

## HIS SACRIFICE AND SERVICE (Ps. 40)

Ps. 40:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. 4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. 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. 6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. 9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. 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. 11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me. 12 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. 13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me. 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. 15 Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha. 16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified. 17 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.

This is a psalm which initially plumbs the depths of despair. It can be divided into three simple sections ...

- |                                   |                                |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. David's Deliverance<br>(v.1-5) | 2. David's Delight<br>(v.6-10) | 3. David's Defender<br>(v.11-17) |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|

In the first section, David had many dark experiences to which the opening five verses could relate, for example, he had been hounded by King Saul, his son Absalom had rebelled against him, and the consequences of his adultery with Bathsheba was as a deep pit. On each occasion, though, the Lord lifted him out, set his feet, - as it were, - upon a rock, and restored to him songs of praise.

We shall come to the second section in a moment, but in the third section (v. 11-17), David is praying for the Lord to keep his faith from failing, 11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me. 12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about. He could so easily have been 'dragged' down by these '*innumerable evils*', 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 ... and he confesses his sin, before crying out to God once more, 13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me. ... And in the hope of his salvation, - and his enemies routed (v.14,15), - he gives thanks to God in anticipation, 16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified. 17 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.

The second section is about David's delight ... and v.6-8) are quoted in Heb. 10:5-7,

**Ps. 40:6** Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. **7** Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, **8** I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. **9** I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. **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.

**Heb. 10:5** Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: **6** In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. **7** Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

The quote in Heb. 10:5 (a body hast thou prepared me) is taken from the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. It is not a correction or an alteration of Ps. 40:6 (mine ears hast thou opened) but it is the prophetic clarification referring the Old Testament verse to the Messiah, and note Heb. 10:15, Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us.

To explain ... **Ps. 40:6** Sacrifice and [*meal/grain*] offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. ... The statement referring to, mine ears hast thou opened relates to two Old Testament passages, **Ex. 21:2** If thou buy an Hebrew servant [*male*], six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. **3** If he came in by himself [*lit., 'with his body'*], he shall go out by himself: if he were married [*previously*], then his wife shall go out with him. **4** If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. **5** And if the servant shall plainly say [*if he makes a firm declaration*], I love my master, my wife, and my children [*notice the priority*]; I will not go out free: **6** Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever ... [*also Dt. 15:12-18*].

Excruciating, **Ex. 21:6** his master shall bore [*ratsa, pierce*] his ear through with an aul ... **Dt. 15:17** Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. ... The word in Ps. 40:6 is *karah*, mine ears hast thou opened ... it is translated 'dugged' eleven times in the Old Testament, 'opened' once, and once it is translated 'pierced'. This 'piercing' was a public sign of voluntary slavery. It occurred

at the gate, in full view of all the citizens of the city. In front of the elders and officials, the servant who desired to serve his master for the rest of his life waived the opportunity to be free, and he was brought to a door post where his master would place his ear up against the wood and use an implement with a sharp point to *pierce* the servant's ear. This was a sign of perpetual servitude.

Here is how it worked ... The first six years of the man's slavery was to pay off the debt he owed, and for those six years he had no choice but to serve his master. In the seventh year, though, he could go free, for he had served his time. However, during those six years, if he had married a wife and had children, he would have had to leave them with his master, for they were his master's property since the servant acquired them through his six years of servitude. ... He had an option though. If he wanted to remain with his wife and children, He would have to make the conscious decision to surrender his freedom for the sake of his loved ones, and to allow his blood to be sprinkled on the doorpost. ... Remember how the blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the doorposts of the Hebrews in Egypt.

In Hebrews 10:5 this practice was referred to the Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, - that's His incarnation, and instead of translating word-for-word mine ears hast thou opened* from Ps. 40:6, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the writer adapts it to read, *a body hast thou prepared me*. ... How is the change justified?

When Jesus came to earth as a baby in the manger, He came to do His Father's will. He entered *the body prepared for Him*, thus 'surrendering' Himself, **Phil. 2:8** ... *as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He came to do the will of His Father, Jn. 5:30 I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me*. ... So, Ps. 40:6 is prophesying His incarnation, and His becoming the servant when He 'put His ear to the doorpost and allowed His Father to pierce it with an aul'.

And said the psalmist in prophetic anticipation of the Saviour, **Ps. 40:7** *Lo, I come ... 8 I delight to do thy will, O my God* ... His incarnation, and His submission, as He explained to His disciples, **Jn. 4:34** *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work* ... and in obedience to His Father, **Is. 22:42** *not my will, but thine, be done*. ... And when the servant in Psalm 40 is pierced to demonstrate his submission, the master receives the whole body as a living sacrifice, **Heb. 10:5** *a body hast thou prepared me* ... In other words, when applied to Jesus, He gave Himself in perfect submission to His Father that we would be saved, - that is what He was prepared in Glory to achieve. ...

Finally, in Ps. 40:9-10 is the proclamation of the Gospel, <sup>9</sup> *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest*. ... The

testimony of the Saviour, - here is His message ... <sup>10</sup> 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. ... righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, loving-kindness, and truth ... That's the Gospel message!

That was why He came ... His birth, His ministry, His sacrificial death is prophesied in these verses of Ps. 40:6-10 and confirmed in their Messianic fulfilment in Hebrews 10:5-9, thus enabling the conclusion, <sup>9</sup> He taketh away the first [*the Old Testament offerings*], that he may establish the second [*the Lord Jesus Christ*].