

## The Helpless Man

Jesus in the Psalms

*Psalm 41*

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### I. Jesus in the Psalms (cf. Lk 24:44; Heb 2:11, 12; 10:5)

*“In the Psalms of David the promised Christ Himself already speaks (Hebrews 2:11, 12; 10:5). These same words which David spoke, therefore, the future Messiah spoke through him. The prayers of David were prayed also by Christ. Or better, Christ himself prayed them through His forerunner David.”* Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### II. The Helpless Man

David proclaims the Lord’s blessing on those who showed him compassion in his suffering and declares that even as the Lord had delivered *him* in his time of trial, so the Lord will deliver *all those* who show compassion to God’s anointed and entrust themselves to His loving care.

#### A. *The Instruction:* Blessed are the merciful! (1-3)

So who is this one who “*considers the helpless*”? In context, David is proclaiming God’s blessing on those who had comforted *him* in his sorrow, who had come alongside him and shown mercy to him. He was *the helpless man*.

Jesus is the true singer of this psalm. In this psalm, Jesus reminds us that God’s blessing lies on the one who identifies with Him in His suffering on the cross and in His suffering in the midst of His people. Even as the Lord raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead, so the Lord will raise up with Jesus all those who have trusted in Him.

#### B. *The Background:* David Prayed for God’s Salvation (4-10)

God’s faithfulness to *His anointed* assures us that God will be faithful to *all those who identify with His anointed*. Even as God had delivered David as he humbly looked to the Lord and entrusted Himself to the Lord’s loving care, he knew thereby that God would deliver others.

- i. 4 - Acknowledged his sin
- ii. 5-9 - Described his suffering to God:
- iii. 10 - Petitioned the Lord for mercy and vindication

#### C. *The Thanksgiving:* God answered (11-13)

Though Jesus’ enemies cried out, “*When will he die, and his name perish?*” (5b), His Name has endured forever; He died and then rose again triumphant over death. So all those who identify with Him will likewise be blessed and should give thanks and praise to the God of heaven.

### III. Application

#### A. God Takes Sides (Ps 138:6; Pr 3:34; 29:23; Mt 23:12; Lk 1:52; Jas 4:6; 5:5)

The first thing that we learn in our text today is that God takes sides. God is on the side, God blesses, those who *consider the helpless* – those who identify with Jesus in his suffering and those who identify with Jesus' people in their suffering. On the other hand, God despises those who try to take advantage of the helpless state of His people. God takes sides.

The Scriptures frequently remind us: “*God is opposed to the \_\_\_\_\_ but gives grace to the \_\_\_\_\_.*” So what does that mean? What is the true measure of *pride* versus *humility*?

The true measure of humility is a willingness to acknowledge the \_\_\_\_\_ and conform myself to it. Who is the humble man? The humble man is the one who knows that there are objective moral laws to which he must conform his life.

The difference between the proud man and the humble man is not that one has definite moral convictions and the other does not. The difference between them is that while *the humble man* acknowledges that God is the Lord, that truth exists outside of himself, and that he must conform himself to God's law and God's truth, *the proud man* says that he himself is the lord, that truth exists only in himself, and that the world must conform to him and his law. *God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.* God takes sides.

#### B. God Opposes the Treacherous Man (cf. Job 2:11-13; 42:7-11; Mt 5:7; Rom 12:15)

When we see others suffering, we are to comfort them. We are, in Paul's words, *to weep with those who \_\_\_\_\_*. Remember the words of our Lord, “*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*” We are to be true friends, not the enemies that David describes here.

#### C. God Sides with the Helpless Man

God sides with the \_\_\_\_\_ man. So who is the helpless man? *The helpless man is the one who, in suffering or sickness, humbly acknowledges his sin, suffers the hatred, accusations, and plots of his enemies, and entrusts his vindication and triumph to the Lord.*

- *Humbly acknowledges his sin*
- *Suffers the hatred, accusations, and plots of his enemies* (cf. 1 Pet 4:12-19)
- *Entrusts his vindication and triumph to the Lord* (cf. Jas 5:13-18)

### IV. Conclusion (cf. 1 Pet 2:19-25)