



Address on Psalm 40:1-8

A sermon preached at
Bethesda Chapel, Great George Street, Bristol
On Sunday morning, 25th July 1897 by Mr George Müller

These verses refer throughout to our adorable Lord Jesus Christ, they bring before us His sufferings and resurrection, and they especially also point to His voluntary coming into the world to be our Substitute.

In verse 1, we read, "I waited patiently for the Lord." As in every particular our Lord Jesus Christ is an example to the church, so regarding His patience also, And here we see the result of waiting patiently. "He inclined unto me, and heard my cry." So the children of God will find it always. If we patiently wait for the Lord the result will be the answer will come according to our desire. We should particularly keep this in mind in order that we may receive the blessing for which we have asked God. Nothing is obtained by impatience, we only dishonour God by it, but we never in the least degree obtain the answer by impatience.

Verse 2. This refers to the great and awful sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ as our Substitute. When He passed through the hour of darkness this was fulfilled. "An horrible pit," the very figure brings before us the awfulness of the hour through which our Lord had to pass. But this did not continue always. He was brought out of it. And though we have not to suffer in the way of a substitute for others, yet we in the providence of God, because He sees it to be good for us, may also in our little degree be found in the horrible pit and in the miry clay. But it will not last forever – we too shall have our feet set upon a rock. Oh, how precious, how bright the prospect which will have its fulfilment in the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ! Now the Lord Jesus once for all passed through suffering, and once for all had His feet set on a rock, and His goings established, but ever since His resurrection this work has been further and further developed, and will be developed further and further up to the time of His return, and then the reaping will go on throughout eternity, so far as Himself is concerned, and so far as the church is concerned, and there will be nothing, nothing but partaking of the rivers of pleasure at the right hand of God (Ps 36:8).

Verse 3. "Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." This second part of the verse we see continually fulfilled, millions of millions have been brought to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and millions of millions will yet further be brought to a knowledge of Him, an innumerable multitude. Oh, how bright the prospect with regard to the end! Comparatively now as to outward appearance, the number is small – it will be seen how innumerable it is at last!

Verse 4. "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust." This is real blessing, and this only is real blessing, to make the Lord Jesus our trust for the salvation of our souls, for the obtaining of all that which we really need while passing through this vale of tears in the midst of trial and difficulty, and for our spiritual work and labour, for all this the only remedy is to trust in the Lord and then and only then, we are really blessed and can be really happy. This word "blessed" is the same in the original as "happy", so we may read it with regard to its application in both respects – "Happy, really happy is that man who maketh the Lord his trust".

Verse 5. This we should remember for our comfort when we are in trial, in difficulty, in affliction, whatever the outward appearance is – "This will never come to an end, I shall never be happy any more" – we should remember this word. "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done." Thou canst increase their number by helping me also out of the trial, out of the difficulty in which I find myself.

Then comes a remarkable sentence: "And Thy thoughts which are to us-ward". Here the Lord Jesus is brought before us in union with the church of God, to **us-ward**. Not "to **me**", or simply toward the church, but to "us-ward", in intimate union with the church, for we are members of that mystical body, of which the Lord Jesus is Head. And this truth we should continually seek to dwell on, and never lose sight of. Oh, how great the joy in God when we are able to enter into this, poor, wicked, guilty, hell-deserving sinners though we are naturally, the thoughts of God are "to us-ward". His mind is toward us, He is thinking about us! Oh, how precious is this, He

never loses sight of us, never forgets us. Oh, how precious is this! And then how many they are we read in what follows: “They cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered”. Just think of this! So often does God think of us that the thoughts which He has toward us, regarding us, these thoughts are so many they cannot be reckoned up in order. Not a thousand merely, not ten thousand merely, not fifty thousand merely in them – far, far more, they cannot be reckoned up in order. How about whom He is thinking thus? About poor sinners who deserve nothing but hell? We should say to ourselves individually, “He is thinking about **me**, wicked, guilty sinner, deserving nothing but hell, yet so dear am I to the heart of God, so precious in His sight, so entirely He is looking on me as He looks on His only begotten Son, because I am one with Him, I am a member of that body of which He is the Head, I am altogether united to Him, and therefore for His sake He is continually occupied in mind about me, and thoughtful ever how He may invariably make me happy, how He invariably may make manifest His care over me, so dear am I to His heart, so precious in His sight.

Verse 6. “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire.” Originally this was the law of things – it was according to the mind of God, but it was instituted because of man’s weakness, otherwise it would not have been. “Mine ears hast Thou opened.” Most, if not all, present know what is meant by this. When a slave was set at liberty, and chose to remain a slave (Ex 21:5) “I love my master, my wife and my children, I would rather remain a slave for ever” – then he was to be brought to the doorpost, and his ear bored through, and he was to remain the bond-servant of his master for ever. Now the Lord Jesus Christ makes Himself the bond-servant of God, that is, He would perfectly obey God at all times and under all circumstances, never, never doing anything contrary to the mind of God. To this it has reference. By thus yielding perfect obedience to God at all times and under all circumstances, the Lord Jesus Christ wrought out a righteousness through which, by faith in His name, we stand as justified ones before God. So He not merely fulfilled the law in our room and stead, but bore the penalty of the law, which we deserved on account of our numberless transgressions.

Now let us, beloved in Christ, whilst again we surround the table of the Lord, seek more than ever to enter into this thought. Though we individually have broken the law of God and that times without number, in our room and stead the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled it, and this is put to our account, and thus we who trust in Jesus stand as justified ones before God. Then the Lord Jesus Christ bore the punishment in our room and stead, and therefore, though we deserve nothing but punishment on account of our numberless transgressions, we shall not for one single sin be punished. And this should always be particularly before us when we meet for the breaking of bread, though at other times it should be continually in our minds, day by day and hour by hour we should seek to remember what the Lord Jesus did, and suffered in our room in order that peace and joy in the Holy Ghost may increase and abound more and more.



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