God is great And they do Their dastardly deeds Perhaps we should be Doing some shouting About great Is the Lord Jesus Christ Great is the Lord We should be Praising Our Saviour

Day by day David's under No illusions As to his Own situation He's poor And needy He may be Exalted to a throne But really Before God He's poor And needy But his comfort Is the Lord Takes thought For me So tonight If you're feeling Poor and needy Know that the Lord Takes thought For you Your God Is the covenant God The one with Steadfast love And faithfulness Who will ever Preserve you Be comforted That tonight The Lord The sovereign God The maker of heaven And earth He is your help And your deliverer And our prayer Is that he Should not delay In showing to us His salvation It's interesting This psalm Has come round Now Full circle Started off I waited Patiently for the Lord He inclined to me

And heard my cry And drew me up From the pit Of destruction And where Is he at the end Poor and needy But now he knows That God Takes thought For him That God Is his help He is his deliverer And he can pray That God Should not Delay We need to be Patient people But we need To be people Who are instant And persevering In prayer But confident People Like the psalmist Here That our God Is the God Of steadfast love And faithfulness And rejoicing People We don't have To offer Sacrifices And All this Has been Dealt with By the Lord Jesus Christ Who has Obeyed In our place He is the one Who has come And done God's will He has laid down His life For us He is our Great And mighty Saviour So David Knew something Of God's salvation And praised God For it Don't we have More A clearer view Of God's salvation In our Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ So If David Prays How much More Should we Be praising Our God Tonight Amen To be