

## *PSALM 40*

David composed this psalm of thanksgiving and prayer to God while awaiting deliverance from his enemies. While he patiently waits, he perseveres in faith and sings this song of praise to God. However, one part of the psalm raises an interesting question. We find verses 6-8 quoted in chapter 10 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In what sense is this part of Psalm 40 Messianic? These verses cannot in their entirety be intended as a direct prophecy of the Messiah, for David in verse 13 refers to his manifold iniquities. Thus, a number of scholars agree that verses 6-8 are not directly Messianic. This means that they were simply applicable to the life of Christ and are therefore cited in Hebrews 10:5-9 as a kind of type of the Messiah that was prefigured in the life of David. In reading this psalm, then, let us focus our minds on the example left by King David, namely, to wait patiently for the Lord, who is graciously inclined to hear our prayer and help us.

### **For the choir director. A Psalm of David.**

- 1 I waited patiently for YAHWEH; he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- 2 He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.
- 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear, and put their trust in YAHWEH.
  
- 4 Blessed is the man who makes YAHWEH his trust, who does not turn to the proud,  
to those who go astray after a lie!
- 5 You have multiplied, O YAHWEH my God,  
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you!  
I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.
  
- 6 In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear.  
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.
- 7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me:
- 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."
  
- 9 I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation;  
behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O YAHWEH.
- 10 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;  
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;  
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness  
from the great congregation.
  
- 11 As for you, O YAHWEH, you will not restrain your mercy from me;  
your steadfast love and your faithfulness will ever preserve me!

- 12 For evils have encompassed me beyond number;  
my iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see;  
they are more than the hairs of my head; my heart fails me.
- 13 Be pleased, O YAHWEH, to deliver me! O YAHWEH, make haste to help me!
- 14 Let those be put to shame and disappointed altogether who seek to snatch away my life;  
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who delight in my hurt!
- 15 Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"
- 16 But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is YAHWEH!"
- 17 As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me.  
You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!

#### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, your works are wondrous and your thoughts toward us are full of mercy. We adore and magnify your glorious name, your infinite perfections, and your merciful loving-kindness toward the fallen sons of Adam. You have dealt most graciously with us. Keep us steadfast in our faith, and teach us to cling to the hope that is set before us. So order our goings as to make our way acceptable to yourself, and let not our spiritual enemies have dominion over us. When they assault us, be present with us, that we may rejoice evermore in your holy comfort through Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen.*