



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V27 N17

April 27, 2025

PSALMS: CELEBRATING CHRIST IN GOD'S HYMNBOOK

"Psalm 40"

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Faithfulness

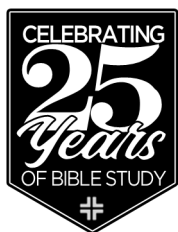
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

Proverbs 3:3-4



How does the LORD show faithfulness?



God's people celebrate his faithfulness. New Testament saints sing "Great is Thy Faithfulness." You're no doubt familiar with the lyrics. "Great is Thy *faithfulness*. Great is Thy *faithfulness*. Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy *faithfulness*, Lord, unto me . . . Summer and winter and spring-time and harvest. Sun, moon and stars in their courses above. Join with all nature in manifold witness. To Thy great *faithfulness*, *mercy* and *love*." Worth noting is the frequent association of faithfulness with God's mercy and love.

Old Testament saints also sang of God's faithfulness. The psalmists mention God's faithfulness thirty-seven times in their lyrics. Here are just a few references: "Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens, your *faithfulness* to the skies" (36:5); "I will praise you with the harp for your *faithfulness*, my God; I will sing praise to you with the lyre, Holy One of Israel" (71:22); "But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and *faithfulness*" (86:15); and finally, "For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his *faithfulness* continues through all generations" (100:5). Again note the frequent association of faithfulness with God's mercy and love.

God is faithful; he is not fickle. He is *unchanging* with regard to his truthfulness, love, compassion, and loyalty to his people and his promises. After closely linking God's faithfulness to his truthfulness, one theologian offers the following description of faithfulness. "God is reliable and faithful in his words. With respect to his promises, God always does what he promises to do, and we can depend on him never to be unfaithful to his promises. Thus, he is 'a God of faithfulness' (Deut. 32:4). In fact, this specific aspect of God's truthfulness is sometimes viewed as a

distinct attribute: *God's faithfulness means that God will always do what he has said and fulfill what he has promised* (Num. 23:19; cf. 2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 141:6, et al.). He can be relied upon, and he will never prove unfaithful to those who trust what he has said" (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 196).

Old Testament examples of God's faithfulness abound. His faithfulness to Abraham is a prime example. God promised to give Abraham and Sarah a son when she was sixty-five and he was seventy-five. By that time, Sarah had experienced menopause, was barren, and was no longer able to become pregnant. Abraham and Sarah knew as much, which explains the expectation that Eliazar might be their heir (Ge 15:2), as well as the attempt to have a child through a surrogate, Hagar (Ge 16:1-4). The promise was repeated over a period of twenty-five long years; yet God proved faithful – Isaac, the son God had promised to Abraham (Ge 15:4), was finally born when Abraham was one hundred years old, and Sarah was ninety. Another theologian adds: "That the people of Israel would one day possess the Promised Land seemed unlikely in view of their bondage in Egypt. The future blessing promised to the nation appeared in doubt when they were in captivity. And the first promise (Gen. 3:15) of a Redeemer seemed a long time in coming to fulfillment. Yet in all of these situations, the Lord proved that he is faithful. He does not make promises lightly. The promises he does make, he keeps" (Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, vol. 1, 291).

Numbers 23:19 says it all. "God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"

Read Psalm 40:1-17

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

*I waited patiently for the LORD;
he turned to me and heard my cry.*

*2 He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.*

*3 He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.*

*Many will see and fear the LORD
and put their trust in him.*

*4 Blessed is the one
who trusts in the LORD,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods.*

*5 Many, LORD my God,
are the wonders you have done,
the things you planned for us.
None can compare with you;
were I to speak and tell of your deeds,
they would be too many to declare.*

*6 Sacrifice and offering you did not desire –
but my ears you have opened –
burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.*

*7 Then I said, "Here I am, I have come –
it is written about me in the scroll.*

*8 I desire to do your will, my God;
your law is within my heart."*

*9 I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;
I do not seal my lips, LORD, as you know.*

*10 I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;
I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.
I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness
from the great assembly.*

*11 Do not withhold your mercy from me, LORD;
may your love and faithfulness always protect me.*

*12 For troubles without number surround me;
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see.
They are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart fails within me.*

*13 Be pleased to save me, LORD;
come quickly, LORD, to help me.*

*14 May all who want to take my life
be put to shame and confusion;
may all who desire my ruin
be turned back in disgrace.*

*15 May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!"
be appalled at their own shame.*

*16 But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who long for your saving help always say,
"The LORD is great!"*

*17 But as for me, I am poor and needy;
may the Lord think of me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
you are my God, do not delay.*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "slimy pit" in v. 2.
- Circle "new song" in v. 3.
- Circle "us" in v. 5.
- Underline references to sacrifice in v. 6.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 6, 16, 17.
- Bracket "my ears you have opened" in v. 6.
- Highlight vv. 7-8.
- Underline "saving acts" in v. 9 and "saving help" in v. 10.
- Circle attributes of God you see in vv. 10-11.
- Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 12.
- Circle "may" (6x) in vv. 14-17.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Summarize what the LORD did for David (vv. 1-2).
2. "Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD" (v. 4). How so (v. 5)?
3. If the LORD does *not* desire "sacrifice and offering," "burnt offerings and sin offerings" (v. 6), what does he desire?
4. Speaking about himself (vv. 7-8), David says, "I have come — ." To do what?
5. The writer of Hebrews cites Ps 40:6-8 (10:5b-7) with respect to David's greater Son, Jesus. What did Jesus have in common with David?
6. To what attributes of God did David testify "in the great assembly" (see v. 10)?
7. The psalm takes an abrupt turn beginning with verse 11. Explain.
8. Describe the origin of David's present troubles.
9. David prays a two-fold *contrasting* prayer (vv. 14-16). Describe the *contrast* in the two parts — cf. "but" (v. 16).
10. **Discussion:** David confesses that his "troubles" (v. 12a) are of his own making (v. 12b), and yet he still prays for deliverance. Talk about what you make of that.

Commentary On The Text

Psalms 40 reads like two psalms in one—a thanksgiving psalm (vv. 1-10) and a lament psalm (vv. 11-17). One commentator explains: “The Psalm consists of two distinct parts: verses 1-10 form a Thanksgiving of the Individual . . . which praises God for the deliverance from a grave illness, and verses 11-17 make up a Lament of the Individual . . . in which the writer appeals for help against his enemies and other unspecified evils. Most scholars regard this Psalm as composed of two originally independent poems” (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 1-72*, NCBC, 314), but this is not necessary. To further complicate matters, verses 13-17 with minor variations are found in Psalm 70. Regardless of its history of composition, in its present canonical form, Psalm 40 opens with thanksgiving for the LORD’s deliverance in the past (vv. 1-10) and continues with a prayer for his deliverance in the present (vv. 11-17)—the LORD’s past deliverance being the basis for the psalmist’s present request.

In the opening stanza (vv. 1-3), David recounts how the LORD responded to his previous cry for help. He waited patiently on the LORD, and the LORD rescued him from an unspecified near-death experience and sent him on his way, singing a different song, a “new” one that celebrated what the LORD had just done for him. Others would learn to trust the LORD from his experience.

The message of the psalm is perhaps contained in the second stanza (vv. 4-5). “Blessed” (i.e., “happy,” or “enviable”) are those who trust in the LORD, for the wonderful acts of benevolence he shows them are incomparable and innumerable.

In the third stanza (vv. 6-8), the psalmist dedicates himself to the LORD, *a la* Romans 12:1-2. These verses are difficult to interpret and thus difficult to translate—hence the variations in the versions. Consider the following rendering: “You do not want sacrifices and offerings; you do not ask for animals burned whole on the altar or for sacrifices to take away sins. Instead, you have given me ears to hear you, and so I answered, ‘Here I am; your instructions for me are in the book of the Law. How I love to do your will, my God! I keep your teaching in my heart’” (GNT).

One commentator explains: “Because God had been so good to David, the psalmist yielded his life as a living sacrifice to Him (Rom. 12:1-2). As the LORD’s anointed king, David was responsible to

follow the directions handed on to him in the scroll of the Mosaic Law. Because God had captured his affections, David could say the Law was in his heart, not just in his hands or in his mind. He delighted to do God’s will, rather than just doing it out of obligation” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Psalms,” 2025 ed., 192-93, soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf). According to the writer to the Hebrews, Christ shared this same attitude at his incarnation (Heb 10:5b-7).

In the fourth stanza (vv. 9-10), David testifies to the greatness of the LORD. Before the congregation of Israel, he testifies to God’s justice (“saving acts” v. 9 and “saving help” v. 10), “righteousness,” “faithfulness,” and “love.” “The positive duty to share the news of salvation is very clear in the Psalms, many of which were meant for use on such occasions. Cf. e.g. Psalm 116, and see on 22:22-26. An actual example of a formal thanksgiving is that of Hannah, with her offering (and the living sacrifice of Samuel), her spoken testimony and her ‘new song’ (1 Sam. 1:24-2:10)” (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, 178).

The upbeat spirit of Psalm 40 changes dramatically at verse 11. Based on his experience of salvation in the past, David prays for deliverance from his enemies in the present (vv. 11-13). His chickens, i.e., his unspecified “sins,” have come home to roost, so to speak (v. 12). He recognizes that sin, like foolishness, has its consequences. None of which are beneficial. Readers would like more details, but the psalmist refrains from giving too much information—something that adds to the psalm’s applicability to others. And so he asks the LORD to come to his aid quickly (v. 13). He prays that his enemies be put to shame and turned back in disgrace (vv. 14-15). All this so that those who trust the Lord will “rejoice and be glad” and always say, “the LORD is great!” (v. 16). In spite of the fact that his troubles are of his own making, he prays, “May the LORD think of me.”

On the practical implication of Psalm 40, one commentator writes: “We who are believers should present ourselves as living sacrifices to God with a willing heart because of His grace to us (Rom. 6:13 12:1). Having done so, we can appeal to Him for help against our spiritual enemies and expect His aid. Nevertheless, we should base our appeal on what will glorify God” (Constable, 194-95).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 2 *slimy pit* “The **slimy pit** and the **mud and mire** present the image of a cistern (cf. 69:1-2, 14-15). By contrast, Yahweh’s salvation is depicted in the image of a **rock** and a **firm place to stand**” (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 191). The expression is used metaphorically of death. “The allusions to death and dying in the words ‘slimy pit,’ ‘mud,’ and ‘mire’ (v.2) suggest that David was seriously sick (cf. Ps 38), even to death. Healing was then salvation from the netherworld (cf. 69: 2, 14), out of which the Lord ‘lifted’ him (see Reflections, p. 663, Sheol—Grave—Death in the Psalms)” (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 365).

v. 3 *new song* “The newness probably alludes to the events just celebrated, rather than to the recent date of the composition” (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 1-72*, NCBC, 315); it was not necessarily a new composition (VanGemeren, 365).

v. 5 *us* What the Lord has done for the psalmist is but an example of what he does for his people. “This is a transcript of the praise offered in the presence of others, no doubt at the sanctuary of God . . . His own experience reminds the psalmist of the many other wondrous works that the Lord is known to have wrought for His people and of His ‘thoughts toward us.’ What happened to the writer is not without parallel” (H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of the Psalms*, 324).

v. 6 various sacrifices Cf. “To obey is better than sacrifice . . .” (1Sa 15:22b). “David is very much aware that the Lord was not pleased with mere sacrifice, as the accounts of Saul bring out. The kingdom had been torn from Saul because of his disobedience, not because of his aversion to sacrifice (1Sa 15:22-23). Some have mistakenly concluded from vv.6-8 that the psalmist was opposed to the sacrificial system. On the contrary, David was opposed to mere formalism and declares his personal commitment to the Lord” (VanGemeren, 367).

v. 6 *my ears . . .* “Some have suggested that the words **my ears You have pierced** refer to the custom of boring a slave’s ear (Ex. 21:6), meaning ‘You have bound me as a slave to Yourself.’ However, it is more likely that this statement is a recognition that God had given him the ability to hear and obey the Word of the Lord (cf. NIV marg., ‘opened’)” (Allan P. Ross, “Psalms” in *The Bible*

Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament, 824). Note: The NIV©1984 has “pierced.” The NIV©2011 has “opened.”

v. 7 “Here I am . . .” “Here I am, I have come. Probably refers to David’s commitment to the Lord at the time of his enthronement. *It is written about me in the scroll*. The context strongly suggests that the ‘scroll’ refers to the personal copy of the law that the king is to ‘write for himself’ (Dt 17:18) at the time of his enthronement to serve as the covenant charter of his administration (see Dt. 17:18-20; 2Ki 11:12; cf. 1Ki 2:3; see also NIV text note)” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ps 40:7). See Heb 10:5-7. “In Hebrews 10:5 through 7, the writer of that epistle quoted verses 6 through 8 as expressing Jesus Christ’s attitude at His incarnation. The sacrifices of the Mosaic system could never satisfy God’s high demands. They only removed sin temporarily and expressed worship superficially. The offering that fully satisfied God was the willing self-sacrifice of the sinless Son of Man. Jesus Christ offered Himself to God as David did, as expressed in this psalm” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Psalms,” 2025 ed., 193, soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf).

v. 9, 10 *saving acts, help* Cf. “justice” (NET, NLT); “deliverance” (ESV); “righteousness” (NASB). “*Heb* ‘I proclaim justice in the great assembly.’ Though ‘justice’ appears without a pronoun here, the LORD’s just acts are in view (see v. 10). His ‘justice’ (*tsedeq*) is here the deliverance that originates in his justice; he protects and vindicates the one whose cause is just” (*The NET Bible*, 23tn on Ps 40:9).

vv. 14-15 *may* “The psalmist prays for his enemies’ fall and shame in accordance with the principles of justice and with the promise of God to curse those who cursed his own (cf. 35:4, 26; Ge 12:3). It must be remembered that the enemies were probably not known personally. They were Israel’s national enemies—those who hated Israel, David, and Yahweh, the God of Israel” (VanGemeren, 371).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THIS PASSAGE

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD to forgive and deliver them from all their troubles, for the wondrous acts of love he shows those who trust in him are incomparable and innumerable.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?
2. What does this passage teach me about myself?
3. What does this passage lead me to do?



PARENT CONNECTION

When our kids were little, they would always ask my husband, a fabulous storyteller, to share a tale of growing up in Rhode Island. Of course, he talked about walking to school uphill both ways in the snow, but also about his lifelong friend, Kevin, who may or may not have encouraged him to skip school a few times to make Steak-umms. There's this one time they had a grease fire and thought it would be a good idea to put it out with water. They survived. The kids also loved to hear crazy stories about Sloppy Joe, my husband's Army buddy whose antics seemed to live up to his name. His best stories, though, were the ones that included them. What the kids didn't realize as he was recounting the time the oldest found the poison in the garage or the youngest quietly slipped into the pool, was that these stories are more than tales of their growing up, but stories of God's faithfulness. They might request the miraculous tale of the time our middle son began to choke and we frantically called the paramedics. But what they're really hearing is how we cried out to God and somehow He cleared our son's throat, allowing him to breathe. We all have stories of God's faithfulness, from the time He called us into a relationship with Him to how He rescues and redeems us, daily changing us into Christ's likeness. These stories are meant to be shared and the ripple effect of God's work spreads far and wide. This week, share a story of God's faithfulness with your kids! We're praying for you.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Psalm 40.

1. What did the Lord do for David after he heard his cry?
2. What does David proclaim and speak of in verses 9 and 10?
3. How does David view his position and God's position in verse 18?

What Do You Think?

What wonders could David be referring to in verse 5?

What Do You Do?

Enjoy a dinner where everyone speaks pig Latin *except* when you're talking about God's wonders and deeds. Why is it important to speak clearly and frequently of God's faithfulness?

CORE COMPETENCY: Faithfulness

I am loyal to God and others, so they know they can count on me.

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 1:7

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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BIBLE CHURCH**

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OUR MISSION
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.