

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

PSALM 35-41

PSALM THIRTY-FIVE and 36 are “[Imprecatory Psalms](#).” “[Imprecate](#)” means “[to invoke evil](#).” These two psalms belong to a genre of psalms called “[the cursing psalms](#).” In them the writer blasts his enemy.

The psalmist rains down curses, and lashes out at evil in violent ways.

One author writes, “[The main message of the imprecatory Psalms is this: rage belongs before God](#).” When you’re the victim of evil there are three ways to respond: You can strike back *in anger* - or *bottle up your feelings* – or you can take your desire for justice to Almighty God.

My favorite line in an imprecatory Psalm is found in Psalm 58:6. David prays, “[Break their teeth in their mouth, O God!](#)” *God, bust their chops!*

Have you ever wanted to pray that kind of prayer?

Philip Yancey writes, “[Instinctively, we want to ‘clean up’ our feelings in our prayers, but perhaps we have it all backwards... We should strive to take all our worst feelings to God.](#)” Better to *pray it* than to say *it* or *do it*...

Remember, “[Rage belongs before God](#).” Our desire for vindication and justice is often righteous, but only God can and *should* bring it to pass.

David was a godly man with a fiery temper. He hated sin, and got angry at sinners. But his anger was corralled by his tendency to take his feelings to God. In these Imprecatory

Psalms God allows David to vent his anger.

CS Lewis once observed, “If the Jews cursed more bitterly than pagans it was because they took right and wrong more seriously.” That explains some of the harsh statements David makes in these next two chapters.

Verse 1 “Plead my cause, O LORD, with those who strive with me; fight against those who fight against me.” As Christians, Jesus elevates us to a higher standard, we’re to love those who hate us - but David’s concern is about outcome not the outlaw... You can love the sinner, yet ask God to thwart his sinful plans. Lord, “*Fight against those who fight against me.*”

That’s a fair prayer. Many times I’ve prayed, “*Lord, I’ll love him, but please upset what he’s trying to do.*” That’s the essence of Psalm 35.

“Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for my help. Also draw out the spear, and stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, “I am your salvation.” King Saul’s jealousy and hatred for David was only part of the problem. Other men David considered friends were lying about him and slandering him. They were taking political advantage of David’s trouble.

And being a fugitive there was nothing David could do to stop them... except pray this prayer. He wanted God to fight against his enemies.

“Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor who seek after my life; let those be turned back and brought to confusion who plot my hurt.

Let them be like chaff before the wind, and let the angel of the LORD chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the LORD pursue them. For without cause they have hidden their net for me in a pit, which they have dug without cause for my life. Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly, and let his net that he has hidden catch himself; into that very destruction let him fall." Let him fall into his own trap!

Like Haman let him swing from the gallows he made for Mordecai.

"And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; it shall rejoice in His salvation.

All my bones shall say, "LORD, who is like You, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?" Something in all us takes joy when see the poor man triumph over his oppressor – when justice prevails – when the bad guy gets what's coming to him! *I always cheer when Rocky decks Drago!*
It's not revenge... we just like seeing justice served.

Verse 11 "Fierce witnesses rise up; they ask me things that I do not know. They reward me evil for good, to the sorrow of my soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer would return to my own heart.

I paced about as though he were my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother." The man who has turned on David is the same fellow David prayed for when he was sick. David sat with this man's family

while he was in the ICU. Now he's an enemy.

"But in my adversity they rejoiced and gathered together; attackers gathered against me, and I did not know it..." His enemies plotted against him. David had no idea of their clandestine meetings. It was an ambush.

"They tore at me and did not cease; with ungodly mockers at feasts they gnashed at me with their teeth. Lord, how long will You look on?

Rescue me from their destructions, my precious life from the lions.

I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people. Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.

For they do not speak peace, but they devise deceitful matters against the quiet ones in the land. They also opened their mouth wide against me, and said, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it." They falsely accuse him.

"This You have seen, O LORD; do not keep silence. O Lord, do not be far from me. Stir up Yourself, and awake to my vindication, to my cause, my God and my Lord. Vindicate me, O LORD my God, according to Your righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.

Let them not say in their hearts, "Ah, so we would have it!"

Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up." Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion who rejoice at my hurt; let them be clothed with shame and dishonor who exalt

themselves against me.

Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favor my righteous cause; and let them say continually, "Let the LORD be magnified, who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant." And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long."

PSALM THIRTY-SIX is prefaced "A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD." As a king I'm sure David had many titles: "Your Highness," "Your Majesty," "Your Anointed." But here was his favorite, "Servant of Lord."

Verse 1 "An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flatters himself in his own eyes, when he finds out his iniquity and when he hates."

Here's a man who flatters himself when he needs to repent. He denies his sin. The surest sign of sin is the refusal to admit its existence. Author Thomas Carlyle wrote, "The deadliest sin is the consciousness of no sin."

Plop an anvil on a dead man's chest and he won't feel its tremendous weight... because he's dead. Dead men are immune to the burden. The same is true of those who are spiritually dead. They don't feel their guilt.

"The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; he has ceased to be wise and to do good. He devises wickedness on his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not abhor evil."

The man David has in mind is not the well-meaning fellow who misses the mark and occasionally slips up and sins. This guy premeditates evil.

Verse 5 contrasts God's mercy with the evildoer. “**Your mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.**

Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgments are a great deep; O LORD, You preserve man and beast.” There are men who plot evil against God, while God goes to great extremes to preserve man.

Notice the extremities to which God goes for us. His mercy extends to the heavens. His faithfulness reaches to the clouds. His righteousness is as sturdy as a mountain. His wisdom descends to the depths of the sea.

“**How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.**” Like little chicks sheltered under the wings of a mother hen – God protects His own.

This is the picture that comes to mind when I read Paul’s statement about us in Colossians 3:3, “**Your life is hidden with Christ in God...**”

Verse 8 “**They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.**

For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.”

Satan’s soda wets the mouth, but doesn’t satisfy the thirst. Jesus told the woman at the well, if she drank His water she’d

never thirst again.

Jesus is the real *Thirst Quencher!* He alone is the river of pleasure.

“Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, and Your righteousness to the upright in heart. Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked drive me away. There the workers of iniquity have fallen; they have been cast down and are not able to rise.”

Along with Psalm 49 and 73, **PSALM THIRTY-SEVEN**, deals with the old question: “*If God is good and just, then why do evil men prosper?*”

Psalm 37 is an acrostic – in Hebrew each section begins with a different letter of the alphabet... Psalm 37 was written by David when he was an old man. He’s seen a lot of life and feels ready to tackle this difficult question.

“*Do not fret because of evildoers...*” When I think of abortionists, and pornographers, and drug lords, and sweatshop owners pocketing billions of dollars it makes me furious... *Why do evil men profit from exploitation?*

Yet David tells us, “*Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*” Don’t fret, their judgment comes soon enough.

“*Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.*” Rather than *fret* have *faith*. Trust in God and do good...

Feed on His faithfulness. Don’t get eaten up with

resentment – don’t take vengeance into your hands, and act like the men you despise.

“Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” When you find no joy in this world – “delight,” or take joy in the Lord. Rejoice in all that Jesus *is* and *does* and *gives* - and He’ll shape the desires of your heart. Often we pit seeking God’s will against my will.

God’s will and my will should never be at odds. If I delight in Jesus, He promises to make *my* desires *His* desires. He’ll harmonize our hearts.

“Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.” The word “commit” means “to roll over.” Just roll over your life and loves and ways and plans onto God and He’ll make it all good!

“He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.” In this life things are not always as they seem. Truth doesn’t always come out. *Don’t worry...* one day you’ll be vindicated for all to see.

In the end rightness will shine as the noonday sun! Good will triumph...

“Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.” Today God is being patient. He’s hoping evil men repent. We too need to be patient and not lose sight of what matters.

“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret - it only

causes harm.” Focus on life’s injustices, rather than God’s mercies – and you get bent out of shape. You become resentful or lash out – you end up doing more harm than good. Here’s advice, “Look at others and be distressed; look at self and be depressed; look at Jesus and you’ll be at rest.”

“For evildoers shall be cut off; but those who wait on the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; indeed, you will look carefully for his place, but it shall be no more.

But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 5. The third beatitude, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

When Jesus returns He’ll settle the scores. Evil men will be judged.

Verse 12, “The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes at him with his teeth. The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that his day is coming.

The wicked have drawn the sword and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, to slay those who are of upright conduct. Their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

Verse 16 “A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous.” What good is an armful of ill-gotten gain if God breaks your arms? In the long run it pays to be upright not wicked.

"The LORD knows the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the LORD, like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish.

Into smoke they shall vanish away.

The wicked borrows and does not repay, but the righteous shows mercy and gives. For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those cursed by Him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.

The Hebrew word "ordered" means "supported." The moves motivated by a man's goodness are strengthened and supported by the Lord.

God gets behind the person who aligns his life with God's will.

George Mueller used to say, "Not only are the steps of a good man ordered by Lord... but so are his stops." His go's and his no's.

"Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the LORD upholds him with His hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread."

The Lord takes care of those who seek Him and delight in His ways.

"He is ever merciful, and lends; and his descendants are blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell

forevermore.

For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.

The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell in it forever.”

We need to remember the big picture! Over time righteousness will be rewarded.

“The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.

The wicked watches the righteous, and seeks to slay him.”

I once heard Pastor Chuck’s son tell of his mom’s insistence about what he put in the trash. If he picked up a beer bottle he was forbidden to put it in *their* trash can. Kay was always worried about the family’s reputation.

Chuck Jr. thought her mom had a strange obsession.

Until one day a man came forward after church and identified himself as their garbage man. He said he’d collected their garbage for years and had inspected it for incriminating evidence that would discredit Chuck’s ministry, but he never found any. Kay had shown great wisdom.

The world wants to pick us apart. We need to live beyond reproach.

Verse 33 “The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the LORD, and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.

I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; for the future of that man is peace.

But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the future of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in the time of trouble.

And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him.”

PSALM THIRTY-EIGHT is a song of repentance. David wrote it after being extremely sick. His illness was a punishment from God.

“O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure!” He asks God to count to 10 before He spans. Cool down.

“For Your arrows pierce me deeply, and Your hand presses me down.” This is a fitting description of God’s conviction! It pierces and presses.

“There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger, nor any health in my bones because of my sin.” Not all illness is the result of sin. But in David’s case, his sin did have a direct physical effect on his health.

“For my iniquities have gone over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds are foul and

festered because of my foolishness. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are full of inflammation, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and severely broken; I groan because of the turmoil of my heart.” It’s very possible David suffered from an STD.

His loins were “full of inflammation” – sounds like venereal disease. Was this the result of his sin with Bathsheba, or his multiplying wives?

This is one of the results of sexual promiscuity today. Among young people STDs are the third most common disease behind colds and flu.

Here’s the scary truth… “When you have sex with someone you’re having sex with everyone else your partner’s had sex with and with everyone your partner’s partners have had sex with and on it goes...”

In the wake of the sexual revolution that started in the 1960s, currently 65 million Americans live with an incurable sexually transmitted disease.

Sadly, there are 19 million new infections every year. On American college campuses genital herpes has reached epidemic proportions.

You don’t thumb your nose at God’s laws and not pay a price.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “Sin is not hurtful because it is forbidden, but it is forbidden because it is hurtful.” God’s laws are not intended to spoil our fun. They’re intended to insure our health and protection.

Verse 9 “Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from You. My heart pants, my strength fails me; as for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me. My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague, and my relatives stand afar off.” Some scholars think David was stricken with leprosy. He talks about being socially ostracized.

“Those also who seek my life lay snares for me; those who seek my hurt speak of destruction, and plan deception all the day long.

But I, like a deaf man, do not hear; and I am like a mute who does not open his mouth. Thus I am like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth is no response.” David has no excuse, and avoids accusations.

“For in You, O LORD, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God. For I said, “Hear me, lest they rejoice over me, lest, when my foot slips, they exalt themselves against me.” For I am ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me.” For I will declare my iniquity; I will be in anguish over my sin.” God has forgiven David. His accusers are his enemies.

“But my enemies are vigorous, and they are strong; and those who hate me wrongfully have multiplied. Those also who render evil for good, they are my adversaries, because I follow what is good.” David wasn’t sinless, but he was repentant... “Do not forsake me, O LORD; O my God, be not far from me! Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!”

PSALM THIRTY-NINE is a psalm of David, written for Jeduthun. The name means “praise.” He was a Levite in

charge of the Temple worship.

Verse 1 “I said, "I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me."

James 3:2 tells us, “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.” The key to a perfect life – or a spiritually mature life - is the ability to control and guard your tongue.

“I was mute with silence, I held my peace even from good; and my sorrow was stirred up. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned. Then I spoke with my tongue...” David held his tongue as long as he could, but his heart burned. It was a volcano of emotion. He needed to speak to someone - to vent his frustrations - so *he did so in prayer*.

Psalms teaches us God doesn’t mind if we vent to Him. Prayer can be a means of blowing off some steam. Better to take your feelings to God than *bottle them up* or *take them out on someone else*. God knows us anyway.

Verse 4 "LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths (this was the width of the king’s hand), and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor. Selah." Selah means “pause and think about what’s just been said.”

David is struck by the brevity of life. He says we’re here today and gone tomorrow. We’re like a vapor – a puff of warm

breath on a cold morning.

Billy Graham said “The greatest surprise in my life has been its brevity.”

Verse 6 “Surely every man walks about like a shadow; surely they busy themselves in vain; he heaps up riches, and does not know who will gather them.” It’s bad enough that life is so short, but what compounds our misery is that most men waste away their life on stuff that really doesn’t matter.

I like the comment Ralph Waldo Emerson once made, “This time, like every time, is a very good time, if we but know what to do with it.”

Most folks are going nowhere and getting there fast. They work - to make money - to feed themselves - so they can go back to work - and make more money - so they can feed themselves... throw in a holiday or two... and that’s life. Every man “busies themselves in vain.”

“And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.” Here’s what makes sense out of life... Jesus! Our hope is in Him! All else is vanity.

Without transcendent truth life is a rabbit chase without the rabbit.

This was the message of Ecclesiastes. Solomon says, “Vanity, vanity all is vanity...” Under the sun all is emptiness. And where did Solomon gain his perspective? His father was David. Solomon read Psalm 39...

“Deliver me from all my transgressions; do not make me the reproach of the foolish. I was mute, I did not open my mouth,

because it was You who did it.” When David pondered his dilemma it dawned on him that God was the cause. How could he complain when God was in control?

We need to realize that some of our struggles are struggles with God.

Once, a man working at the White House became upset. He slammed the door anger... just as Abraham Lincoln was nearing the threshold. He was profusely apologetic for slamming the door in the President's face.

Lincoln's had one comment, “**Young man, why don't you stop fighting with God on the inside?** Often *outward actions* mask an *inner conflict*.

Verse 10 “**Remove Your plague from me; I am consumed by the blow of Your hand. When with rebukes You correct man for iniquity, You make his beauty melt away like a moth; surely every man is vapor. Selah**

“Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; do not be silent at my tears; for I am a stranger with You, a sojourner, as all my fathers were.” The Hebrew word translated “stranger” means “house guest.”

We’re house guests in God’s world – and we’ve taken advantage of our host’s generosity. We’ve sinned. We have failed to be appreciative.

And David’s prayer of repentance now becomes fluid. Tears are at times called “**liquid prayers.**” David weeps over his willfulness.

Author John Phillips writes, “**When our situation is so desperate that we are reduced to tears... we can be quite**

sure that we have finally found the language that persuades. Our tears melt God's heart and move His hand."

The chapter closes with verse 13 "Remove Your gaze from me, that I may regain strength, before I go away and am no more."

PSALM FORTY was written by David after a severe trial. Quite possibly it was penned after Absalom's rebellion and David's exile from Jerusalem.

"I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps.

He has put a new song in my mouth - praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD. God lifted David out of the **mire** and put into the **choir!** He was taken from **a horrible pit** to *heavenly praise*.

"Blessed is that man who makes the LORD his trust, and does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order..."

Sit down one day and try to recount God's blessings. It may surprise you! You'll probably agree with David, they "**cannot be recounted.**"

I love the old hymn, "When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, when you are discouraged thinking all is lost,

count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.”

The more you love someone the more you think of them. And God’s thoughts toward us are innumerable. When no will give you the time of day, remember your Father in heaven can’t stop thinking about you!

Verse 6 “**Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; my ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.**”

The Old Testament sacrifices were never intended as a substitute for obedience. More than *heifers and lambs* God wants our *heart and lives*.

All too often it’s easier to make a sacrifice than it is to obey. We drop a few bucks in the offering, and think we’ve paid off our obligation to God.

We’re mistaken. He doesn’t want a token sacrifice. He wants our ear.

David says, “**my ears You have opened...**” This probably refers to an OT practice. In ancient Israel there was no bankruptcy – only slavery.

You worked off your debts as your creditor’s slave. It lasted six years.

In year 7 you were free - *unless you found your master to be especially kind and generous*. Often a slave and his family enjoyed a better life in his master’s house than he could create on his own. He could choose to stay.

He’d put his ear on the doorpost, and the master would

drive an awl threw his lobe. A pierced ear was a mark of love. He was a love slave.

This is how Paul saw himself. A *love slave for Jesus!* Since becoming a Christian, his new life with Jesus was better than anything he could muster on his own. Like David he opened his ear. He became a slave by choice.

He continues in verse 7, “**Then I said, "Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of Me."** There are several OT passages that we think of as Messianic prophecies. They speak clearly of Jesus years before His birth - Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 – but He’s not limited to these passages.

Jesus says, “**In the scroll of the book it is written of Me.**” In other words, Jesus is on every page. From cover to cover the Bible is all about Jesus.

And here He says, “**I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.**” This is the verse quoted in Hebrews 10:5, but there’s a preface. “**Therefore, when He came into the world, He said...**”

This is the Christmas story before the Christmas story. This was the Son’s farewell to His Father before He journeyed from His heavenly throne to occupy the womb of a virgin. The delight of Jesus was to do God’s will!

Through the ages God had covered man’s sin with the blood of bulls and goats, but God’s righteousness had always demanded more.

The Temple sacrifices *pacified* God, but never satisfied His holiness. To blot out man’s sin once and for all it would take a

sinless sacrifice.

But where do you go to find a sinless sacrifice? Only God's Son could supply what was needed. He alone had a heart engraved with God's will.

Here's the courage of Christmas. Jesus stepped up to do Father's will.

Verse 9 “I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know.

I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great assembly.

Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O LORD; let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me.

For innumerable evils have surrounded me; my iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart fails me.”

David realizes he's an evil man. His sins are more than the hairs on his head. A blonde has 140,000 hairs – a brunet 125,000 – and a redhead 90,000 hairs. I'm not sure that means blondes are more sinful.

It's interesting that Jesus turns this same illustration around...

He says the Father is so concerned for us even the hairs on our head are numbered. Under the OC our sins are as numerous as the hair on our head. Under the NC God's care

for us extends to even split ends.

"Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me; O LORD, make haste to help me!

Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion who seek to destroy my life; let them be driven backward and brought to dishonor who wish me evil. Let them be confounded because of their shame, who say to me, "Aha, aha!" Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; let such as love Your salvation say continually, "The LORD be magnified!"

But I am poor and needy; yet the LORD thinks upon me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God."

PSALM FORTY-ONE was written while David was ill and incapacitated. He was losing control of his Kingdom. A rebellion was brewing. His own son, Absalom, was waiting for his chance to seize his father's throne.

"Blessed is he who considers the poor; the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive, and he will be blessed on the earth; You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him on his bed of illness; You will sustain him on his sickbed." David was aware of the rumors. People were saying he'd be dead soon, but the king asks the Lord to preserve his life!

"I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You." My enemies speak evil of me: "When will

he die, and his name perish?" His enemies were already sizing David up for his coffin.

"And if he comes to see me, he speaks lies; his heart gathers iniquity to itself; when he goes out, he tells it." The "he" here may be Absalom. When he came to visit his father on his sickbed, sabotage was in his heart.

"All who hate me whisper together against me; against me they devise my hurt. "An evil disease," they say, "clings to him. And now that he lies down, he will rise up no more." Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."

2 Samuel 15 describes how David's trusted counselor and close friend, Ahithophel, betrayed David and turned his allegiance toward Absalom.

This also is prophetic of Jesus. He too was betrayed by a "familiar friend." Judas held the moneybag, yet sold out Jesus to the Jews.

Psalm 41 concludes, "But You, O LORD, be merciful to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them. By this I know that You are well pleased with me, because my enemy does not triumph over me. As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, and set me before Your face forever.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting!" Our God exists from *eternity past* to *eternity future*. "Amen and Amen."