

THE KING AS A PREACHER

Psalm 40:9-17

Part 2

Intro: Wherever we turn in the Bible, in all thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, or in all of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, we can say about every word in all of them that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” the statement that we find in 2 Timothy 3:16. And yet God did not write any of them, but He spoke through some forty writers, many of whom did not know each other because they lived at different times in the history of the world. And yet there is a supernatural unity about the Bible because each writer was directed by the Holy Spirit in what they wrote. So while there were many writers, there was just one Author. And that Author was the Holy Spirit. Consequently He is also the One Who teaches us the meaning of Scripture. The Holy Spirit used the style of writing of each writer. He used their understanding of the truth, and yet He did it in such a way as to preserve the accuracy of the message that God intended for us to have. And so we believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. We believe it is the very Word of God.

Perhaps you remember the story of the Ethiopian eunuch, a high government official under Candace the Queen, who had been to Jerusalem, probably meaning that he was a man who had embraced Judaism, and he was returning home in his chariot reading the prophecy of Isaiah. An angel had told Philip, who was a deacon in the early church in Jerusalem, to go down to Gaza where he would meet this Ethiopian man. It was possible to read while you were riding in a chariot, especially because this Ethiopian, being who he was, had probably a member of the Ethiopian army as his driver. Anyway he was reading in Isaiah 53. Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading, and the Ethiopian responded by saying, “How can I except some man should guide me? And since he assumed that Philip might be able to help him, he invited Philip to join him in the chariot. Then Philip realized that the Ethiopian was reading Isaiah 53. But this was the question that the Ethiopian for Philip. He asked Philip, “I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?” (Acts 8:34). And Philip explained to him that the prophet was speaking of Jesus. And then Philip led the Ethiopian to Christ.

Now we run into that same kind of a problem here in Psalm 40, especially as we come to verse 9. We learned last week in considering the first eight

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verses of this Psalm that suddenly, after King David who wrote this Psalm had been speaking about himself and his own salvation, suddenly wrote verses 7, 8, and 9 in which he was quoting the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the proof that he was speaking in these verses, not of himself, but of Jesus, is proved for us when this Psalm is quoted in the NT book of Hebrews where we are told that David was speaking of Christ.

Now in trying to understand Psalm 40, and we go on to the verses I want to consider with you this morning, we have a similar question. It is this: Was David still referring to what the Lord said, or was he speaking for himself?

If you go on from verse 8 where David was quoting our Lord, then it seems that he was still quoting the Lord in verse 9 where he continued with the pronoun "I" which could mean that David was still quoting the Lord.

But when we get down to verse 12 and David was speaking of "mine iniquities," that would have to be David's sins, since the Lord never sinned! But we know that the Lord Jesus was charged by God with our sins, and so He died on the Cross as though our sins were His.

Personally I think that David was giving us truth here which suggests in so many ways what in developed in the NT following the death and resurrection of our Lord that which has to do with our union with Christ in His death and in His resurrection, and now in our lives from day to day where we live in Him.

But now let us look at our text.

Last week I expressed that verse 1 gives us the conclusion, or it might be called, a summary, of the Lord's dealings with David.

Then in verses 2 through 5 David spoke of what the Lord had done for him in salvation. (Review briefly.)

And, finally, seeing how verses 6 through 8 are mentioned in Hebrews 10, we saw that David spoke by divine inspiration of the coming of the Messiah, and, amazingly, how He delighted in doing the will of God even though it meant greater suffering for Him than what anyone from the

beginning of time had suffered, or what anyone will ever suffer in this life to the end of time. The Father planned and ordained salvation. The Son was to be the Savior. The Holy Spirit would convict and draw and regenerate those whom the Lord had ordained for salvation.

The first part of Psalm 40 makes it very clear that the Gospel was upon the mind of King David as he penned the words in the first five verses. Then the prophetic reference of the words in verses 6, 7, and 8, point us to the Gospel again. But when we come to verses 9, 10 and 11 the emphasis on the Gospel is made stronger than ever.

Note the statements in verses 9 and 10. First what is done with the Gospel is stated positively, then negatively. In verse 10 it is first stated in a negative way, then positively, and finally negatively. But the purpose behind all five statements is the spread of the Gospel. The Gospel was to be preached. These words expressed the ministry of David, and the certainly expressed the ministry of our Lord while He was here on earth. And we know that this was the ministry of the early church, as well as our ministry today. The prophets of the OT preached. The apostles of the NT preached. Noah was a preacher. Jonah was a preacher. Paul preached. Peter preached. The word is used over 150 times in the Bible, especially in the NT.

To preach is to declare, or to proclaim, to make known, a message. It can be done on a one to one basis, or it can be done to countless numbers of people now by the various means of communication that we have. It can be done by voice, or in print. It can even be done with music, such as in our hymns. It has to do with a message of great importance. Most of the time it is a word relating to God.

In our Psalm it has to do with the message of salvation from sin, and that is its meaning throughout the Bible. It is a message of the righteousness of God, and of the only way in which people can become righteous. It is the Gospel, and the Gospel is unique because there is only one Gospel, one way of salvation, one Savior. And it is this feature of the Gospel concerning Christ that often draws great opposition and even persecution. The Gospel speaks of God's love and His faithfulness. The Gospel is the truth, the unchanging truth of God. The Gospel is about God. The Gospel is about salvation, salvation from the penalty of sin and salvation from the power of sin. The Gospel is the account of the death and resurrection of Christ. The Gospel is the one message that every person needs

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to hear and to believe. The Gospel is universal in its appeal. It has no national or language barrier. It is for the whole world, for Jew and Gentile alike. King David was obviously dedicated and devoted to the spread of the Gospel. And so was our Lord Jesus Christ. When we know and believe the Gospel, it is our God-given responsibility to make sure that others hear it. And this is where the Church in our day has failed.

But look at verse 11. David not only sought and found salvation through the Gospel, but he also found preservation. The Lord not only saves us, but He keeps us saved. David knew from his own experience how important that is. And in verse 12 he tells us why.

We live in a world of sin. Temptations to sin are everywhere. And sin is always on the offensive. The Devil makes sure of that. And we all have special sins to which we are subject. Sometimes past sins are brought to our minds with such force that it appears that they are not forgiven after all. To King David (and often to us) they seem to overwhelm us. And David remembered sins that he had forgotten. Like God's blessings, they were more than can be numbered.

In verse 13 David knew that the Lord was the only One Who could help him. This is one reason why Jerry Bridges has reminded us more than once in his ministry to us that we need to preach the Gospel to ourselves every day. Our feelings can be very intense, but when it comes to the forgiveness of our sins we rest on the truth of the Word, and not on our feelings. When we pray like David did in verse 13 we can be sure that help is not far away.

In verses 14 and 15 we learn that people can be a problem. But David, with all of the authority that he had as a king, knew that only the Lord could deliver him. Often the charges that people bring against us are true. David did not deny their accusations, but he prayed that the Lord would deal with his enemies and let them be ashamed. People were inclined to say, "Aha, aha," which is like people would say today, "We've got ya!"

Now from dealing in prayer with his enemies, David prayed in verse 16 for others who loved the Lord. And then in verse 17 he prayed for himself, reminding himself of truths that he knew that could help him in all of the distress he was experiencing.

Today in the NT reading which many of us are following, we had Romans

8. Actually we had the first eighteen verses for yesterday, and then the rest of the chapter of thirty-nine verses today. Usually when a chapter is divided like that I read the whole chapter on the first day, and then read the whole chapter again the second day. And that has usually been a special blessing to me. And it was this time. I mentioned to the men at our prayer meeting yesterday morning that Paul mentioned in Romans 8 that the Holy Spirit prays for all of us, and he also mentioned after that that the Lord Jesus prays for us. Later in the day I looked at Romans 1 and was reminded that Paul prayed for the people of that church which he did not establish, nor had he ever visited them, that he prayed for them without ceasing. In Romans 10 he told them about his prayers for Israel, “that they might be saved.” And then in Romans 15 he asked the believers in Rome to pray for him: “that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.”

What a blessed people we are! The Holy Spirit prays for us. The Lord Jesus is our intercessor. We can pray for each other. We pray for ourselves. We can even pray for people who don't know the Lord. How different our lives would be if we couldn't pray, and yet I doubt if any of us prays as much as we should. I am always very thankful for those of you who pray for me, and it is my special joy to pray for you.

How do you think those Jews felt when they read Psalm 40:16 to see that their King was praying for them? David's trials and the opposition that he faced did not make him self-centered, but they were reminders that his people were having the same kind of problems. They were people like we are, they were seeking the Lord, were glad in Him, and they loved their salvation which was really God's gift to them. And he prayed that in all of their trials they would train themselves to say, “The Lord be magnified.” That somehow takes the sting out of our trials when we see that they are an opportunity for us to magnify and glorify our Lord.

But that isn't all! In verse 17 King David prayed for himself, and said some very important things about himself, and about his Lord. Look at verse 17 with me.

What did he say about himself? “But I am poor and needy.” I am sure that he was not talking about money, but about the lack of resources he had in himself to meet the needs, the spiritual needs and opposition that he was facing. I know he didn't sing one of the songs we sing, but if he had he would have burst out in song, singing, “I need Thee, O I need

Thee, every hour I need Thee . . .”

What did he say about the Lord? That “the Lord thinketh upon me.” Who are the people that you are always thinking about? They are the people you love, aren’t they? The Lord doesn’t just think about us when we come to Him, but He is always thinking about us. We are never out of His thoughts. Even when we are not thinking about Him, he is thinking about us. Do you believe that, or do you think you have to be the King before the Lord thinks about you? This is what all of us can say: “The Lord thinketh upon me.” And that is not just our imagination; that is the truth!

But what does the Lord want to hear from us? He want to hear us say, as King David said, “Thou art my Help and my Deliverer.” The Lord loves to hear us say that He is the One Whom we really want and need.

And then I believe that there is a little bit of humor, godly humor, in the last statement of this Psalm, when the Lord said that it is OK with Him if we are so inclined to say, “Make no tarrying, O my God.”

Psalm 40 tells us what a wonderful Savior we have, and what a wonderful salvation we have. But are we getting from the Lord all of the peace and joy that King David did? Take Psalm 40 verse by verse, step by step, and let it all lead you to verse 17 so that you can say to the Lord about yourself what David said about himself, and can say to the Lord what David said about the Lord. And make sure that just as you don’t want the Lord to delay in helping you, you make sure that you make no delay in coming to Him.