

Out of the Miry Clay, into the Arms of the LORD

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Text: Psalm 40:1-5

Date: Sunday, September 2, 2009, 7pm

Series: The Life of David

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Introduction: Open your Bible to **Psalm 40:1-5**. The title of our message is "Out of the Miry Clay, and Into the Arms of the LORD". I want to talk about God's compassion for His children. He's not a Father that loves us because we are perfect. He's a Father that loves us because He's birthed us into this world, both physically and spiritually, you belong to Him. We didn't always want to go His way or live for Him, but He rescued us! He loved you with an everlasting love, and He loves nothing more than for you to call Him "Father". Don't you love to hear your children call your name? O, it is also precious to our Heavenly Father.

Tonight we are going to see how much God loves us. We need these reminders when we are discouraged. David wrote this Psalm probably during the rebellion of Absalom. David is speaking about a time in his life when he felt trapped in a helpless and hopeless situation. But, even in that terrible time of darkness and fear, God heard his cry and reached into David's pit and lifted him out. He tells us how the Lord lifted him out of the mire and placed him in the choir, with a new song in his heart.

David knew, and we all ought to know tonight, that we are in the Father's hand, and no one can pluck us from His hand. We are told about some blessings that have come to us because God also lifted us out of the miry clay, and He set your feet upon a rock. O the blessings God has given to us! We are going to read about them in Psalm 40. Let's read verses 1 through 5.

Psalm 40:1-5, "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. 4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. 5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

[Prayer for Guidance]

I. God uses trials to allow us to experience His **Tenderness**.

A. We experience God's Tenderness when we are **Waiting**. **Verse 1**, "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry". David describes a time of waiting in his life. He seems to indicate that this time was a time of helplessness and hopelessness. It was a time when David was waiting on the Lord

to move and deliver him from his terrible circumstances. He was unable to help himself, so he was forced to wait on the Lord.

We have all experienced those helpless times in our lives, but none can compare to that time we spent lost in sin. Can you remember the day it became clear to you that you were a lost sinner living under the wrath of a holy God?

Ephesians 2:1-5, "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. ⁴ ¶ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ".

Can you recall what it was like when you realized that you were sinking deeper and deeper into the miry grip of sin? There is no greater feeling of hopelessness and helplessness than that! There is no other pit of life that can compare to knowing that you are lost in sin and headed to Hell. Thank God, even in that terrible time of waiting, God loved us, heard us and reached out to us, even while we were languishing in sin.

- B. We experience God's Tenderness when we are **Weary**. Listen to David describe his weary, helpless condition. **Verses 1-2**, "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he **inclined** unto me, and heard my cry. ² He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and established my goings.*" David tells us that when he cried out to the Lord, God "inclined" unto him. That word means "to stretch out or to bend." When you have no strength, and you are weary, God loves to take you into His arms.

David was in a position where he could not reach the Lord. He had no strength to deliver himself from that horrible pit. He could not reach up, but God gladly reached down to him! The Lord gladly condescended to reach down to lift this lonely, lowly, broken man! **Romans 5:6**, "For when we were **yet without strength**, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

Can you remember that day when the Lord of glory "**bent down**" to hear your cry? Can you remember the time when the God of Heaven reached down farther than you could ever reach up? Friend, when the precious, Sovereign God stretched down His hand to you and lifted you out of the pit of your sins; that was the greatest day of your life!

Thank God, **where man failed, grace prevailed**, "For where sin abounds, grace much more abounds!" (**Romans 5:20**). I praise His name that He loved us in spite of our failings! His tenderness abounds to us. We have nothing to complain about. God's not given us what we deserve!! He's given us His tender love.

- C. We experience God's Tenderness when we are **Wounded**. **Verse 2**, David testifies of God that "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay".

David describes himself as being in a “horrible pit.” The word “horrible” means “roar, din, crash, uproar, tumult.”¹ “Pit” refers to a “cistern or a dungeon.”²

This has the idea of being trapped in a place of torment while ones enemies constantly cry out against him. David speaks as one who is wounded by the problems and burdens of life. But, God reached out to him, even in that horrible time and extended His tenderness to David.

Who among us can forget the horrible pit of sin? Who can forget pain and the loneliness of our separation from God? Who can forget the burden of conviction? Who can forget the fear over knowing we were headed to Hell? Being lost is like being in a horrible pit, while the enemy of the soul, Satan, howls against us, mocking, taunting and condemning. Thank God for the tender hand of the Lord that reached out to touch us in our wounded condition! When we needed Him the most, He did not turn us away, but He took us in, bound up our wounds and gave us rest. “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

If you are wounded tonight, the same God that saved you will comfort you today. He called you then, and He calls you now to come to Him. He says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

II. God uses trials to allow us to experience His **Touch**.

A. **Explanation:** The phrase “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay...” indicates that God did not just see what David was going through and He did not just listen as David talked; God did something about it! He got into the pit with David and he lifted David out.

B. **Scriptural Support:** God is there for you when you can do nothing for yourself. Christ said to Paul, and says to all of us in **2 Corinthians 12:9**, “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Paul’s reply was, as our should be, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

C. **Illustration:** I don’t know of another poem that expresses this better than the poem entitled “Footprints”.

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the LORD. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonging to him, and the other to the LORD.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of life, there was only one set of footprints.

He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life. This really bothered him, and he asked the LORD about it. He said,

¹ Strong’s Concordance. 07588 שׂוֹן sha’own shaw-one’

² Strong’s Concordance. 0953 בֹּרַי bore bore. AV-pit 42, cistern 4, dungeon 11, well 9, dungeon.

"LORD, You said that once I decided to follow You, You'd never leave me, but I've noticed that during the most turbulent times in my life, there was only one set of footprints in the sand".

The LORD replied, "My precious, precious child. I love you, and I would never leave you. During your times of greatest trials and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints in the sand, it was then that I carried you.

Jesus rescued us from the pit we could not escape from.

- If a legalist came by a saw a sinner in a pit, he would preach a sermon about the dangers of the pit.
- If a religionist came by a saw that same sinner in that pit, he would talk about steps the sinner could take to help him get out of that pit and avoid other pits in the future.
- If a pessimist walked by, he would tell that sinner that he is going to die in that pit.
- If an optimist passed by, he would tell the sinner that he had seen worse pits than that.
- If a realist walked by, he would tell that man to just accept his pit.
- But, if Jesus came by, He would get into the pit with that sinner and lift him out.

That's just what Christ did. **Romans 5:8**, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Christ condescended into the pit. He died in our place.

Now turn over to **Philippians 2:5-11**, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father".

Mary was told that in **Matthew 1:21** she would "bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins".

III. God uses trials to allow us to experience His **Transformation**.

A. God changes our **Nature**. **Verse 2**, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay".

Christ's touch in our hearts has now changed your life! God brought David up out of that terrible dungeon. When David talks about "miry clay," he is speaking of the sludge that collects at the bottom of a well. It has the idea of that deep, slimy, clinging mud that tries to pull you deeper into its grasp. It also has the idea of instability; of feet that are slipping and in danger of falling.

Look also at **verse 3** "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." David says that

there is "a new song" in his mouth. The mouth can sing because the heart has been transformed.

2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." We are God's "workmanship", His masterpiece "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (**Ephesians 2:10**).

We were dead dry bones, and God raised us from the dead!

Each day God is conforming us more and more into the image of Christ (**Romans 8:29-30**). We are growing and changing in the grace and knowledge of Christ every day (**2 Peter 3:18**).

- B. God changes our **Master**, **Verse 2**, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." I am now in Christ, part of His church, and Christ is the Head of His church. **Galatians 2:20**, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Our feet are now founded on the Rock, which is Christ. He establishes our goings. Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings in every decision of our life.

- C. God changes our **Future**, **Verse 2**, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."

Proverbs 3:5-6 give us the same principle: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." You can trust God in the darkness!

Listen to the Psalmist of **Psalms 37**, probably David who says in **verse 1**, "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in the LORD, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." Amen isn't that true? Look down at verses **23-24**, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the LORD upholdeth him with His hand". God's going to guide your feet!

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (**Philippians 1:6**). Hebrews 12 tells us that Christ is the "Author and finisher of our faith"!

- D. He changes our **Pleasure**, **Verse 3**, "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

The joy and praise of our life is now different than most of the people that surround us.

E. He changes our **Power**. **Verse 3**, "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

People used to look at our lives see the world. They saw money or possessions or pleasure. Now they see the Lord. When people see you they will see that the central power of your life is the Lord, and they will want to trust in Him!!

IV. God uses trials to allow us to experience His **Trustworthiness**. Great is His faithfulness!! Very briefly consider **Psalm 40:4-5**, "Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. 5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Conclusion: God's mercies are new every morning. His faithfulness is Great!! You are taken out of the miry clay out of the horrible pit, and your feet are set on a Rock. Give Him praise. He will never fail you. You will never falter as you trust in Him.