

Good News of Salvation

Psalm 40

- ❑ In Psalm 37, David wrote, “Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him” (*Psalm 37:7a*). Psalm 40 indicates that he practiced what he preached. Read Psalm 40:1-10.

Salvation

- ❑ The LORD lifted David “out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire” (*40:2a*). We do not know David’s actual situation, but he needed rescue (deliverance, salvation).

1. What kind of “slimy pits” do we find ourselves in? What is the worst kind of “slimy pit?”



- ❑ The LORD lifted David out of the slimy pit and “set [his] feet on a rock and gave [him] a firm place to stand” (*40:2b*). The rock provides stability and safety. The LORD is *the Rock*.¹ The ultimate stability and safety is realized in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❑ The LORD put a new song² in David’s mouth. Through the LORD’s saving acts and David’s songs of testimony, “many will see and fear³ the LORD and put their trust in him” (*40:3*).

Reflection

- ❑ As David reflects on his past salvation, he says, “Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD” (*40:4a, NIV*). Blessed is the person who does not turn aside to lies and false gods (*40:4b*).
 - ❑ David is overwhelmed by the LORD’s wonders (that is, the things God has done, including his saving acts). He is also overwhelmed by the LORD’s thoughts and plans for His people (*40:5*).
2. As true believers, we have been rescued from the worst “slimy pit.” As we reflect on our salvation, what is the proper response? As we reflect on God’s wonders and promises, what should we do, and say?

Dedication

- ❑ Read Psalm 40:6-8.⁴ Sacrifices and offerings were prescribed by God as part of Israel’s worship. However, external ritual is not enough.⁵ “To obey is better than sacrifice” (*1 Samuel 15:22*). David desires to do God’s will, and have God’s law within his heart (*Psalm 40:8*).
3. How can verses 6-8 apply to our lives today?



¹ Psalm 18:2, 31, 46; 19:14; 28:1; 31:3; 62:2, 6-7; 95:1. The Lord Jesus Christ came to rescue us from the present evil age (Galatians 1:4). So “Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock” (Isaiah 26:4, ESV).

² A ‘new song’ is a logical response to God’s ‘new acts’ of deliverance (Psalm 33:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10). The ultimate act of deliverance requires the ultimate ‘new song’ (Revelation 5:9; 14:3).

³ To ‘fear’ God does not mean to be afraid of Him, but to revere (honor) Him as God and respond appropriately.

⁴ ‘my ears you have opened’ – probably refers to God’s ‘opening’ of David’s ears so he can hear God’s word better

⁵ There are different interpretations of verse 6, but all agree that true worship comes from the heart (verse 8).

4. Like David, we should desire to do God's will. How can we *know* God's will?⁶ How can we have God's law within our hearts?⁷

- ❑ In the New Testament, Psalm 40:6-8 is applied to Jesus Christ (*Hebrews 10:5-10*). Jesus is the ultimate example of doing God's will. Jesus gave his life for our sins. His once-for-all sacrifice was the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices and offerings. His death and resurrection are the basis of our salvation, which is received through faith in him.

Proclamation

- ❑ Read Psalm 40:9-10. David writes, "I proclaim your saving acts (glad news of deliverance - *ESV*) in the great assembly" (*40:9, NIV*). He speaks of God's faithfulness and salvation (*40:10*). He certainly does not hide it!⁸ Rather he is compelled to proclaim the good news of salvation.

5. What is the content of David's good news? (*40:9-10*) As Christian believers, what is the content of the "good news" we need to proclaim?⁹ In what practical ways can believers 'proclaim' the Lord's salvation?¹⁰



It's Not Over Yet

- ❑ Read Psalm 40:11-17. Though David has experienced past salvation, he still faces trouble, and he still needs God's saving help. Though he is secure in his relationship with God, he still sins, and he is still attacked by his enemies.¹¹ It's not over yet, but David trusts in God.

Reflection/Application

- Apart from Christ, we are all in the worst "slimy pit." Do you need God to lift you out and set your feet on firm ground? Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Savior.
- As a believer, reflect on God's work in your life. Are you responding appropriately? Have you truly dedicated your life to the Lord? Are you proclaiming God's righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, and love through your life and words? Reflect on Romans 12:1-2.

⁶ David refers to 'the scroll' (verse 7), which likely refers to the king's copy of the law mentioned in Deuteronomy 17:18-20. In any case, it is God's instruction. Today, our record of God's instruction is the Bible. When people say, 'I want to know God's will,' they often mean God's specific plan for their lives, which may not be revealed. We can only know what God reveals to us, and what he reveals is adequate. Thus we should first of all desire to know *and do* God's revealed will, recorded in the Bible. See Jay's 'Knowing God's Will' on the ICF website.

⁷ We have God's law within our hearts by internalizing it. We internalize God's laws by learning them, memorizing them, and practicing (doing) them with 'all our heart' (Deuteronomy 11:18-19; 26:16; Joshua 22:5; Psalms 119:11, 30, 34). In these New Testament times, we have an advantage! For God puts his laws in the hearts of believers through the new birth and indwelling Holy Spirit (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26-28; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16).

⁸ David says, 'I do not seal my lips... I do not hide your righteousness... I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness.' Speaking to believers, Jesus said, 'You are the light of the world... people [do not] light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven' (Matt. 5:14, 15-16).

⁹ David proclaims God's righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, and love. God's righteousness reveals our sinfulness. So proclaiming the 'good news' includes proclaiming the 'bad news' of our condition. Thus confession of sin, repentance, forgiveness, and restoration should be part of our personal testimony and message to others.

¹⁰ Of course, the central, essential content of the 'good news' is God's salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But our lives need to be consistent with the message. Our lives often speak louder than our words.

¹¹ As believers, we *have been* saved (from the penalty of sin and the controlling power of sin). But our salvation is not complete. We still live in this battleground called 'the world.' So God's saving work continues until the end.