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I Delight to Do Your Will Psalm 40 Studies on Christ in the Psalms

Around the capitol, we are all familiar with the position "Chief of Staff". This is the person who seeks to carry out the desires of the leader or elected official whom they serve. It is often a close friend or supporter. If the chief of staff is to be successful, they must "delight" to do the will of their leader. They must seek to carry out their decisions and policies on a constant, daily basis.

In Psalm 40 we read of how Jesus, God's Son, delighted to carry out the will of the Father who sent Him. We are led to worship Him for what He did for us. And we are moved to follow His example as we seek to delight to do God's will.

We Can Learn from David's Experiences and from His Trust in the Lord

David was writing in response to some very difficult challenges and struggles in his life. He writes of being in the pit of destruction and the miry clay (vs. 2). He relates that "evils beyond number had surrounded him and that his own numerous iniquities had overtaken him (vs. 12). Wicked people were seeking to destroy his life and took delight in his hurt (vs. 14). He realized he was afflicted and needy (vs. 17).

In the face of such great difficulties, David shares how he patiently trusted in the Lord and how God delivered him from past trials. Trusting that God would continue to show him compassion and lovingkindness, he cried out for God's deliverance from his current difficulties.

Even when undergoing such struggles David still delighted to do God's will and follow God's law (vs. 8). He would still tell all about God's faithfulness and salvation. We can certainly learn from David how we should respond to the trials, challenges, and difficulties in our own lives.

We Better Understand What Christ has Done for Us as We See This Psalm's Fulfillment in the New Testament

Psalm 40 is one of the Psalms that has a specific and explicit reference to Jesus Christ fulfilled in the New Testament. In verses 6-8 we read:

⁶Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.

⁷Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. ⁸I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."

We then turn to Hebrews 10 where we see:

⁵Therefore, when He (Jesus) comes into the world, He says,

***"SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED,
BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;***

***⁶IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU
HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE.***

***⁷"THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME
(IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME)
TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'"***

***⁸After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND
WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE
NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE in them"
(which are offered according to the Law), ⁹then He
said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes
away the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰By
this will we have been sanctified through the offering
of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.***

This is one of the clearest statements of the work of the coming Savior found anywhere in the Old Testament. While David may have written about his own experience, God used him as a prophet to write of Jesus Christ.

David writes that God did not desire or take pleasure in sacrifices and offerings, yet we know He instituted the sacrificial system for His followers. God did not want these mere rituals, He wanted hearts that were devoted to Him and sought to do His will (1 Sam. 15:22; Jeremiah 44:23).

In Hebrews 10 we read the coming of the Savior would supersede the offerings of animals in the Old Testament. The killing of the lambs and goats and bulls could not take away sin. The fact they were offered over and over served to remind of the presence of sin and its

consequences. These were but a shadow or a picture that pointed to what Jesus would do when He suffered and died for us on the cross.

We then read some amazing statements that help us understand Christ's coming to save us from our sin.

In Psalm 40 we read, "**My ears You have opened**". In Hebrews 10 the passage is quoted, "**...A body you have prepared for me**". The difference in the quote from the Old Testament comes mainly from the fact that New Testament writers most often quoted from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was originally written in Hebrew. The writer may have used the part (the opening or creation of the ears) to represent the whole (the preparation of the body). In Psalm 40 the ears were opened to hear and obey God's Word. In Hebrews the body was prepared to obey and carry out God's will.

This describes how God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, came to earth and while fully God took on a human body – becoming fully man – so that He could carry out His Father's will.

We read "**I delight to do your will, O my God**" and "**I have come to do your will, O God**". Christ came, and He delighted to do His Father's will. This should amaze us when we realize that it does not just mean He came to live a perfect sinful life, to preach the gospel, and to heal the sick and feed the hungry. His Father's will included Him going to the cross to suffer and die for our sin. God's will included the betrayal by His friends, the suffering in the garden, the beating and humiliation, and horrible death of crucifixion. Yet we read that Christ delighted to do God's will! Over and over we read that the Father sent His Son (John 17). and Jesus willingly came. In Hebrews 5:8 we read how Jesus, as a man, "**learned obedience from the things which He suffered**". In Hebrew 12:2 we read of Jesus, "**...for the joy set before Him (He) endured the cross**".

Here, the will of God specifically refers to His marvelous plan of salvation. As sinful people we are under God's wrath and righteous judgment. God sent His Son to become a man so that He might live a perfect life, take the punishment of our sin upon Himself, and suffer and die in our place. He would rise again and take His place at His Father's side. Now, when we repent and put our faith in Him, our sins are forgiven, and His goodness is given to us. This is God's will that Jesus came and delighted to do for us.

We Worship Even More When We Look for Christ in this Psalm

Psalm 40 has specific and explicit reference to Christ in the New Testament. However, we remember three truths that help us to see Christ in a more general sense in the Psalms.

Jesus is the Representative Singer of this Psalm. We could say with certainty that Jesus would have likely sung this song while He was here on earth. As a man He endured experiences similar to David's and to our own.

He depended upon His Father and cried out to Him for grace and deliverance. He sang praise to Father even during the trials and suffering. If we read Psalm 40 with the thought that Jesus would have sung this very song, it gives us an even greater appreciation of all He did for us.

Jesus is the Supreme or Ultimate singer of the Psalms.

We read Psalm 40 and easily see how Christ is the ultimate singer of this Psalm.

When we read of being brought up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay we cannot but help think of the resurrection.

We realize that there is no person but Christ who could truly and completely say, "**I delight to do your will, O my God; Your law is within my heart**" (vs. 8). David wrote those words, yet we know it was not completely true of him. While we may seek to love and follow God, we must admit it is not always completely true of us. Yet Christ's delight in God's will and His obedience is just a part of His righteousness (goodness) that is credited to us when we trust in Him.

When we read of the proclamation of glad tidings (vs. 9-10) we think of how Christ proclaimed the Good News of the Gospel message.

In Psalm 40 we read of faith and trust in God even in the face of great trials and suffering. Christ is surely the ultimate example of such faith in the Father even as suffered so greatly for us.

Jesus is the Coming Singer of the Psalms.

David writes of God's deliverance from trials that may be experienced in this life. But we learn from Jesus' own example there will be times when God's will might include ongoing trials and suffering. There may be a period of time when we continue to suffer even as we cry out for deliverance. We will certainly deal with trials of some kind until Christ comes to rule over all things. Until then, we look forward to the day when Christ will fully and finally deliver us. We stand amazed and worship Christ for all He did for us. We trust in God's grace and mercy. We strive to delight in doing God's will. We tell others of His Good News. And we join with the Psalmist in crying out,

***Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
Let those who love Your salvation say continually,
"The LORD be magnified!"
(Psalm 40:16)***

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

Thursday, July 26

12:00 Senate President's Conference Room (by Sen. Pres. Offices)