

Psalm 40 <sup>1</sup>

"David's Praise of and Pleas to Yahweh, the Deliverer"

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

Scripture taken from the *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE*®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org)).

**A1 PRAISE TO YAHWEH 40:1-10**

**B1 David's Praise to Yahweh, Our God for His Deliverance 40:1-3**

C1 David's Patient Waiting for Yahweh Rewarded 40:1

D1 His patient wait: {1} I waited patiently for the LORD;

D2 Yahweh's response to His cry: And He inclined to me and heard  
my cry.

C2 Yahweh's Deliverance 40:2

D1 From the pit: {2} He brought me up out of the pit

E1 of destruction,

E2 out of the miry clay,

D2 To a rock

E1 And He set my feet upon a rock

E2 making my footsteps firm.

C3 David's Praise 40:3

D1 Yahweh's giving him a song

E1 New song: {3} He put a new song in my mouth,

E2 Praise song: a song of praise to our God;

D2 The widespread benefits of the song

E1 Observant fear: Many will see and fear

E2 Trust in Yahweh: And will trust in the LORD.

---

<sup>1</sup> Psalm 40: Keil and Delitzsch (K & D) say this psalm has seven six-line strophes.

**B2 David's Reflection on the Blessedness of Those Who Trust in Yahweh, Who Graciously and Infinitely Acts on Israel's Behalf 40:4-5 <sup>2</sup>**

- C1 The Blessedness of the Man Who Trusts in Yahweh, Not Fallen Man 40:4
- D1 Trusting in Yahweh: {4} How blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust,
- D2 Not upon fallen man
- E1 The proud: And has not turned to the proud,
- E2 The deceitful: nor to those who lapse into falsehood.
- C2 David's Reflection upon the Gracious Incomparability of Yahweh, His God, on Behalf of Israel 40:5
- D1 Upon His many wonders: {5} Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders which You have done,
- D2 Upon His thoughts on behalf of Israel: And Your thoughts toward us;
- D3 Upon the incomparability of Yahweh: There is none to compare with You.
- D4 Upon the infinite volume of his gracious thoughts and acts on Israel's behalf: If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count.

**B3 David's Willingness to Obey God as the Ultimate Act of Worship 40:6-8**  
(The author of Hebrews 10:5-9 applies this paragraph as the words of Christ.)

- C1 David's Understanding That God's Desire Is Not Ultimately Sacrifices, But Listening Ears 40:6
- D1 God's non-desire: {6} Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired;
- D2 God's sovereign achievement of responsive listening in David: My ears You have opened;<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> 40:4-5: K & D have vv. 4-5 together in one paragraph. Allen Ross, "Psalms," *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (TBKC), connects v. 4 with vv. 1-3, evidently because both v. 3 and v. 4 speak of trust in Yahweh. Then he has 40:5 separate and 40:6 separate and 40:7-8 as one unit. To me 40:1-3 are clearly a unit of praise to Yahweh, while 40:4 reflects on the happiness of the one who trusts in Yahweh. 40:4 and 40:5 seem, indeed, somewhat separate, yet they are reconcilable. Though Ross separates his discussion of 40:6 from 40:7-8, he acknowledges that vv. 6-8 form a unit as interpreted by the author of Hebrews 10:5-9.

<sup>3</sup> 40:6 - opened: The Heb. *karah* (3738) is typically used of digging a well or a pit. When applied to the ear, it perhaps means to dig out the wax or other impediments to hearing. The point is that God sovereignly gave David ears that listened to God and obeyed Him (see also Ross, TBKC). [K & D concur, suggesting David is echoing the words of

- D3 God's non-requirements: Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.
- C2 David's Preparedness to Perform, as King, God's Law 40:7-8
  - D1 His arrival [in the sanctuary?] with his personal copy of the Law: {7} Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me." <sup>4</sup> 40:7
  - D2 His announcement of his delight to obey God's precepts, which he has internalized: {8} I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart." 40:8
- B4 David's Willingness to Proclaim Publicly the Righteousness and Faithfulness of Yahweh 40:9-10**
  - C1 His Public Proclamation of the Good News of Yahweh's Righteousness 40:9
    - D1 His "good-news-icizing:" {9} I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation;
    - D2 His refusal to remain silent: Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O LORD, You know.

---

Samuel to Saul in 1 Sam. 15:22, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to attend better than the fat of rams!"] This is why God calls David, through Samuel, "a man after his own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). Acc. to Ross, "the Septuagint translated Ps 40:6 much more generally, "a body You have prepared for me" (cf. NIV marg.), which captured the idea of the context." Prophetically, the writer of Heb. 10:5, 10 utilizes the LXX translation and applies the prepared body to Christ, which God, through the incarnation, prepared for His use of redemption (see also Zane C. Hodges, Hebrews, *TBKC*). [One reading of the LXX has the word *hotia*, (outer) ears, instead of *soma*, body. Heb. 10:5 unquestionably uses the word body.]

<sup>4</sup> 40:7 - in the scroll of the book: K & D cite the Beth of *bimegillat* (4030) as one of accompaniment -- "Lo, I come **with** (emphasis mine) the roll of the book which is written concerning me." In this view, "the roll of the book is the Tora, (sic) and more especially Deuteronomy . . . which, according to the law touching the king (Deut. 17:14-20), was to be the vade-mecum of the king of Israel." Note Deut. 17:18-20 (NNAS), here quoted: "Now it shall come about when he [the anticipated king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. {19} "It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, {20} that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel." Ps. 119, though not written by David, certainly captures his spirit.

Perhaps David is announcing his arrival in the Sanctuary with his personal copy of the Torah to worship, reflect, meditate, pray, and plan to do God's will as recorded therein.

Unquestionably, these words are prophetic of the Ultimate King, Jesus. According to Ross (*TBKC*), "Verses 6-8 take on a greater significance when cited in Hebrews 10:5-7 where the writer contrasted Christ's perfect obedience with the insufficiency of the Mosaic sacrifices. The words are applied to Christ's Incarnation to fulfill God's purpose for Him as prescribed in the book." I might add that not only the incarnation generally, but specifically the crucifixion of Christ's body for the sins of the world was the body that God had prepared. Though it was agonizing, Christ delighted to do the Father's will. In His death upon the cross, Jesus combined the Ultimate Sacrifice with the Ultimate Obedience!

- C2 His Public Proclamation of Yahweh's Character 40:10
  - D1 His righteousness: {10} I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;
  - D2 His faithfulness: I have spoken of Your faithfulness
  - D3 His salvation: and Your salvation;
  - D4 His loyal love: I have not concealed Your lovingkindness
  - D5 His truth: and Your truth from the great congregation.

## A2 PLEAS TO YAHWEH 40:11-17

### B1 David's Expression of Confidence in Yahweh's Support in View of His Great Need 40:11-12

- C1 His Confidence in Yahweh's Support 40:11
  - D1 Extending His compassion: {11} You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me;<sup>5</sup>
  - D2 Extending His loyal love and truth: Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.
- C2 His Dire Need for Yahweh's Support 40:12
  - D1 The nature of his need
    - E1 Surrounded by evils: {12} For evils beyond number have surrounded me;
    - E2 Overtaken by iniquities: My iniquities<sup>6</sup> have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see;
  - D2 The quantity of his need: They are more numerous than the hairs of my head,
  - D3 The effect of his need: And my heart has failed me.

---

<sup>5</sup> 40:11 - "You ... will not withhold," etc. Other translations, such as KJV, NKJV, NIV, RSV, translate 40:11 as a request ("Do not withhold," etc.), but the verbs are Qal imperfects, not imperatives. The imperatives do not occur until v. 13. So NASB and Young's Literal Translation stand virtually alone in their translation. K & D also translate as a request, not a statement. We here follow the NASB translation.

<sup>6</sup> 40:12 - iniquities: Part, at least, of David's distress is caused by his sins.

**B2 David's Prayer for Deliverance from His Enemies 40:13-15**

C1 His General Plea for Deliverance 40:13

D1 At Yahweh's pleasure: {13} Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;

D2 At David's speed! Make haste, O LORD, to help me.

C2 His Pleas for the Disgrace of His Enemies 40:14-15

D1 For the shame of those who seek to kill or otherwise harm him  
40:14

E1 For the shame and humiliation of those who seek his death:  
{14} Let those be ashamed and humiliated together Who  
seek my life to destroy it;

E2 For the repulsion and dishonor of those who seek his harm:  
Let those be turned back and dishonored Who delight in my  
hurt.

D2 For the shame of his finger-pointing critics 40:15

E1 {15} Let those be appalled because of their shame

E2 Who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

**B3 David's Closing Requests on Behalf of the Righteous 40:16-17**

C1 For the Spiritual Well-being of the Righteous 40:16

D1 For the joy of all who seek Yahweh: {16} Let all who seek You  
rejoice and be glad in You;

D2 For the praise of Yahweh by all those saved by Him: Let those  
who love Your salvation say continually, "The LORD be  
magnified!"

C2 For His Own Deliverance 40:17

D1 For Adonai's mindfulness of him in his affliction: {17} Since I am  
afflicted and needy, Let the Lord be mindful of me.

D2 For Elohim to deliver him quickly: You are my help and my  
deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 40

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

April, 2010. Updated October, 2013

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)

Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)