

Heart to Heart with the Living God

Psalm 40

"Do not withhold your mercy from me, O LORD." Psalm 40:11a

Day 1: Read Psalm 40.


1. What image does the Psalmist, David, use to describe his past trouble? (v. 2)
2. List all of the things God did for him at that time. (vv. 1-3)
3. Throughout this psalm, David uses the special covenant name for God—the LORD, or Yahweh. What do we learn from Psalm 40 about this covenant God?
4. What do you think it means to "fear" the Lord (v. 3)? (Deut. 6:1-2; 10:12-15)

Day 2: Read Psalm 40.

5. How does the Psalmist describe himself?
6. What is his current situation? (vv. 12-15, 17)
7. What is David beseeching God to do?
 - a. (vv. 11, 13, 17)
 - b. (vv. 14-15)

Day 3: Read Psalm 40:6-8.

8. The line translated "my ears you have pierced" in the NIV (v. 6) seems in fact to mean "my ears you have opened."
 - a. What do you think it means to have opened ears? (Jer. 9:20a; Zech. 7:11-12)
 - b. How does the Psalmist, with his opened ears, respond to God? (vv. 7a, 8)

9. God clearly commanded the Israelites to make regular sacrifices and offerings. Then what leads the Psalmist to make the statements in verse 6 regarding sacrifice? (1 Sam. 15:22; Mic. 6:6-8; * Is. 1:11-17)
10. Read Hebrews 10:1-10, noticing the writer's quotation of a version of Psalm 40:6-8.
- What problems with Old Testament sacrifices does the writer of Hebrews lay out? (Heb. 10:1, 4)
 - Into whose mouth does the writer of Hebrews place Psalm 40:6-8? (Heb. 10:5)
11. How are the problems with sacrifices noted in questions 9 and 10a solved by the one who came to do God's will? (Heb. 10:10; 9:26b-28)

Day 4: Read Psalm 40.

12. Some commentators see Jesus and his work all through this psalm. Fill in the chart below to see how the first three verses of this psalm could have been spoken by Jesus.

Psalm 40	Jesus and His Work
v. 1a: "I waited patiently for the LORD"	1 Pet. 2:23
v. 2: "He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock"	Acts 2:23-24, 31
v. 3a: "He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God."	Heb. 2:11-13a


13. How do verses 1-3 reflect our own experiences as well? (Eph. 2:1-7; * Job 33:27-28)

Day 5: Read Psalm 40.

14. Throughout this psalm, what does experiencing the Lord's goodness result in? (vv. 3, 9-10, 16)
15. To whom does the Psalmist proclaim the goodness of God? (vv. 9a, 10b)

How do we do that now? (Eph. 5:19-20; Heb. 10:24-25)

16. We have experienced God's gracious deliverance. Consider how you can encourage others in your group with the way you have seen God's righteousness, faithfulness, salvation, love, truth, and mercy at work in their lives, or your own (vv. 9-11).

*The  symbol indicates verses for further study.