

Helper and Deliverer

Psalm 40

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Good morning! If you are new here, my name is Dan Burleson.

I am one of the Associate Pastors here at Cornerstone.

And we always tell our guests three things. First, we are really grateful that you are with us. You are God's gift to us in this time we that we have together. So thank you again for worshipping with us

Second, you are in a place where the ground is level. Which means no one is any higher, better or more significant than anyone else. The ground at the foot of the cross is level ground and we are sinners who need a Savior and Jesus is that Savior. And while your salvation is a personal matter, God never designed for it to be a private matter. He wants us to live as brothers and sisters in the family of God.

Which leads to the Third, thing we need to tell you... we love you enough to speak the truth to you. That's truth with a capital "T". The truth from God's Word. The truth about Jesus. His Person. His Works. And His Words. How He can transform your life from the inside out. He is the Cornerstone of our faith.

I. Introduction:

We just sang "I will Wait for You." What a hard song to sing. I will wait for You, I will wait for You, through the storm and through the night. I will wait for You, surely wait for You, for Your Word is my delight." Is that your prayer? Is that the song that is in your heart? I hope so. I pray that today you would delight as we look at God's Word.

This morning we are going to be looking at *Psalm 40*. So if you are not there already please open your Bible or app to Psalm 40. This is a Psalm written by King David. David is the author of 75 of the 150 Psalms. He has been called a shepherd king and a warrior poet. 2 Samuel 23:1 calls him “the sweet psalmist of Israel”. Even though David was a man after God’s own heart, his life was filled with many trials and troubles. David writes Psalm 40 when he is going through one of those difficult times. David remembers God’s help and deliverance in the past and calls on the Lord to deliver him once again from his troubles.

II. David’s Praise vs 1-10

As we look at verses 1-10, we see David praise for delivering him out of a past situation.

Let’s look at verse 1....David says, *“I waited patiently for the Lord”*. Another way to say this is “waiting, I waited”. David waited and waited and waited. That’s patience. We live in a world where we do a lot of waiting. We wait in lines at the grocery store, amusement parks, the DMV and many other places. We wait for that man or woman to back out so we could have the perfect parking spot. We wait in traffic. We wait for our clothes to dry. We wait for dinner to get done. We wait for the sequel to our favorite movie. We wait to see if we passed a test. We wait for results from medical tests. We wait to get married. We wait for our children to be born. We wait and wait and wait for so many things. We don’t like to wait. We will pay extra to get on the plane so we don’t have to be in the last group to board. We drive with a friend or pay a toll so we could use the carpool lane or drive on toll roads to avoid waiting in heavy traffic. We will pay extra at an amusement park so we don’t have to wait in long lines. We don’t like to wait.

Sometimes we can do things to avoid waiting, but there are many circumstances in life that we can't control. In those times we must patiently wait on God. In Psalm 13, David prays, *"How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You Hid your face from me?"* Waiting is something that David experienced often.

David patiently waited for God and then after a long wait (look at the second part of verse 1)...God "inclined to me and heard my cry". In this past time of difficulty, David is praising God. He is remembering when He waited. He is remembering when God heard his cry. God does hear and answer our prayers. Sometimes it is immediate and sometimes it is delayed. Sometimes it is as we hope it would go and sometimes it is in some other way. God will cause all things to work together for our good. We may not understand the answer, but we must trust God in those situations. Look back at David's praise.

David praised God for two things. First, He praised God for **what God has done**. Look at verse 2...*"He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay..."* The situation is one where David is not able to get out on his own. He is trapped. It's a dark pit. He is all alone. He can't get out because of the mud and mire. We don't know what the pit was for David. The Bible doesn't tell us. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt that you were alone in a pit?

I asked some Facebook friends the following questions: "What do you think are some of the most difficult times in life? Difficult times that are excruciating circumstances and extremely painful? It feels like you have fallen into a deep pit and can't get out....like you have hit bottom and there seems to be no hope. It doesn't have to be from your own personal life, but it can be." Here are some of their replies....

- I'd say anytime you pin your future on something (a relationship, job, etc.) that doesn't turn out as you envisioned, especially if you lose it altogether and have to start over.
- I've always said postpartum depression wasn't hell, but I could see it from there. Also, this week waiting for my mom to pass while she's in hospice care. Agonizing.
- I would say addiction. When I gave up on everyone around me and the only thing I cared about was getting my next high. Dereliction. Desperation. Addiction. Praying to God, please, please just one more time so I'm not sick, but 1 is too many and 1000 is never enough!
- Losing a child, no matter how old — I had 2 second trimester miscarriages. Also, when my 4th child was born, we assumed he was going to be normal like our other 3 kids. All the sonograms were normal. I was completely shocked and devastated when my son born with a rare genetic disorder that included intellectual and developmental disabilities and a life-threatening medical issue. It was all very scary and exhausting.
- Depression, Death, Consequences of sin, Loneliness
- Tragic unexpected deaths, being abandoned by others when you're trying to survive abuse or neglect, people not believing you or being in your corner when you're a truthful, loyal person
- Death of a parent especially when you are very close. Being a caregiver for a short-time or even longer is hard to stay positive and be encouraged. Then, to have it lead to death.
- The trials & aftermath of combat. Depression, survivors guilt, suicide, loss of life (enemy and friendly casualties).

- Living through any form of abuse: physical, mental, emotional, sexual.
- Unwanted divorce
- Car accident resulting in lost limbs and a disfigured face and body.
- For me it was many affairs of my husband, then the divorce with two boys to raise & no Income.
- Death of my 2 precious wives
- Losing a loved one. But more excruciating, losing a loved one's love.
- For me not being able to surrender to God 100%. Allowing this secular world get the best of me at times.
- I had my stroke in December 2017. For the first time as an adult I found out what loneliness was like. No one in my family really understood what I was going through. We moved three hours northeast of Charleston. I didn't know anyone, we weren't in a church, I couldn't drive, I became very depressed. My family moved around me like I wasn't there. They packed the house without my opinion. Once here they would go places like the grocery store, without me. I would loved to have gone just to get out of the apartment.

A. What God has Done vs 1-5

Maybe you feel like you are alone in the pit this morning. You have been waiting for God to help and deliver you from that pit. Here is how God intervened in David's situation. Look at the verse 2 and 3 to see what God has done. David notes three things. *"He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God;"*

He did it! He heard me! He rescued me! He brought me up out of that hopeless pit. He put a new song in my mouth! David is praising God. David sees

an opportunity. It's an opportunity to tell everyone what the Lord had done for him. Look at the end of verse 3...*"Many will see and fear and will trust in the Lord."* David will tell his story about God's deliverance. What an opportunity to point people to God. David knows in verse 4...*"How blessed is the man who has made the Lord his trust, and has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood."* David wants people not to depend on human strength or idolatry. He wants them to trust in the Lord. Then David remembers more of what God has done in verse 5...*"Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count."* Look at what God has done! Praise God for what He has done! God has intervened in David's life many times. The Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 8:28 *"that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."* David had experienced a past trial. He needed a helper and deliverer. David trusted in God even though he had to wait.

B. What God Desires vs 6-10

David was praising God for what God has done in a past situation, but David also praises God for what God desires.

1. What God does not desire vs 6a

Look at verse 6...*"Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required."*

Notice....God opened David's ears. God had made David aware....Aware that God does not desire mere sacrifice. This was not lessening God's commandments to bring burnt offerings and sin sacrifices to God.

2. What God Desires vs 6b-10

David is emphasizing the importance of having the right heart and attitude. It is a heart that is eager and willing to do what God commands. It is a heart of obedience. In 1 Samuel 15:22 *“Samuel said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.”* God desires an obedient heart over sacrifices.

In verses 7 and 8, David continued, *“Then I said, “Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.”*” Steve Lawson says of verse 7 and 8 that David “remembered his commitment to the Lord, probably at the time of his enthronement, a dedication to keep God’s commands. The scroll was probably David’s personal copy of God’s law, the copy which a king received at his coronation that served as his divine charter for governing the land.” In these verses, David is submitting himself completely to do whatever God may require. David, the Lord’s anointed, presents himself as an offering to the Lord. In Romans 12:1-2 the Apostle Paul tells us, *“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”* “David wants to do God’s will. God wants David to obey His law and tell others about His goodness.

Side note and a totally different sermon.....Psalm 40:6-8 is quoted by the writer of Hebrews in 10:5-7. In that passage, it appears that God the Son (Jesus Christ) is speaking to God the Father and is submitting to the Father’s will. Steve

Lawson says, "He is agreeing to enter the earth and die as a sacrifice for many."
"Behold, I have come" "connotes the idea of a submissive willingness on the part of the Son to the Father's will which is to enter the world in a human body and act as a sin-bearer on behalf of all who would believe."

Back to David...Look at verse 9 and 10..."*I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation; Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O Lord, You know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation.*" What an amazing response to God's deliverance. He wants to tell the great congregation of what God has done. David can't keep silent. He has to speak of God's righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, lovingkindness and God's truth. Notice the words at the end of verse 9..."O Lord, You know" God knows David's heart. He knows that David's praise is sincere. David gave praise to God, publicly proclaiming His righteousness and faithfulness to others.

III. David's Plea for Deliverance vs 11-17

David remembered God's help and deliverance in the past. We now see David call on the Lord to deliver him from a present problem. In verses 11-17 we see David's plea for Deliverance. He is asking God to deliver him from two things. From his troubles (vs 11-12) and From his enemies (vs 13-17).

A. David's troubles vs 11-12

Look at verse 11. David prays, based on his past experience, for God's compassion, His lovingkindness, and His truth to continually preserve him. He says, "*You, O Lord, will not withhold Your compassion from me; Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.*" David just got done

in verse 10 remembering the times he told “the great congregation about God’s righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, lovingkindness and God’s truth during a past experience. Now he is praying for those things to continue to preserve him in this new difficult circumstance.

Now here is the present trouble in verse 12...*“For evils beyond number have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; They are more numerous than the hairs of my head, And my heart has failed me.”*

He is back in the pit. And he is praying. He needs help. He needs deliverance.

This time David gives us a hint that his problems are of his own making. He mentions his “iniquities” have overtaken him. Evils beyond number have surrounded him. He is not able to see. They are more numerous than the hairs of his head. His heart has failed him. He has lost perspective. So what does he do? He prays.

B. David’s Prayer

++The prayer he prays is repeated in Psalm 70.

He prays in verses 13-17....

“Be pleased, Lord, to deliver me: Make haste, O Lord, to help me. Let those be ashamed and humiliated together who seek my life to destroy it; Let those be turned back and dishonored who delight in my hurt. Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, ,”Aha, aha!” Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let those who love Your salvation say continually, “The Lord be magnified!” Since I am afflicted and needy, Let the Lord be mindful of me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.”

He still doesn’t like to wait. He says, “make haste” in verse 13 and “do not delay” in verse 17. But he will wait on the Lord. Notice the words “be pleased” in

verse 13. David knows that God could deliver him. But He is affirming that it must be God's will and God's act of deliverance. David might have been tempted to take things into his own hands and do things in his own wisdom and strength.

Notice his prayer for two groups of people. First are those who are seek his life to destroy it. David's enemies like to take potshots at God's people. "They want to destroy David and God's people. David wants more than anything for his enemies to turn to the Lord. David knows that God is able to deliver Him. God is able to change the hearts of his enemies. He knows that God will judge his enemies.

The second group of people in David's prayer are those who seek the Lord. David wants those who seek the Lord to continue to praise the Lord. He wants them to be glad in Him. He recognizes his condition: afflicted and needy. In his helpless state, he knows that God is his helper and deliverer. He continued to trust in the Lord.

IV. Application:

What about us? What about me?

What do I do if I find myself in "the pit"?

1. Remember what God has done--

- A. He lifted David out of despair,
- B. He set David's feet on solid ground, and
- C. He puts a new song in David's mouth

What has God done?

- Read God's Word to find out about Who God is and What He has done through history

- If you are a believer this morning and find yourself in the pit, praise God for your salvation. Remember what **James 1:2–4** says, *“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*
- J.C. Ryle said, “Your trials, crosses, and conflicts are all temporary.” Rejoice in that.

2. Remember what God desires of you

A. Trust Him--I love Proverbs 3:5–6 *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight”*. It’s so easy to lean on our own understanding when things get tough. The Bible says, “Trust God. Acknowledge God”.

B. Obey Him--What a testimony to others. They are watching. Are you obeying God during the hard troubles that you face? Are you trusting God no matter how hard things get? Many of us here today (including me) have prostate cancer. When I found out that I had prostate cancer, I remembered a little book that I read once called “Don’t Waste Your Cancer”. It reminded me of all of the opportunities that I now have that I would have never had before. Opportunities to minister to people I would never have ever had the opportunity before. It’s an opportunity to point people to God, our helper and deliverer.

3. Remember to patiently pray

- Wait while you are waiting on God

- Remember Isaiah 40:31 *“Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.”* And while you are waiting remember to do what 1 Peter 5:7 tells us to do...“cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”
- Pray Scripture. Pray Psalms. Meditate on God’s Word. Keep your focus on the Helper and Deliverer.
- Earlier we sang He will Hold Me Fast. That song reminds us that during seasons of doubt and question, As we hold onto God, He holds onto us. Trust that Christ will hold you to the end while we wait for God’s Deliverance through the storms and through the night.
- In a minute Jesse is going to lead us in the song “The Lord is My Salvation”. Think about the words to that song, “In times of waiting, times of need, when I know I am weak, I know His grace will renew these days. The Lord is my salvation.”

Let’s Pray.