



Psalm 41

Psalm 41 - For the Choir director. A Psalm of David

Psalm 41 stands as the last psalm of the first book of the psalter (Psalms . 1-41)

Theme: A Complaint in response to the malicious plotting of the psalmist's enemies during a debilitating sickness Outline:

1. The Blessings in store for the sympathetic person (vv. 1-3)
 - a. The Psalm begins with a beatitude which also marks the beginning of the whole Psalter (Ps. 1:1). The Hebrew word "ashre" translated blessed in verse 1 is to be distinguished from "baruk" which is also translated as blessed in verse 13.
 - b. "Considers" "have regard for" (v. 1) – To know the right response in each situation (see 1 Sam. 18:5, 14, 15, 30; Amos 5:13).
 - c. The "weak" (dallim) in verse 1 are those who are weak or poor, particularly financially poor (Prov. 10:15; 19:4; 19:17; 22:9; 28:11).
 - d. The LORD will protect the sympathetic person: i. from external foes and troubles (v. 2) ii. from the internal ravages of disease (v. 3)
1. His Complaint against his enemies and friends (vv. 4-9)
 - a. The psalmist confesses his sin and pleads to the LORD for mercy (v. 4)
 - b. He describes his enemies' malice:
 - i. They anticipate his death as imminent and expects his name to perish (v. 5-8)
 - ii. The malice extends to his close friends (v. 9) This passage is well known from Jesus' use of it at the Last Supper to predict Judas' coming betrayal (Matt. 26:23; Lk. 22:31; John 13:18). "has lifted up his heel against me": "The emphasis would seem to be that one, with whom one was bound by a covenant of peace, who partook of one's bread, had violated the law of hospitality, and had turned on his host" (Koov).
1. His Final Plea and Confidence (vv. 10-12) Having poured out a complaint of isolation and betrayal, the psalmist now seeks mercy from God and restoration to health.
 - a. The psalmist pleads for mercy (v. 10; compare v. 4)
 - b. The psalmist expresses a rather unexpected and audacious confidence in the pressing circumstances (vv. 11-12)
1. The Doxology (v. 13) This is the first of four similar doxologies that mark the conclusion of the first four books of the Psalter (Psalms 1-41; 42-72; 73-89; 90-106).
 - a. "Blessed be" "The NIV's consistent translation of the Hebrew word blessed (baruk) as 'praise be...' obscures the fact that this is not an attempt to praise God but is rather an outpouring of the human desire to give back to God in blessing" (G. H. Wilson).
 - b. "the God of Israel"
 - c. "from everlasting to everlasting"
 - d. "Amen and Amen"

Lessons:

1. Know how to offer the right and appropriate response to people who are less fortunate than ourselves.
2. God's grace sustains us in times of trouble.
3. God's children will enjoy his presence for an unlimited time.