

Psalm 40, A Bible Study Outline

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1. Introduction
 - a. "To the Chief Musician", intended to be sung in the congregation
 - b. "A Psalm of David", human authorship of the Psalm
 - c. Its topic and matter, faith persevering in trial (Cf. Job 5:7)
 - d. Its Messianic tone, Cf. 40:6-8; Hebrews 10:5-10
 - e. Its example for prayer, magnifies God throughout, emphasizing confidence and submission to the divine will
2. 40:1-3
 - a. Verse 1, man's part, waiting for God
 - b. God's part, answering prayer, let's trust that He will!
 - c. Profiting (spiritually) from and through trials, James 1:2-8
 - d. Verses 2-3, a picture of salvation, the basis for our communion with God
 - i. Depravity of the natural state, Cf. Isaiah 64:6
 - ii. Spiritual foundation, Cf. Isaiah 28:16; Matthew 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 3:11
 - iii. "established my steps", beginning with justification, and continuing with progressive sanctification (John 17:17; Hebrews 2:11)
 - iv. The former being dispatched, proper worship is now possible, and God's power works in us a both verbal and life testimony to the watching world
3. 40:4-5
 - a. Verse 4, faith, single-mindedness towards God
 - b. Avoid putting faith in proud people, and idolatrous temptations
 - c. Verse 5, part of prayer is praise, and it is too often neglected
 - d. Answered prayer is cause for praise, itself a work of God
 - e. Exercising spiritual discipline in prayer increases our faith and trust in God, and we will have that reservoir at all times if we do the work to fill it
4. 40:6-8
 - a. Quoted and expounded in Hebrews 10:5-10, when we have NT commentary on the OT, we always do well to refer to it

- b. Messianic thrust, note this is applied to God the Son, proving plurality in the Godhead, consisting of three distinct Persons, and refuting Modalism
 - c. Verse 8, Christ perfectly exemplified in His Incarnation
5. 40:9-10
- a. These verses are true of David, even in the writing of the Psalms and their issuance for public worship “To the Chief Musician.” Praises are never meant to be kept to oneself, hence a purpose of the church, mutual edification.
 - b. Apply: There are always unbelievers present in God’s church, and they expect God’s gospel to be proclaimed
 - c. These verses perfectly true of Christ Jesus, and can also be read as a continuation of the prior three verses as that which is from the Savior’s lips
 - d. Talk the talk, God’s Word, which is necessary (Romans 10:17), but proclaim and declare with your life also (2 Corinthians 3:2-3 applied)
6. 40:11-12
- a. Having known God’s grace (verses 2-3), let us beseech His “mercies” also.
 - b. God’s preserving work with regard to the saints, based upon His “lovingkindness” (His gospel which keeps, Nehemiah 9:17; John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8) and “truth” (leading unto progressive sanctification, John 17:17), 1 Peter 1:5 is the capstone verse re: this point.
 - c. “evils” without (resulting from the sin-marred creation) and “iniquities” within us (personal/our own sin), threaten to rob us of communion with God, and distract our attention; These can be minimized and/or overcome, only with God’s help.
 - d. “my heart fails me”, Cf. 2 Corinthians 7:10a
7. 40:13-15
- a. When we seek deliverance, is prayer your first and only resort?
 - b. Confounding of the wicked, those who act malevolently toward us w/o cause
 - i. Consider: Is that truly your case, or do you have a victim mentality?
 - ii. Consider further: Have your actions contributed to the circumstance and response of others, intended or not? It may be

that your adversary is praying the same thing regarding you, and his cause is more righteous than yours.

- c. "Aha, aha!" is the mocking of others, something which ought not be names among the saints (1 Peter 2:17a).
8. 40:16-17
- a. The blessings of communion with God, for seekers and professing Christians, are conditioned upon obedience (1 Peter 2:17b).
 - b. "continually", continued boldness and perseverance in Christian faith is rewarded
 - c. "poor and needy" is an honest assessment of the spiritual condition of every man
 - i. For the unbeliever, in need of God's mercy and salvation
 - ii. For the believer, in need of ongoing repentance of sin and the keeping of short accounts before God, Matthew 5:3
 - d. "Yet" God is mindful, Psalm 8:4
 - e. He "thinks upon me", God has not forgotten you, and He thinks upon us in the present tense. What does He think? Jeremiah 29:11-13.
 - f. Divine delays designed to stretch our faith and teach us the virtue of patience
 - g. Close with verse 1 and 17. Consider what is man's part and what is God's part, and make the distinction between the two. Consider verses 2-16 as an exposition of this theme.