

Isaiah 7:10-14. Psalm 40:1-17. Luke 1:26-38..Hebrews

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“If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all” Isaiah 7:9b.

Keep these words in the front of your mind during this message – please.

I would like to draw some thoughts from Psalm 40.

It speaks to me, not of depression and down, but of delight and happiness and quiet smiles.

The writer is so totally honest that it brings his words into my soul, imagine telling God the almighty creator and lover of us all that:

1. I was in a pit, stuck in a bog that sucks at my feet and every move is an effort that consumes all that is in me - just to take the next step – to move on with the day.
2. I am so close to destruction of emotions and feelings and my body is weak as the destruction of mind effects my whole being .
3. Day by day, morning comes – ‘oh Lord not another day’ – slug through the day – evening comes – but not sleep and rest , yet the sleep of tablets and other things comes, and so do the destructive dreams.

Yet I wait – even in the midst of the nothingness I can trust that God knows and is working in me and with me -patiently seems such an inappropriate word and has nothing to do with dullness and lethargy – Patiently knows, somehow in the center of our beings, patiently knows, and is still.

Still even as we cry unto the Lord – our cry of dry tears we still draw from the knowing that Gods love, even unfelt, is real. How can it not be – the world still exists -I still exist – patience comes from love and our God is made of solid patience.

Get on with the day, and one day you will walk around a corner and there it is – a hit of joy and we draw in a deep deep breath of laughter, and smile it out in tears, and running and song and we are like mad people. (CS.Lewis)

The psalmist sang out, or maybe said, in a quiet voice of certainty, “I waited patiently for the Lord; God listened to me and heard my cry. God drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry sucking bog, *and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.*

*“He put a new song in my mouth.”*

What sort of song, do you feel, would come spontaneously and uncontrolled from my mouth – YOUR mouth???from the pit to ? a carefully controlled and choreographed dance and composed song?? Or – a song of freedom.

“He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.”

You, O Lord, will not restrain Your majesty from me;

Your steadfast love and faithfulness will ever preserve me!.

This is where we now live, for difficulties will come - yet our Gods love/presence remains the same, He will not hold back mercy from us.

The words of Psalm 40 were written some 3000 years ago in a time where human beings were the same as today – v12 “for evils have encompassed me beyond number; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head; my heart fails me.”

The world of wars was the same - the only difference being that with a sword they could only kill one person at a time while today, we have progressed, civilized, to being able to destroy the whole world at the same time.

*What is different is that the writer lived in a time in Gods will when the only way to approach God was through animal or bird sacrifices and strict obedience to minuet laws and ways of living. This system was introduced by God as a mercy, as a way to build a people for the Lord Jesus to come through, not a sinless line, but a line that believed and trusted God. The line included some challenging choices – both men and women.*

*When the angle came to Mary and Joseph their response shows that they believed in and trusted God. Mary said “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to you word.” She said this knowing that the penalty for pregnancy outside of marriage was death – she trusted – not knowing how God would work it out but trust – a knowing, a certainty in God. Joseph showed his faith, his aliveness to God by marrying Mary after the angel came to him and by his response when warned of danger – he got up immediately during the night and took Mary and the baby Jesus to safety – didn’t think – ‘yes I’ll do that in the morning or at a more convenient time.’*

*We live in the time when “God made a body for Himself” (Hebrews 10:5-7) and Jesus lived amongst us, showing His love, and teaching His ways, the Kingdom of Gods ways that we, with the Companion, His Spirit in us live.*

*“Jesus became sin for us so that we might become the rightness of God in trust in Him - Jesus who took our sins on the cross and defeated the power of death.”*

V16 all who seek, you, will rejoice and be glad in you; we who love your salvation will say continually, Great is the Lord, He thinks of ME of you. You are my help and deliverer and companion and teacher and you bring Jesus to me, my savior and family, and my smile.