

## PSALM 40

## THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

This Psalm is the voice of Christ Himself, when He was crying and groaning in the midst of the agony of death; and it is also a beautiful example and consolation for the whole Church, reminding the people of God that He will never forsake any of those who believe in Him. Even when they are physically suffering, or when they are in the midst of mental agonies and despair; they may cry unto Him in the midst of the horrible pit and terrors of death, and they may rest assured that they will be heard!

Doubts and fears about the everlasting state of our souls are indeed a horrible pit and miry clay; and sadly, many a dear son or daughter of the King has sunk down into these dreadful depths. There is power enough in the Lord to help the weakest of all who trust in Him, and grace enough to help the unworthiest. The Psalmist here tells us that he waited patiently; he continued believing, hoping, and praying. And those who wait patiently for God do not wait in vain! Those who have been under such times of affliction, and who – by the grace of God – have been relieved, may apply the words of verse 2 very feelingly to themselves; they are indeed brought up out of a horrible pit! Christ is the only Rock upon which a poor soul can stand fast; and in Him, His people are filled with joy and peace in believing. O how many indeed are the benefits with which we are daily loaded, both by the Providence and the grace of our God! (verse 5)

Verses 6-10 teach us that all our own works and sacrifices are not sufficient to make our peace with the Lord. The Psalmist speaks prophetically, in the Person of Christ – declaring that He is the only One Who truly pleases God and fulfills His holy Law. Christ came to bring glory to God and grace to mankind, which it was impossible for the Levitical sacrifices to ever do. “In the volume of the book,” says He, “it is written of me” – that is, in the rolls of the Divine decrees and counsels, the covenant of redemption was recorded. He was set apart to perform the office of Mediator between God and man, and to fulfill the promise of blessing and grace that was given in Genesis 3 – that the Seed of the Woman would bruise the serpent’s head.

As we study this Psalm, let us not fail to observe the inefficacy of all sacrifices except that of Christ Himself! It is impossible that the blood of bulls and

**Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:**

*Jesus is clearly here in this Psalm! Even if the New Testament were not so express upon it, we should have concluded that David here spoke of our Lord, especially in verses 6-9; but the Apostle, in Hebrews 10:5-9, puts all conjecture out of court! He confines the meaning to Him Who came into the world to do His Father’s will.*

*Verses 1-3 contain a personal thanksgiving, followed by a general declaration of Jehovah’s goodness to His saints (verses 4-5). In verses 6-10, we have an avowal of dedication to the Lord’s will; and verses 11-17 contain a prayer for deliverance from pressing trouble, and for the overthrow of enemies.*

goats could take away any human sin; and yet, without shedding of blood, there can be no remission. The Lord Jesus is the one and only all-sufficient Sacrifice which Jehovah desired. But what is meant in verse 6: "Mine ears hast thou opened"? In this text, the appointment of the



Lord Jesus as Mediator and Servant to Jehovah, in the great work of redemption, is declared by an allusion to a custom among the Jews. The Law of Moses permitted a Hebrew servant to be set free after six years of service to a Hebrew master; but when a servant became so attached to his master and his family that he determined to remain in his service forever, his ear was to be bored through as a mark of perpetual servitude (see Exodus 21:6). Was there ever a Scripture passage that was more plain in testifying of the appointment of the willing consent of the Lord Jesus, in thus giving Himself as an offering for sin? Yes, blessed Savior! You loved Your Bride so greatly that You voluntarily became Jehovah's obedient Servant forever, when You had every right to go free! When neither burnt offerings nor animal sacrifices could go one step toward the atonement of our sin, then You said, "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God!" What a precious thought to the believer!

In the rest of this Psalm (verses 11-17), we see the frightful view that David had of sin; it was this that made the discovery of a Redeemer so welcome to him! Even the best of saints see themselves to be lost and undone, unless they are continually preserved by the grace of God. In all his reflections upon each step of his life, the Psalmist discovered something amiss. Indeed, the sight and sense of our sins would surely lead us to despair if we did not have – at the same time – the sight of our Savior. He has triumphed over our spiritual enemies; and so we, through Him, shall be more than conquerors! This may encourage all who seek the Lord, love His salvation, rejoice in Him, and endeavor to praise Him. No griefs nor poverty can make those who fear the Lord miserable. Their God, and all that He has and does, is the ground of their joy. The prayer of faith unlocks His fullness, which supplies and satisfies all their needs!

*Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, let blessings be everlastingly given to Your precious name for Your merciful and compassionate undertaking of the work of redemption – for when the blood of bulls and goats, and the sacrifices on a thousand altars, could never atone for our guilt; You came forth to save us, in the fullness of Your grace and love! Give us grace to sing to You a new song of praise and gladness, with the same strains of adoration that are being sung by the Church above! Amen.*