

Psalm 41

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[0 : 0 0] We have been for almost a year now walking through the Gospel of Matthew. And so it seems like a good time to take a break from Matthew. So from now to the end of the year we're going to take a short break from Matthew.

In January we will come back to Matthew. We'll pick up in chapter 8. We finished chapter 7 so we'll pick up in chapter 8 and keep moving forward with Matthew. But for the next three weeks we're going to spend some time in the Psalms and then after that we'll be talking about the birth of Christ and looking at a number of Old Testament prophecies that are pointing, looking ahead to the coming of Christ into the world.

But for this week and the next two weeks our plan is to dive back into the Psalms. And so this morning we're going to dive into Psalm 41. We've been going through the Psalms for the last several years.

Just about four or five per year. Sometimes a little more than that. Sometimes a little less than that. But around that amount every year. And so here we are jumping back in. We left off.

We did Psalm 40 last time. And now we're in Psalm 41. So if you have found Psalm 41 in your Bible then I invite you to stand to your feet in honor of God's Word. And we will read together the whole Psalm this morning.

[1 : 1 6] Psalm 41. We're told that this song is written to the choir master. A Psalm of David. Blessed is the one who considers the poor. In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him.

The Lord protects him and keeps him alive. He is called blessed in the land. You do not give him up to the will of his enemies. The Lord sustains him on his sickbed.

In his illness you restore him to full health. As for me. I said oh Lord be gracious to me. Heal me for I have sinned against you.

My enemies say of me in malice. When will he die and his name perish? And when one comes to see me he utters empty words. While his heart gathers iniquity. When he goes out he tells it abroad. All who hate me whisper together about me. They imagine the worst for me. They say a deadly thing is poured out on him. He will not rise again from where he lies.

[2 : 1 8] Even my close friend. In whom I trusted. Who ate my bread. Has lifted his heel against me. But you oh Lord.

Be gracious to me. And raise me up that I may repay them. By this I know that you delight in me. My enemy will not shout in triumph over me.

But you have upheld me because of my integrity. And set in me. Set me in your presence forever. Blessed be the Lord. The God of Israel. From everlasting.

To everlasting. Amen. And amen. God we thank you that. Your spirit worked through David. As he wrote this psalm.

So that every word. Is exactly what you desired. For him to write. And that it has been included. In the book of psalms for us. So that we might be taught.

[3 : 1 3] And instructed. So help us this morning. To see the beauty of Jesus. On display. In psalm 41. We ask these things in Christ's name.

Amen. You guys can take a seat. Most of us. Read the psalms. Kind of like. I've been preaching through the psalms. Just a bit at a time. Piecemeal.

A psalm here. And a psalm there. And there's nothing wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with picking out a psalm. And meditating on that particular psalm. That day. Or preaching a sermon. On one psalm at a time.

Here and there. There's nothing wrong with that. But. We do miss something. When we approach. The book of psalms like that. Because. More than probably any other book.

In the bible. We are inclined. To read. Different sections of the psalms. The different psalms themselves. In isolation. From the rest of the book. We know not to do that.

[4 : 09] When we're reading the gospels. Because we know. For instance. That Matthew is telling. One long story. And so we don't want to just read. One paragraph. Or one chapter. And not relate it. To anything that came before.

Or after it. We know to do that. In Paul's letters. Because he always says. Therefore. And so then. Those kinds of things. Making connections obvious. From one sentence. To the next. And so we try. When we read Paul's letters. Or at least I hope that we try. To read each verse. Each paragraph. In the context. In which we find it. But we don't often do that.

With the psalms. We don't very often ask the question. How does Psalm 23. The great shepherd's psalm. How does it connect. To Psalm 22.

Or to Psalm 24. Or why is it right there. In the book of psalms. And not somewhere else. In the book of psalms. Maybe we do that. Because. We're under the impression.

[5 : 04] That the book of psalms. Is just sort of. Randomly cobbled together. From all of these different psalms. Many written by David. Some written by others. And they're sort of brought together.

Yes. Under the inspiration of God. But they're just sort of. All thrown in together. And each individually. Is inspired by God. But we don't need to consider them together. But there's something. That you might want to notice. In your Bibles right now. That I think. Will help us to avoid doing that. Or at least cause us to realize. That we probably shouldn't.

Only read the psalms. In isolation. From one another. I don't know if you noticed it. But when we finished reading Psalm 41. The next words. Right after that.

Are the two words. Book two. You see that in your Bibles. That's not something. That was added later on. I know our verses. Were added later on.

[5 : 58] They're not. The verse numbers. Are not inspired by God. The chapter numbers. Are not inspired by God. Those are things. That were added later on. To help us find things. In the Bible.

Right. If I just quoted. A random sentence. Out of the book of Romans. But we didn't have chapters. And numbers. It would take you a while. Sometimes to figure out. Where I was. And I wouldn't have an easy way. Of telling you.

Where I was in the book. So we have chapter and verse divisions. That were added much later. Just to give us some guidance. Just to help us define things. But these words.

Are not words that were added. Long after the book of Psalms. Was put together. Was compiled. No. These words belong there. Because the book of Psalms. Is actually divided.

Into five books. Five sections. And each section. In each section. All of the Psalms. That belong in that section. They're connected together.

[6 : 52] And then in a much bigger way. Each book. Or each scroll. Is connected to the other four. And they're in the sequence. In which we find them. For a reason.

And so one of the questions. We need to ask. As we read. And meditate upon. The very last Psalm. In book one. Is. Why is this Psalm. Right here.

How does this Psalm. Connect. To the other Psalms. That we've already read through. That we've already seen. At another time. Up to this point. What's the connection. Between Psalm 41.

And Psalms. One through. Forty. And that brings us. To a much bigger question. And that is. What is the book of Psalms. Really. And truly. All about.

Is it just. A collection. Of Psalms. And songs. That the ancient Israelites. Would sing. As they. Went up to the temple. We know they did that.

[7 : 49] With many of them. But is that all. The book of Psalms is. Is it just. A sampling. Of some of the songs. Of ancient Israel. In fact. When I originally started. This. Sermon series.

Probably. Eleven. Twelve years ago. When I originally started. This sermon series. I titled it. The songs of Israel. But I was telling Michael. This week. As we were talking.

I said. You know. I kind of would like. To retitle this series. At some point. Because. I don't feel like. That accurately represents. How I read the Psalms. And what I've learned. About the Psalms.

As we've been walking. Through them. Over these last. Ten plus years. Because I don't really think. These are just the. Songs of Israel. But these are. The songs of the Messiah.

These are all. Ultimately. About Jesus. Every Psalm. In one way. Or another. Is pointing ahead. To Jesus. So that the main question.

[8 : 43] That we need to ask. When we approach the Psalms. Is not. How does this affect me. Emotionally. Though it's an important question. The main question. We need to ask. Is not. What was going on.

In the life of David. Or the Psalmist. When they wrote this. Though that's a very important question. But the main question. The final. Ultimate question. We need to ask. When reading any Psalm. Is how does it point us.

To Jesus. Because the Psalms. Are the songs about. The Messiah. The Christ. The anointed one. They are songs. That are intended. To point us.

Toward Jesus. The Old Testament. The entire Old Testament. Is intended. To point us. To Jesus. It's not just the prologue. To the real story. The Old Testament.

Is meant. To open our eyes. To look for. And see. The glory of Jesus. Displayed throughout. The Old Testament. And they. Then made more clear. In the New Testament.

[9 : 39] As the New Testament. Writers. Interpret. And explain. The Old Testament. For us. The Old Testament. Is very much. A book about Jesus. And the Psalms.

Is very much. A book about Jesus. So in what ways. Does Psalm 41. Connect to what came before it. And in what ways.

Does Psalm 41. Point us. To Jesus. Really. Answering those two questions. Leads us. In the same direction. Because.

Psalm 41. Has connections. That are obvious. To several Psalms. But some of the most. Important connections. Are back to. The first two Psalms. In this great book.

If you'll hold your place. In Psalm 41. One of the things. I want you to see. Is that Psalm 41. The last book. Of book one. Begins.

[10 : 34] With the same word. As Psalm one. The first Psalm. Of book one. Psalm 41. Says. Blessed is the one. Who considers the poor.

And Psalm one. Says. Blessed is the man. Who walks not. In the counsel. Of the wicked. Psalm one. Is going to contrast. The righteous.

The blessed one. Who walks in the counsel. Of the Lord. With the wicked one. Who sits in the counsel. Of sinners. Psalm 41. Is going to contrast.

The friends of David. Those who care. For those. Who are downtrodden. With the wicked. And evil. The enemies of David. Who would try to take advantage. Of those. Who are downtrodden.

There are all these connections. Between. Psalm 41. And then here. Psalm one. But then we see. In Psalm two. As you keep reading. In the Psalms.

[11 : 30] Psalm two. Helps us to understand. That. In order to define. The righteous. And the wicked. The blessed. And the cursed. Of Psalm one.

In order to understand. Who they are. And see clearly. Who they are. We have to ask. What sort of relationship. Does this person have. Toward the coming.

Future. Messiah. That's really. The dividing point. That's really. What determines. Who belongs. To the. To the class. Of the wicked.

And then who belongs. To the class. Of those who are blessed. To be made happy. In the Lord. What's the key difference. And yes. It is their relationship. To God's word. In Psalm one.

One. But in Psalm two. That's explained. In terms of. Their relationship. To God's promised. Deliverer. The Messiah. The anointed one. We won't read.

[12 : 24] Through all of Psalm two. But just look. At a few verses. In verse two. We read. The kings. Of the earth. Set themselves. And the rulers. Take counsel.

Together. Against. The Lord. And against. His. Anointed. Against. His Messiah. Or. Against. His. Christ. And then in verse seven.

I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me. You are my son. Today I have begotten you. Words. Quoted. The words. You are my son. Quoted.

At Jesus's baptism. And at the transfiguration. Key moments. In the life of Jesus. Quote from. This psalm. To identify. Jesus. As the. Anointed one.

Of verse two. That. The writer of Psalm two. Is looking ahead to. Is hoping in. And is saying. Everyone's identity. Is rooted in. Their relationship.

[13 : 19] To him. They either gather together. Against him. Or. Verse twelve. Kiss the son. They are among those.

Who fall at his feet. To offer him. Their devotion. Because the only other option. Is this. Verse twelve. Kiss the son. Lest.

He be angry. And you perish in the way. For his wrath. Is quickly kindled. But blessed are all. Who take refuge. In him.

All of humanity. According to Psalm two. And Psalm one. Are divided into two categories. Those who are blessed. And the wicked. Those who gather.

And take counsel. Against the Messiah. And those who take refuge. In the Messiah. All humanity falls into those two camps. And now.

[14:14] Psalm 42. At the close. Of book one. Of the Psalms. Is telling us. That everyone's divided. Into two camps. Those who come to the aid.

Of those in need. And then those who. Come against those. Who are in need. Let's take a look. At the Psalm. And see how all this. Sort of lays itself out.

Verse one again. Blessed is the one. Who considers the poor. Probably we should. Translate that word. Poor. In this instance. As something like. Weak. Or needy.

The idea. Is not just that. This person. Is. Is. Lacking. In goods. That may be the case. But the main point. Is that. They are.

They are at a disadvantage. They are at a point. In their life. Where they are. They are weak. And that could be. Because of some financial shortfall. It could be.

[15:09] Because of physical illness. Which is going to play. An important role. In this Psalm. It could be. Simply because. Things have not gone well. For you. In relationships. With other people. Or.

In general. Your life has not gone. The direction. That you want it to do. And you find yourself. In a. In a weak. Emotional state. It could be. Any number of things. But here. There is a blessing. Held out.

To those. Who give thought. To those. Who are at a place. Of weakness. And physical. And spiritual. Poverty. That they notice them. They consider them.

And then there is the promise. That in the day of trouble. The day of evil. The Lord will deliver. This one. Who blesses those. Who need help. In the day of their. Trouble.

That God will come. Protect him. Keep him alive. Bless him in the land. And he'll not be given up.

To his enemies. And then when the fortunes. Are turned.

[16:05] And changed. And this one. Who once considered. And tried to help. Those who are weak. And needy. And sick. When he finds himself. On his sick bed. In his illness.

He will be restored. To full health. In other words. God will be with those. Who are. Always looking out. To meet the needs. Of those who are hurting.

Around him. Now the contrast. In Psalm 41. Is between this description. Of the person. Who reaches out. To the needy. Reaches out. To the weak.

And then those. Who see it. As an opportunity. To attack. The person. Who once. Was stronger. Than they were. Skip down to verse 5.

Where David speaks. And says. My enemies. Say of me. In malice. Or with evil intent. They say of me. When will he. Die.

[17:00] And his name. Perish. They're waiting for David. In this moment. Of weakness. He's got some sort of illness. He's sick. And they're waiting for him.

Hoping that he will just. Die. And be removed. From human history. And then he says. That when one comes. To see me. He utters empty words.

While his heart. Gathers iniquity. And when he goes out. He tells it abroad. It's the person who comes. And flatter you. Flatters you. To your face. But the only reason. That they're there. To talk to you.

The only reason. That they've really come. Is not. To speak well of you. And to wish you well. They've come to see. Just how bad off you are. So that they can.

Then immediately leave. And tell everybody. Yeah. It's bad guys. It's really bad. This guy's about. He's about to give in. He's about to tank. It's almost all over for him.

[17:55] That's why they're there. They're there to get the report. Of bad news. That they can take. And then sort of. boastfully spread. To others. They utter empty words. Of consolation.

And compliment. And then all the while. They turn. They turn. And they slander. And they tell others. It's almost over.

He's almost done. Verse 7. All who hate me. Whisper together about me. They whisper together. They don't say it to me. They whisper. And they imagine evil. Or the worst. For me. They say. A deadly thing. Is poured out on him. And he will not rise again. From where he lies. This is a sort of. Curse. That they're uttering. And it's a curse. Uttered in the name. Of a. A false. God. A kind of curse.

[18:51] In which they say. This thing. From Belial. The false God. It's poured out. This guy is done. He will never rise again. Ever. He's finished.

And then verse 9. The final description. Turns from David's. Enemies. Who flatter him to his face. And slander him in public.

It turns from his enemies. To his friends. Even my close. Friend. Friend. And literally. The word there is. Even. Even the man of my peace. The man that I thought. Sought for my. Shalom. My well-being. Even my close friend.

In whom I trusted. Who ate my bread. Sat. At the king's. Table. He has. Lifted his heel.

[19:50] Against me. Which is a. Kind of a poetic. Way of saying. He has betrayed on me. Betrayed me. He has turned on me. He has. Joined my enemies.

And so David. As he writes this psalm. Recognizes. That he's in a place. Where there are very few people. Left that he can trust. There are very few people. Left. That he can turn to. Even those. That he once regarded. As. His friends. The one that he thought. Sought his well-being. Has now. Betrayed him. It's a sad state. That David finds himself in.

But what we need to notice. At this point. Is that. This last verse. That we just read. Verse nine. About David's. Close friend.

This verse. Is actually quoted. For us. In the New Testament. And. I'm sure. You won't be shocked. To discover. That it's applied.

[20:49] Directly. To Jesus. Jesus. Now hold your place. In Psalm 41. Because I need you. To see this. So that you're not just taking. My word for it. And turn all the way. In your Bibles. To the gospel of John.

Chapter 13. John chapter 13. As Jesus.

Is discussing things. And talking to his disciples. disciples. He tells them. All sorts of things. He told. He's told them. Over and over. That.

His enemies. Are seeking to kill him. And his time. Is coming soon. And then he speaks to them. About blessings. That they will receive. And in verse 18.

He says this. I am not speaking. Of all of you. The blessings. I've just mentioned. Are not for all of you. Now he's. Talking to his.

[21:45] Twelve disciples. His twelve. Closest companions. And the blessings. He's just uttered. He says. I am not speaking. Of all of you.

I know. Whom I have chosen. There's one among them. That Christ has not chosen. And then. But the scripture. Will be fulfilled. He who ate my bread. Has lifted his heel. Against me. We all know.

That it's Judas. And in fact. If you don't know it. All you have to do. Is go down to verse 21. And read that next paragraph. And it tells the story. Of when Judas. Literally ate.

At a table with Jesus. Shared bread with Jesus. And then left. To betray Jesus. There's no doubt. About how this. This verse. This from Psalm 41.

[22:42] Is being literally fulfilled. In the life of Jesus. Through Judas. One of the twelve. One of his closest companions. Who betrays him.

Turns his heel upon him. And runs. To Jesus' enemies. And joins their camp. So that Jesus. Can be put to death. Now you might be thinking.

So how. Why does Jesus. How does he make this move. How do you get from David. Talking about. His closest companions. Betraying him. To Jesus saying.

This is fulfilled. In me. Well that takes us. All the way back. To Psalm 2 again. If you were reading. Psalm 2.

Without. Any knowledge. Of the rest. Of the promises. Of the Old Testament. Then you might think. That the anointed one. Of Psalm 2. Is King David.

[23:42] He is after all. The anointed king. He is a powerful king. Who subdues. And defeats. Many of his enemies. But that's not the king.

That Psalm 2. Has in mind. Because David. Simply points us ahead. To Jesus. There is a connection. Between David. And Jesus. In which. David. Stands for Jesus. Represents Jesus. And points ahead. To Jesus. In which Jesus. Fulfills. All the hopes. And expectations. That were originally. Laid before David. Jesus fulfills those. And in all the ways. That David succeeded. Jesus. Far outstrips him. In his own success. In all the ways. That David. Failed. Jesus. Never fails. Jesus is.

[24 : 41] A fulfillment. Of all the hopes. That were concentrated. At one time. In David. And David himself. Was well aware. That there was someone.

Greater than him. Who was to come. In the future. David knew. That there was another. Anointed king. That would come. From his own line. That David.

Was supposed to trust in. David knew. And understood. That there was someone. Coming.

Greater. And better than him. From his own line. And this one. Was worthy.

Of his trust. Worthy. Of his worship. Even. David understood this. The old. The old. Testament verse. That is quoted.

More than any other. Old Testament verse. In all of the new. Testament. Is psalm 110. One. Written by David. Who says.

[25 : 35] And you don't have to turn there. In psalm 110. Verse one. He says. The Lord. Says. To my Lord. Yahweh. Speaks.

To my. Adonai. My king. My sovereign one. These are David's words. In the new. Testament. Over and over. Says. That the sovereign one.

There. In psalm 110. Of whom. David speaks. Of whom. David. Looks forward to. Is Jesus. David knows.

And understands. That there is a greater. Anointed one. To come. In the future. And David.

Understands. That his own. Life. Is just a signal. Pointing ahead.

To someone. Greater. Which means. That. Many of the things. That we read. In the psalms. Are true. On one level. About David.

[26 : 29] David. Is recording. His own. Real. Experiences. That he had. In his own life. He really did. Get sick. His enemies. Really did. Try to take. Advantage of it. And even. Some of those.

That he regarded. As his closest friends. Betrayed him. In that moment. Those things. Really happened. But they're. Pointing ahead. To another. For whom. Those things.

Will also happen. Although. In a much. Greater way. David. Will recover. Jesus. Will go. To the cross. David's.

Friends. Seek. To do him. Harm. Judas. Hands him. Over. To his. Killers. What. David.

Experiences. Jesus. Experiences. To the full. David. Is pointing. Ahead. To Jesus. But in all.

[27 : 23] The ways. That David. Failed. As I said. Earlier. When we come. To Jesus. We see. Not failure. But success. It's not. As if. Jesus.

Just magnifies. Everything. David. Does. There are. Sometimes. When Jesus. Has to. Correct. And reverse. Course. On the things. That David. Does. Yes. And we see that.

Right here. In the middle. Of Psalm 41. David. Sick on his bed. Understands. That at least. A partial cause. Of his own sickness. Is his sin.

Verse 4. As for me. I said. Oh Lord. Be gracious to me. That is. Show me favor. Be kind to me. Heal me. He says. For I have sinned.

Against you. David's troubles. Came upon him. Because of his own sin. But the troubles.

[28 : 19] That Jesus endures. Come upon him. Because of the sin. Of others. David suffers. Because David. Is a sinner. Jesus suffers.

Because you and I. Are sinners. The writer of Hebrews. Tells us as much. The writer of Hebrews. Tells us. That we can never look. At the suffering.

Of Jesus. And point to anything. That Jesus did. To earn that suffering. Because he never sinned. Hebrews 4. 15. We do not have a high priest. Who is unable.

To sympathize. With our weaknesses. But one who. In every respect. Has been tempted. As we are. Yet. Without. Sin. David. Sinned.

And brought suffering. Upon himself. Jesus. Never. Sinned. Not once. But it was our. Our sin. That brought his suffering.

[29 : 13] Upon him. Listen carefully. To these words. From the apostle Paul. 2nd Corinthians. Chapter 5. Verse 21. For our sake.

He made him. To be sin. Who knew. No sin. That's Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. The only human being. Has ever walked the earth. Who knew. No.

Sin. Had no. Personal experience. Of having committed sin. In himself. He made him. To be sin. Who knew.

No sin. So that in him. We might become. The righteousness. Of God. David is.

Pointing ahead to Jesus. In his life. In his sufferings. In his. Victories. And triumphs. Everything in the life of David.

[30 : 09] Is pointing ahead to Christ. But David's sin. Which stands at the center. Of David's life. And experience. Is pointing ahead. To one who never sinned.

And who yet. Suffered. One. Who never. Himself. Raised the battle cry. But was willing. To lay down his life.

In the midst of war. This is who Jesus is. Psalm 41. Is helping us. To see. And understand. What this entire.

First book of the Psalms. Is meant to teach us. And that is. The Christ. The anointed one. The promised one. From the line of David. He has done.

Everything necessary. To redeem. David. And us. And our destiny. And our destiny. Our place. Within humanity.

[31 : 06] Like everyone else. Is determined by our relationship. With him. Do we belong to him. Do we take refuge in him.

Do we kiss the sun. Or do we gather together. With the rest of the world. Against the Lord. And against his Christ. Do you take refuge in him.

Have you put your full faith. And trust in him. Have you stopped trusting. In yourself. Have you stopped trusting. In your own ability. To do the right things. And trusted that.

He's done all the right things. For you. Because the only. The only other place. To be among humanity. Is among those.

Who gather together. Against him. To reject his mercy. To reject his grace. To reject his work. Upon the cross.

[32 : 05] Is to set yourself. Against him. Whether you see it. That way or not. And this psalm. Began by telling us. That.

We can spot those. Who do not belong. Among. The enemies. Of the Messiah. We can spot them. We can see them. By the way that they respond.

To the needy. The sick. And the poor. We can tell. Whether or not. A person is among. Those who are. On the king's side.

By not. What they say. About the king. Because these people. Say nice things. In front of the king. About him. But by what they do. In regard to those. Who are actually.

Suffering. That's how you spot them. That's how you know. And Jesus tells us. The same thing. Jesus says the same thing. In the gospel of Matthew.

[33 : 02] Matthew. Chapter 25. Jesus speaks about those. Who. Take care of the hungry.

And feed them. Clothe those who are naked. Give something. To drink to those who are thirsty. And he says in verse 40.

Truly I say to you. As you did to the one of the least of these. My brothers. You did it to me. Me. And then he speaks in the same parable. Of those. Who did not meet the needs of the poor.

Who did not reach out to those. Who were hungry. And thirsty. And naked. And he says. Truly I say to you. As you did not do. To the one of the least of these.

You did not do it to me. Jesus. Jesus. Teaches us. That his. People can be recognized.

[34 : 05] By how they treat. The least of these. His people can be recognized. By how they respond. To the needs of people. Around them. Because those who take refuge in Christ.

See how desperately. The rest of the world. Needs. Refuge in Christ. Those who take refuge in Christ. See just how. Gloomy the situation is.

For all those outside of Christ. Those who take refuge in Christ. Understand. That as their greatest spiritual need. Has been met. Through the death of Jesus. So they can now meet.

The needs of others. So they might open their eyes. So they might. Finally take refuge. In Jesus. You can always spot those.

