

Psalm 40

Part 1

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[00:00:01] I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry.

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.

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.

Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us warred. O Lord, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. [00:01:01] Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire.

Mine ears hast thou opened, burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart.

I have preached righteousness in the great congregation. Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord thou knowest. 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. Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord. Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me, for innumerable evils have come past me about.

Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me so that I am not able to look up. [00:02:04] They are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me.

O Lord, make haste to help me.

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. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, Aha. Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee.

Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified. But I am poor and needy, yet

the Lord thinketh upon me.

Thou art my help and my deliverer.

Make not tarrying, O my God.

[00:03:01] Our subject in the meetings that we have held during this week has been Christ in the first book of Psalms.

And I wish to go over a few salient points.

I hope I shall be forgiven for this. It is partly for the benefit of those who haven't been able to be with us during the week, and it's partly to remind those who have.

We began by inquiring of our own hearts and experiences wherein we really have found help in the book of Psalms.

And it seems almost certain that by conversation with many persons about their experience of the book of Psalms that they have found a great deal of help from it. A very famous book written by a man called Prothero [00:04:02] was entitled The Psalms in Human Experience.

And he tells a long, long and interesting story of how from the time the Psalms were written, and especially in the Christian ages, there have been a help to many. However, it is very important that we should distinguish those matters in which God intends them to be a help to us Christians, and we must discriminate against those things wherein they have been wrongly used in the history of Christendom.

Now I'm sure that almost all of us, if we inquire wherein we have received real help from the Psalms, most of us would say first that we had received comfort in sorrow and affliction.

And without question, the predominant character of the Psalms is a people in terrible distress and affliction [00:05:04] calling upon the Lord and finding that he does indeed come in in their affliction and give them comfort and strength.

We have in the very end of the Psalm, after he's saying innumerable evils have come past me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me so that I'm not able to look up. In the end he's able to say, and evidently it's an experience that enables him to say, let those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee.

Let such as love thy salvation say, the Lord be magnified. But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord sinketh upon me.

Now what saint is there in any age that hasn't frequently felt like saying, I am poor and needy.

[00:06:01] In fact, the day we stop saying, I am poor and needy, will be a bad day for us.

But as long as we say, and we do say, I am poor and needy, then we can say, the Lord sinketh upon me. What more wonderful comfort could we have than saying, the Lord sinketh upon me, for thou art

my help and my deliverer. Make no tarrying, O my God.

When we come to speak more particularly of Psalm 40, I'm going to suggest to you as a suggestion regarding the understanding of the true intent of the book, that as they apply to the remnant of Israel of the future, happily, we spend a little time this afternoon upon this, so we have a start to understand it, then we'll find that this first book of Psalms leaves the believing Jews of the future, in just this situation, they are waiting upon the Lord.

[00:07:03] But they're engaged in a positively active exercise of this expectation, because they're assured in this Psalm that the Lord comes up with blessing for those who wait for him. One of the most striking passages to my own heart, time and time again, is in Isaiah 25.

When God has come in for the destruction of the enemies of his people, for the putting to flight of their afflictions, and for their new life and comfort, this is what they say, this is our God, and we have waited for him.

Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation, and it will be found for all the saints of God that it's been worthwhile to wait for him.

In many ways, therefore, we have had experience of comfort from the Psalms.

[00:08:03] Then, many of us would say also that we have had very valuable guides to godliness in the Psalms, and they are indeed as much a textbook of godliness for the saint of God in every age, as, for example, the books that deal with godliness in the New Testament, such as the Epistles of Timothy. But, I would select a verse which was previously mentioned as the outstanding, unoutstanding specimen.

Once again, everyone here would quote a different verse, and it's an evidence of the abounding wealth that the Psalms speak of. And indeed, the Psalms do speak of that abounding quality that's in God, the multitude of thy tender mercies, thy plenteous redemption, [00:09:01] there's limitless wealth of these qualities in God.

Well, we have found such a wealth that many of us would have different verses that we would quote. It's those that are ministered to us, the guides in godliness that the Psalms can give. I think of the verse in Psalm 37, verse 5.

Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

You see, there's definite action there. When you're in trouble, and you can do something definite, and in that doing something definite, you can be obeying the word of God, there's tremendous comfort in doing something definite about it, and then leading with the Lord. Commit thy way unto the Lord. That's rather like the New Testament idea of rolling it all off unto God, in explicit prayer, setting out to him the difficulties that we have in the way.

[00:10:04] Commit thy way unto the Lord. But that's not the whole story. Trust also in him.

It's no good rolling the burden onto God and then carrying it away again. We are invited to roll it off unto the Lord.

And then trust also in him, and then the promise, he shall bring it to pass.

For a young couple contemplating marriage, for a young couple awaiting their first baby, there are all kinds of things. There's no doubt about, in particular cases, what that it may be.

There may be some particular thing regarding your life, and there's no doubt about what the it is. But there are some concepts that spread themselves over the life of the saint of God altogether. And I suggest that the greatest one is that the it, in that verse, is our highest good, [00:11:03] and therefore his greatest glory.

If we commit our way to him, and then trust in him, he will bring that to pass, which is for our highest good.

And the philosophers, the earth's mightiest thinkers back to the beginning, have racked their brains to find out what is the highest human good. God knows. No one else knows.

We have no good outside of God. He will bring it to pass.

The central part of our theme, of course, has been to find in the Psalms that which will feed our souls upon the person of the Christ, enfolding every grace, once slain, but now alive again in heaven, demanding our praise.

And that, I won't dwell upon that at this moment, for we shall be going over very briefly a few points from the Psalms that we've dealt with. [00:12:01] But, of course, there is another very important point, and that is that the Psalms have a help for us in an activity, an occupation, a privilege, which is not by any means easy to describe, but I would like to call it perhaps our meditations, our actual seeking of the presence of the Lord.

Many believers have called it our devotions.

We get devotional help from the Psalms, and there are indeed many, many lovely sentences and texts and verses from the Psalms, which have throughout the ages been the greatest possible stimulus to the people of God in their seeking the secret place of communion with the Lord and drinking in his perfections and his Spirit.

In Psalm 27, verse 4, one thing have I desired of the Lord, and that when I seek after, [00:13:09] that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

Now that is a description of this activity that I've had difficulty in describing, to behold the beauty of the Lord.

It is in beholding the glory of the Lord that we are changed to become like him. And here is something which requires our retreat as often as we can into the most secret place and sit like Mary at his feet, and there we can do this one thing, you know, the one thing that is needful and will never be taken away by the Lord, and that is to behold the beauty of the Lord.

Beauty is that combination of qualities that delights the senses if it's a physical matter, [00:14:03] but

delights the heart and mind and spirit if it's spiritual things. And to behold the beauty of the Lord, to admire, to contemplate the beauty of the Lord, is that of all things which will be food convenient for the Christian heart and spirit and will make us become more like him.

But we have to say, and it's by no means an unimportant part of our studying the Psalms, but we have to say that many Christians have found something else in the Psalms. They have found the Psalms to be the essence of Christian worship.

Now there are many very appealing things about this, and even in this, you see, it's difficult to separate entirely from the idea of receiving comfort from the Word of God and receiving strength from the Word of God and guidance and the help in godliness. [00:15:05] It's difficult to separate. But one thing is quite certain, and that is that throughout Christendom, it has been assumed that the Psalms are themselves the essence of Christian worship. Now I'll read again what I've written down in my manuscript book about the monks, because this perhaps is the best indication of the kind of thing that the most earnest of those who have professed the faith of Christ have done about them.

The earliest monks were moved by the Psalms to long for a life of meditation.

Only later did idleness on the bad side and good works on the good side enter in. Jerome, who lived in the 4th and 5th centuries, said that his favorite verses were Psalm 1, verse 2, his delight is in the law of the Lord, and, this is the point, in his law doth he meditate day and night, [00:16:04] and Psalm 55, verse 3, which says that he wants to fly away as a bird to his mountain.

The fact that the Psalm actually condemns that, and says that's the last thing I'm going to do, doesn't seem to have entered Jerome's mind, and he wanted to find a place away from the haunts of men that he might spend all his time in meditating the things of God. In the 6th century, Benedict made the monastic rule, which has been the basis of the monastic life ever since, and he systematized the continuous service of God in the 7 or 8 services which the monks carried on every day, and in a degree are still carried on by all the clergy of the Church of Rome. The whole Psalter, in the service of the breviary, was repeated every week.

[00:17:01] Psalm 119, every day, and special psalms on special days, every day ended with complain, when they started by saying, Psalm 41, I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou, Lord only, makest me dwell in safety.

And then Psalm 111, into thy hand I commend my spirit, thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. And then Psalm 91, thou shalt not be afraid of the arrow that flyeth by night, or the pestilence that walketh in darkness. And finally, Psalm 134, bless the Lord, all these servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. At midnight, they rose from their dormers, crept down the stone stairs, many of us have seen those stone stairs in monasteries worn thin by the monks for centuries coming down them, [00:18:02] they crept down the stone stairs, and in the dim light began the first two-hour service of matins, with the words, O come, let us worship, and bow down before Jehovah, for he is our God, and we are the sheep of his pasture.

When I was a boy learning French at school, I don't know whether it's the same with you who are learning French at school, everyone learned the French song, Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques, Dormez-vous, Dormez-vous, Sonnez les matines. Can you translate it? It says, Brother James, Brother James, are you asleep?

It's time to sound the bell for matins. In other words, it was this midnight bell that had to get the monks about asleep and come downstairs into the church and say the first hours' prayers of worship to Jehovah.

And so it has been right through the picture. [00:19:01] You see, there are some very good things about this. In those early days, one of the first qualifications for high ecclesiastical office was to be able to repeat the whole of the Psalter. Now there's one thing to be said about these men. They were serious about their piety. If you believe that John 17 lies at the center of our faith, and the prayers in the Epistles of the Ephesians lie at the center of our faith, can you repeat them, just a few verses like this? Indeed, young brothers and sisters, you ought to be able to repeat word by word the critical parts of the Scriptures that deal with our Christian faith. We ought to take our faith seriously enough to commit the Word of God to mind, so that by mind it may reach the heart. And when the moment's opportunity comes, we may have, so to speak, mentally and spiritually at our fingertips the Word of God so that we can meditate and reflect upon it, [00:20:06] and perhaps in it behold the beauty of the Lord. But, good as some of these things were, it's quite plain that they regarded the Psalter beyond all these things as the essence of Christian worship. At the Reformation, in the Book of Common Prayer, which was written by Archbishop Cranmer for the guidance of the Church of England, then they altered the situation in that the Psalter was repeated every month.

And I think they've rather slipped away from that, and they only have the Sunday Psalms in many places. But they were intended to repeat the Psalter every month. In all the Presbyterian churches throughout the world, they sing the Psalms in metrical version. But right through, you can get the idea even to the school from which comes youth praise of all things. You can get the idea that people think that the Psalms are the center of Christian worship. [00:21:05] Now, the sad and the unhappy result of this is that what we were speaking about this afternoon, and that is the worship of the Father, is obviously displaced by this. If we think that the expressions of the Psalms, not knowing a full redemption, not knowing the final and eternal forgiveness of sins, not knowing the present gift of the Holy Ghost and above all, not addressed to the Father and not knowing the Father at all, if we act as though the Psalms are the center of Christian worship, we will leave aside that great thing that we were speaking of this afternoon in private and in communion with each other, and that is the worship of the Father. And the fact of the matter is that the heart essentials of the Christian faith are not in the Psalter at all. [00:22:02] And that is the revelation of the Father, which I can leave at where we were speaking about it this afternoon, and the knowledge of the Church, with its distinct calling and destiny as the Body and the Bride of Christ, and the object not only of his redeeming love to cleanse it and sanctify it by the washing of water by the Word, but the object of that love which will present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. These are the things that are to lie at the heart of our faith, and they are the things that lie at the heart of our worship. And it's so very important in a study of the Psalms to see those things wherein they are intended for us, so that we may deepen and strengthen these things, comfort, godliness, meditation, and above all, feeding ourselves upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, [00:23:04] but eschew completely the idea that they're the expression of Christian worship. They're not so, and we want to set our heart, mind, and spirit to remember always the revelation of the Father and the tremendous privilege of worshipping him. Now, if it is not true that the correct application of the Psalms is to Christian people and Christianity in the heart of the situation to which they appeal, then what is it?

Well, I can do no more than state that it's not by any means difficult to induce from the Psalms themselves the fact that they envisage a small number of godly people amongst God's earthly people, [00:24:02] that is, a small number of Jews amidst a generally unfaithful and hostile nation, and

that they contemplate a situation in the immediate presence of the coming of Christ in power and great glory. In other words, they are directly intended for the help and the guidance and the comfort and the strength of those people that we were talking about this afternoon in Matthew chapter 24. It's a very interesting thing that I haven't mentioned up to now. I keep coming back to something that I've forgotten to mention and then bringing it in. It's a very interesting thing that has always been observed with meaning by the Brethren, that in Book 1 of the Psalms, which is, as we know, Psalm 1 to 41, and between that and Book 2 of the Psalms, there is an extremely striking difference in the way the names of God are used. Very striking.

[00:25:05] And, of course, it extends to the other books as well, but for the moment we'll dwell upon these. In the first book of Psalms, the name Jehovah occurs 167 times, and the name Elohim, which simply means God, the creator God, so the God who is the judge, it's sometimes used, whereas Jehovah means the covenant-keeping God who made promises to Israel.

Now, in the second book of Psalms, Jehovah occurs only 31 times, and Elohim 198.

And it's an extremely striking thing to see where the change occurs as you pass from Psalm 41 to Psalm 42. I did, earlier in the week, point out, in support of the fact that these Psalms are intended for those godly Jews of the future who will have been converted to the Lord, [00:26:03] and yet going on with the temple worship because they are still godly Jews and not Christians. They believe in Jesus and they continue to be godly Jews. We saw how, in the early Psalms, they are going on with the temple worship. Now, in Matthew 24, there comes a moment when their going on with the temple worship is rudely broken, and there is an idol put up in the temple, and the godly are told, when they see that sign, to flee to the mountains, because the terrible time of trouble is coming upon the land and upon the world. Now, it's evident that the change from the name Jehovah, in Book 1, to the name Elohim, predominantly in Book 2, is connected with this fact that they are not in the land. I read to you a verse which showed how important it was for David, when his enemies, with Saul, drove him out of the land. He said, you've sent me away from my inheritance of the Lord, and you've sent me to a place of idolatry. [00:27:04] It was very definitely connected with his being in the land, that he was in covenant relations with Jehovah, the God of Israel. Well, when you pass from these first Psalms that do envisage these people going on with the temple worship, listen to what it says in Psalm 42.

As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. You see, this is still a godly person. It's not an unconverted person. It's not a man distancing heart and spirit from God. He's longing, with the most intense longing, after God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God? And so on. And then verse 4. When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in thee. For I had gone, or I used to go, with the multitude.

[00:28:02] I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude that kept holy day. Why art thou cast down, O my soul?

And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. He feels cut off from the name of Jehovah because he's been cast out of the land. And as in the first book, the first psalms lay down the conditions, so in the second book, the first psalms lay down the conditions, that is, in a people who've lost the comfort of the relationship with Jehovah,

which belongs to living in the holy land and engaging in the temple worship.

Now, I would like for a few moments to recall a few of the points that came before us.

We read first of all in Psalm 2, and of course the great thing about Psalm 2 [00:29:03] is that although it speaks about the time when the kings of the earth and the nations tumultuously assemble against the Lord and against his Christ, the great assurance of that psalm, and of course it's a tremendous assurance for us, even if it is not true Christian worship, nevertheless, God's king on God's holy hill of Zion is fixed and determined.

And that kingdom, that establishment, that purpose of God's Christ reigning over all the earth from Mount Zion is fixed.

And it's small wonder that the psalm ends by saying about that Messiah, happy are all they that put their trust in him.

When we come to Psalm 8, it reminds us of how, in the gospels, when the Lord Jesus Christ was rejected as the Messiah, [00:30:01] he began more and more to speak about the Son of Man. When he was rejected as Israel's king to reign in Mount Zion, he then begins to speak more and more of himself as the Son of Man. And when we come to Psalm 8, the subject is indeed, in the most excellent praise of the name of Jehovah spread over all the earth, that he is the Son of Man.

He is the one who has been made, has become, in his incarnation, a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. And it is in order that in his resurrection, with all things under his feet, he might reign over all things on the part of God.

When we came to Psalm 16, we saw in this, in connection with Psalm 22, a kind of new beginning. And I suppose that it could very well be that these various levels and subjects [00:31:03] in which the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is introduced and then certain responses in the Psalms that follow, it could very well be a matter of various stages of spiritual growth amongst these people. And they need a new perception, a new understanding of their Lord Jesus Christ in order to help them as they grow in their faith. And we have these two very striking Psalms which compose part of a section which indicates to us that we are not only speaking about the Christ who in God's plan will reign in Zion, nor are we speaking about the Christ who in God's plan has become a man so that he might reign over all the world, but we are talking about the one who became man in order that in the whole of his earthly life he might take his place alongside the godly who feared God and might have the comfort of having himself associated with them. [00:32:05] When it says, As for the saints in the earth, the excellent, in them is all my delight.

We saw the probability that this was fulfilled in the beginning of the Lord's ministry when in accepting the baptism of John, he took his place fulfilling all righteousness with those who were separated as the godly by listening to John's preaching about repentance. But oh, that association with his people, sympathizing with them in walking the path of faith and calling upon God to preserve him, it led him in the end to take their place in a far deeper and more terrible way when he was brought to the dust of death.

And he had to say, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

For his association with them went to the very length, although the psalmist doesn't say this, that he bore their sins in his own body on the tree.

[00:33:05] Now in the psalms that follow, we have for the first time that these people confess their sins. The psalms that follow have a great deal in them about the people confessing their sins but at the same time maintaining their integrity before God.

And this is a very important thing to observe.

In Psalm 25 he says, For the very first time speaking about their own sins, remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. And a little later he talks about his present iniquity. For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. But then he goes on to speak about the fact that he can plead his integrity. Verse 21, Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee. [00:34:01] And that integrity, of course, is the same thing that David had when it says with a whole heart he followed the Lord his God. And those psalms bring the remnant of the Jews in the end to the place, as I said before, where this book leaves them, and that is waiting on the Lord. But I suppose the real purpose of Psalm 40 is to assure them that those who wait on the Lord are delivered.

As usual in Psalm 40, then the real theme and subject is propounded in the first few verses.

In this place it is that the psalmist declares, and he's speaking for the coming Messiah, he declares that he waited.

I suppose the word patiently might put it a bit quietly. It's really a very intense expression. I waited, indeed I waited for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry. [00:35:07] So that there is the assurance that the people who wait on the Lord will be heard by him and will be given his strength. He brought me up also, this was the deliverance, out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. I often think that to talk about being in a horrible pit and in the miry clay is suggesting all that can be said about floundering helplessness, and that's how the psalmist felt at that time. But it was, of course, so far as the Lord Jesus Christ is concerned, it was when he was brought up close to the moment of Calvary's cross, in some such circumstances as the Garden of Gethsemane, when he allowed the shadow of the cross to fall across his spirit. But then he was in the end, doesn't speak in this place, [00:36:02] at this moment about his suffering on the cross, but it says, he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto my God, many shall see it and fear and shall trust in the Lord. In other words, the experience of a man who waited upon God and was delivered will encourage many others, Jews especially, it will encourage them to trust in the Lord and wait upon him. And so it goes on, blessed is that man, and make of the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Now I suppose in verse 5 we really begin the continuous theme of the circumstances which led up to that great deliverance.

First of all, there is in God unplumbable depths of goodness, [00:37:03] his thoughts toward us are too great for us to measure.

Many, O Jehovah my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us, Lord, they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. I think the first verse of our first hymn was based upon that

word. O God of love, how measureless thy thoughts to us are shown.

They're more than tongue can tell, and their fullness none have known. It begins with this thought, and with this truth, and with this contemplation of the limitless resources that are in God, and the limitless plan and power to be a blessing to those who trust in him. His thoughts are too great to be reckoned up in order unto him. And then the psalmist goes on, and we understand that in verses 6, 7, and 8, [00:38:10] as much as to say, if we take the psalmist only, that it is a self-devotion of this person to do the will of God.

Sacrifice an offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened, burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. There's no indication here that he was to be that sacrifice, but he does say, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is within my heart. Now of course this is one of those wonderful verses, which when you get to the New Testament, branches out, and blossoms and flowers into the most wonderful truth. But for the time being, we read that in the volume of the book it is written of him, and in fulfillment of all that's written of him in the book, [00:39:02] I hardly think it can be the Old Testament, although it's not impossible, seems much more likely that it's the book of the councils of God, in which all these wonders, these inexpressible thoughts are contained. In the volume of the book it is written of him, and he came to do the will of God, and he delighted to do that will, the law was in his heart. Now then he came, that's the essence of these verses, and then he preached, in verse 9, I have preached righteousness in the great congregation, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. But then we read that as a consequence of his witness for God and his preaching, he came into this terrible trouble that we read about at the beginning of the psalm. Withhold not thy tender mercies from me, O Lord, let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me, for innumerable evils have come past me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, [00:40:03] there is at least an indication that there was involved in this the fact that he bore our sins. Considering these words are so specifically attributed to the Savior, this can only be the sins that he took upon him, to bear them singly and solely at the cross of Calvary, this can be the only way in which he could speak of mine iniquities, so that I am not able to look up, there are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me.

Now in verses 13 to 16, there is, after a call for deliverance, there is once again at the very end of this book a clear distinction between the mass of the people hostile to God and those who seek to know and rejoice and obey him.

Let them be ashamed and confounded together, that seek after my soul to destroy it. [00:41:01] Let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. There we are again with those very enemies that fill the first psalms, that is psalms 3 to 7.

Here are the enemies still there with him. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame, that say unto me aha.

Now this is of course, as we have said, one of the other plain indications that the psalms can't truly give expression to Christian feeling, because we do not, we are not encouraging the word of God to call for the destruction of our enemies, but that was the hope, that will be the hope of these people, the destruction of their enemies in the judgment of God and their sailing into the calm waters of the congregation of the righteous was the hope of these people. And then there is distinguished those who seek the Lord, that all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee, that such as love thy salvation, say continually the Lord be magnified. And so we come to the end, [00:42:02] the last psalm

of the book, asks for preservation when many were dying, as we understand in Matthew 24, when many are dying, the psalmist asks for preservation, but he's relying upon the Lord. I am poor and needy, yet the Lord sinketh upon me. Thou art my help and my deliverer, make no tarrying, O my God.

You see these people, will above all things, want to know, whether a man who waits for the Lord will be delivered. And I suppose the great purpose of this psalm for them is to understand that one who waits for the Lord will indeed be delivered. His feet will be taken out of the miry clay and his feet put upon a rock and a new song will be put into his mouth, even praise unto our God. And the association wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in this position of trusting in the Lord and waiting for the Lord, spreads abroad. [00:43:01] The knowledge of it spreads abroad and they're encouraged to wait in the Lord. Now for a few minutes, I want to come back to a few words in verse six.

Sacrifice an offering that it's not desire.

Mine ears hast thou opened, burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Now there are several verses in other parts of the scripture that are close enough to this in their expressions to make us inquire of these other passages, what help they give us in understanding the truth that springs in New Testament terms out of this psalm.

And of course the first one is once again in Hebrews chapter 10, which I would like you to find, if you please.

Hebrews chapter 10, when we find the very words quoted.

[00:44:01] One of the great things about reading Hebrews chapter 10, the great purpose of which is to show that by the one great sacrifice of Christ, God is satisfied on the question of sins. And on the basis of this, we can have the witness of the Holy Spirit in the word of God, our sins and iniquities are remembered no more. Now in order to draw to this conclusion, the apostle quotes this verse in verse 5.

Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, you see I was right, wasn't I, in pointing out that the verse spoke about the original entrance, the original coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world. And so far as the psalm is concerned, at that point, that's where it leads it. But here it says, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me.

Now that's the place in which the psalm says, mine ears hast thou digged.

[00:45:03] Now this is a clear case where we might find the words of the psalm difficult to understand, but the Holy Spirit in the quotation here has interpreted the meaning of the Old Testament passage for us. When it says in the psalm, mine ear hast thou digged, it means that God has architected a body for him. God has prepared a human body for this person, and the ear is emphasized because it is a matter of obedience.

So the first meaning of that statement, the real meaning of that statement, mine ears hast thou digged, is the incarnation once again. It means that a body has been prepared.

And that particular feature of true manhood, which consists in the possession of an ear, he that hath

ears to hear, let him hear, that it has the power to hear the will of God, [00:46:01] our Savior has come into the situation when in the position of man his ear can be opened to hear the word of God and to obey.

Now the very similar passage, which takes that thought a little bit further, is in Isaiah, once again back in the Old Testament, Isaiah chapter 50, where it's very beautifully speaking about the earth, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Isaiah chapter 50, verse, let us look at verse four. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. The first emphasis is upon the tongue. And that wonderful thing he said about that tongue, [00:47:01] by it he is able to speak words to the weary. How many of us have been amongst an immense class in all times and places of those who are weary? Well, our Lord Jesus Christ is able to speak a word in season to them that are weary. Why can he do this as a man?

It tells us.

He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

The Lord God hath opened mine ear. That's the point I'm coming to. You see, it's an extension of the idea that since the Lord God is speaking in explanation and is speaking words in season to him that is weary, the reason is that morning by morning, God's speaking to him and his ear is open to the voice of the Lord speaking to him, and it is for this reason that he's able to speak a word in season to him that is weary. And [00:48:01] therefore, the point of great interest to us in this connection is that the process explanation in Hebrews 10 is extended here. It is indeed true that when it speaks about the tongue and the ear of the Savior, he has the tongue of the one who can speak to the weary because he has the ear opened morning by morning to the voice of the Lord. Oh, if our ears were like his, more regularly opened morning by morning to the word of the Lord, then we should be more able to speak words in season to them that are weary. And finally of course, a passage that's often been drawn into close connection, but I think it's really only the words that connect them together, but it's an interesting point because it's the ultimate culmination of the matter, and that is in Exodus chapter 21 when we have the story there of the Hebrew servant. When the time [00:49:01] came that in the Jubilee year he could go out free. Chapter 21 of Exodus verse 2 he could go out free but he must go out by himself if his master had given him a wife and she had borne him sons or daughters the wife and her children shall be her masters and he shall go out by himself. Verse 5. If the servant shall plainly say I love my master my wife and my children I will not go out free and 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 oar and he shall serve him forever. Now I don't believe that that is the meaning of the expression in Psalm 40 but obviously it's an extension of the explanation given in the Psalm the end of this matter [00:50:01] you see the end of the fact that he was given a body so that he might be first of all the sacrifice and then he might have the ear of the learner to speak a word in season. The culmination of it here is in that sacrifice because when he is given those who are his by the gift and the counsel of God and as it were in the case of this Hebrew servant the opportunity is given to go out free. He says I love my wife, I love my children I will not go out free and our saviour even went to the extent of his blood being shed in order that we who are his by the counsel of God may in very truth and by purchase of his precious blood be his and so that turny spot of blood as the ear is bore to the post it speaks to us in the last of the series it speaks to us [00:51:01] of how the Lord Jesus Christ has indeed made us his own and he will have those who are the object of his love with him forever and so we are come so far away from Old Testament truth and the essential meaning of the Psalms to remember again that we are concerned with one who said concerning who but he said

Christ loved the church and gave himself for it and he's going to present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing how right it is that we should conclude our meditations on the Psalms by saying forever be the glory given O Lamb of God to thee our every joy on earth in heaven we owe it to thy blood