

# I Delight To Do Thy Will, O My God

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Ps 40:8

## Introduction

This is a Messianic Psalm – a Psalm of Incarnation. And I prefer to call it the Psalm of Obedience.

**Key Verse**– [v 8]. *“I delight to do Thy will O My God”.*

I believe this verse is key not just because of its Messianic content but also because of its Divine intent. There is a relevant message in it for you and me.

That is why I wish to title the sermon – *“I delight to do Thy will O My God”.*

**And my pray** is that at the end of today our hearts’ desire and the whole purpose of our lives would be to, *“delight to do Thy will O My God”.*

## 1. Superscription

The superscription tells us that this Psalm is a Psalm of David written to the Choir Director. Hebrew Bibles include this superscription as the first verse of the Psalm suggesting that it is part of the inspired text.

If so, this is then an autobiographical but inspired song – and based on **V.3**, the chorus of which might go something like  
*This is my story; This is my song.*

## 2. Theme of the Psalm

[**Vv. 7-8**]. The theme of the Psalm is Perfect Obedience

## 3. Three Parts

The Psalm can be divided into three parts:

1. [Vv. 1-5] *Rescue from the Miry Pit.  
David talks about his rescue.*
2. [Vv. 6-10] *Response with a Messianic Promise.*

*God reveals for a mere glimpse the underlay of His plan.  
[Just like Superman tears his shirt to reveal the outfit].*

3. [Vv. 11-17]

**Reminder of the Mindful Provision.**

*David completes the Psalm with the hope of a future rescue.*

#### **4. Three Tenses**

The Psalm is written to us in three tenses.

- Past Tense: [Vv.1-5]. *Praise of what the LORD has done*
- Present Tense: [Vv. 6-10]. *Joy of what the LORD expects*
- Future Tense: [Vv.11-17]. *Promise of what the LORD will do*

#### **5. Five sided-Gem**

We have been looking at these Psalms as a diamond with many facets.

Based on the five angles covered we can call this Psalm by any of these five names

1. Psalm of Patience
2. Psalm about the Pit
3. Psalm of Praise
4. Psalm of Promise, or
5. Psalm of Perfect Obedience

### **I. Psalm about Patience:**

The Psalm begins with *"I waited patiently for the LORD"*.

In Hebrew v.1 goes: "Qavah, qavah, Yehovah...." Or

- "Waiting, I waited." Or
- "Patiently I was patient".

Or as some versions go:

- "Patiently I waited"

It is interesting that the word for 'Patience' in the Bible is interchangeable with 'longsuffering' ...

- *"I was suffering a long time while I waited for the LORD"*.

#### **1. Waiting seems to be the norm.**

We all wait at some level or the other.

Some desperately, some wearily.  
For some of us the wait for certain things has been many years.  
We even use the expression,

- “I have suffered enough”, or
- “I have suffered all my life”.

However, I hope is that in this waiting we can say with the Psalmist,  
*“I have with long suffering waited **for the LORD**”.*

**David had learned the habit of waiting on the LORD.**

Other Psalmist [unknown] join in in **Psalm 130**, also in other places too.

*Ps 130:5. I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope.*

## **2. Waiting is difficult but that is the language of the Bible.**

- Words like **Hope** [129 times]-**Promise** [53 times]-**Reward** [80 times] etc. all have the implication of something that will be fulfilled in the future.

## **3. David encourages us to expect deliverance**

David is reminding us to patiently wait on the Lord, for the LORD alone is a sure help. He alone is the ONLY help:

*Ps 34:19. "The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him **from them all**."*

## **4. Result of deliverance [v.3]**

**[v.3]** *He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the Lord.*

- When people see this, and hear my testimony it will be a reason for them to fear the LORD and put their trust on Him for themselves.

## **5. Avoiding relapse [v.4]**

Ends the first section of the Psalm by warning against relapse and the benefits of trusting God for the future.

[V. 4] *How blessed is the man who has made the Lord his trust, And has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood.*

- **Proud** probably because we are not in the messes like the others.
- **Falsehood** probably attributing the reason of deliverance to something other than God Himself.
- “*Lapsing into falsehood*” has the same bearing as “*following after other idols*”. Some of your translations reflect that.
- These are those who will be blessed...how blessed is the man. This sounds familiar doesn't it? It is the **Psalm 1** man.

## II. Psalm about Pits

There are **two** pits indicated in this Psalm [V. 2 and V.12]  
And David as an ‘*experienced pit-faller*’ has fallen into both of them.

### A. V.2. The first pit is the miry pit

- [NKJV]. It is a horrible and miry pit  
**Miry pit:** *Mud pit; Swamp. The more one tries the more we sink. It is a pit we cannot get out on our own.*  
[Q: *Has anyone had an experience of quick sand or muddy stream?*]
- [Literally] “Pit of tumult/noise”.  
*We don't know what the noise is all about – may be that of hopeless cries of those who wanting to get out?*
- [ESV]. “Pit of destruction”  
[NLT]. “Pit of despair”  
*It is a pit of hopelessness; a pit of ultimate end.*

This is the pit that the Psalmist is telling us that the LORD ...

**V.2.** “*drew me out...and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.*”

That's a glorious experience.

**Illustration:** *I remember an incident and I was probably in Grade four, when as a family we were visiting my relatives. Just behind their house was a stream and one day my cousin and his friends decided to go swimming in that stream. They stripped and jumped and did I too – now this was a man thing or at least a boy thing to do. No questions asked. It was after I hit water I realized that I didn't know how to swim. I was drowning or so I thought. I screamed and squealed –*

*now that was not a man thing to do. The group was laughing, meanwhile, my hands and legs were flailing and I was drinking up the stream. On their part they were enjoying looking at the city bred, everything-is-icky delicate boy, act like a baby. I thought I was going drown for the last time but that's when I heard my cousin scream to just let my legs down—Let your legs down! Let your legs down and stop splashing. I slowly let my legs fall till it hit the ground. To my surprise the water was only up to my shoulder. I could stand in the water—I could stand, I wouldn't drown. I stood on solid ground. I am not sure if you understand what that means—"feet on a solid ground", but I know David did. And David found rescue in the LORD.*

## Application

**Pit is something we cannot seem to get out of. It is a place from which we need help to get out of.**

### a. GOSPEL

***A quick note that 'Getting out of the pit' is not that once for all saving grace, though that can be applied; however...***

If you have not yet cried out to God to save you from judgment and eternal punishment for your sins, then you are in a deep pit with no human way out.

God alone can save you through the Way He made through His Son.

### b. DAILY STRUGGLE

For some sinking in a pit might be a daily experience even though they have professed to be Christians. The more we try to get out the more we seem to sink.

You may be in despair, desperation or nearly destroyed. Or you may be totally clueless, or worse thoroughly enjoying it.

David is reminding us, *"Hey look at me fellows. I was no better than you. I guess you might say I was worse in some case, but don't worry there is rescue in the LORD.*

**Lord Jesus Christ is the pit rescuer.**

**[V.2]** Jesus alone is the rock on which we can stand secure; [all other ground is sinking sand.](#)

### c. NO IDEA HOW HE GOT IN THERE – SLOW BUT SURE

David doesn't tell us how he got in there. Like most of us probably he didn't realize he was in the pit till he gotten in deep.

Remember that a pit of miry clay is not like a pool of water; the sinking process is slow—it is one step after another, till we can't take any more steps.

### B. V. 12. The second pit is the Pit of Iniquity.

- Pit of iniquity. [v.12]  
*"...mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me".*

**Cause:** David seems to know how he got in this second pit. From **V.12** we understand that his sin was the cause.

### APPLICATION

Just like David, if we are honest, we will find that we often are falling into either of these two pits (*or probably in both at the same time*).

How do they apply to us?

#### a. READ THE LABELS

[*Learn what these pits are called*].

These are generally the two pits that we encounter.

- The first pit is the **Pit of Circumstance**, and
- The second pit is the **Pit of Consequence**.

#### i. **Pit of Circumstance**

Life takes a side sweep and we find ourselves in the pit. Circumstances can get us into a pit.

We like to wallow in this pit because we have someone or something to blame – *"It is not my fault, I am just a helpless victim."*

"She did it to me"; or "life was tough growing up"; or "you don't understand."; "Leave me alone" ... and round and round we go in the pit refusing to get out.

*That is when we become known as the "Certified Pit Dweller";* people can in fact recognize us from far.

## **ii. Pit of Consequence**

The second pit is the pit of consequence.

We find ourselves in the second pit because of our poor choices. Sin can dump you real hard in a pit.

### **b. DIVINE 9-1-1**

Both these pits need a rescuer to get us out; both need a Saviour.

- No self-help will help; there is no 'Get Out of the Pit in Three Easy Steps' guide. The more ***we try***, the more we sink.
- Christ is our Emergency Responder.

David is saying he waited patiently. He realized the more he flays his arms and legs in the miry pit – the more he tries, the more he sinks.

### **Not sure what your pit is?**

- Is it '*ridicule*'? And you wallow in self-pity.
- Is it '*self worth*' or *lack of it*? And you hope to hide in your pit.
- Is it '*hopelessness*'? Nothing you do seems to help
- Is it '*Loneliness*'? So there is no motivation to get out.
- Is it '*weariness*'? '*friendlessness*'? Nobody wants to be your friend.

David says you can get out and there is only one way out and that way is the Jehovah LORD. He will set your foot on the rock.

### **A CHRISTIAN DOES NOT NEED TO BE A PIT DWELLER**

- Christian does not make a 'Pit' Stop.
- For a Christian, it does not have to be the pits.

## **2 Words of Caution**

I hope the imagery is evident. The question then is:

### **1. Are we inviting people to join us instead of getting out?**

- Do we usually put out a welcome mat for the 'pity party' we are throwing?

## 2. What is our definition of a friend?

- Is it that we don't have friends because we want friends who encourage us to stay in the pit?
- Do we want friends who hold us accountable and with the help of God will get us out of the pit?

**Consider Jesus:** More than once Jesus was accused of healing someone on the Sabbath, to which He replied:

*Luke 14:5. Then he asked them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull it out?"*

Jesus was saying it is the most humane thing to do and you would certainly do it for love or for money.

It is a right thing to help people out of the pit instead of sinfully joining with them?

We read in **1 Thessalonians:**

*1 Thess 5:11. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.*

Often God works through people as we get each other to stay out of the pit.

No wonder we see that the Psalmist is proclaiming in the great congregation his experience and praising God in their midst. [vv. 5; 9-10].

There is a shared joy in getting out of the pit.

## Staying out of the Pit

I must quickly point out **three ways** to stay out of the pit.

We know that Jesus presents Himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life. If we are Christ followers, we must then be ones who belong to the way, just like the first century Christians:

*[Acts 9:2. "...and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.]*

This Way has no pits and no sinkholes; and by that I do not mean lack of trouble but what I am referring to is the ensuing behaviors that are neither God honoring, nor worthy of a Christian.



## *What steps do we take so as not to fall in to a pit?*

Three ways to guard yourselves from a pit are [*without much elaboration*]:

### 1. **Guarding our Hearts:**

*Proverbs 4:23. Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

Bring every thought to the subjection of Christ. [2 Cor 10:5]. Pass it through a 'mental' detector, just like at the Airport Security but this deals with the mental- your thoughts.

- When **anger** comes bearing a legit looking paper don't let it in. Anger usually come in pairs – the righteous anger with its evil twin.
- When **jealousy** has a juicy piece of news don't let it in.
- When **bitterness** wants to store its ingredients for a bit don't let it in
- When **pride** dressed in venetian mask of humility don't let it in.

### 2. **Renewing our Minds:**

*Rom 12:2. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

- God's mercies are new every morning because enough for the day the trouble and just like Manna, His mercies are enough.  
*"Sufficient for the day is its own trouble". [Mat 6:34]*
- **Renew:** anakainōsis: a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better

### 3. **Watching our steps:**

*Prov. 4:26. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.*

## III. **Psalm of Praise:**

That brings us to the fact that this is also a Psalm of Praise. David is rescued and so he praises.

### a. **David's Realization**

**Vs. 6-8. [Read]** David realizes that for all that he has so graciously received, giving mere sacrifices and offerings were woefully inadequate.

He doesn't reject the sacrifices but he understands the divine implication.

He understands it goes beyond giving up of an animal. He realizes his reactions must be more than mere economics.

In [Psalm 116](#) we read:

***Psalm 116:12-14.** What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD, I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.*

#### **b. David's Response:**

So how does David respond?

1. You couldn't silence David up even if you wanted to.  
[v.9] *"I haven't refrained my lips",* he says.
2. He was the one who danced with all his might. David was able to attest this before God.  
[v. 9], *"O Lord, You know",* he says.
3. He says in  
[v.10] *"I have not concealed Your loving kindness and Your truth from the great congregation."*

It is a cause of celebration for him. His excitement is made evident in the midst of God's people.

#### **Application**

1. What is our '[happy dance](#)' that the world gets to see?
2. Does the world get to hear our testimony?
3. Would they turn to me and say,  
*"look at you- what happened."; "This is not you?"; "You weren't the same since the last time I saw you."*

The Psalmist says in **Psalm 33**:

***Psalm 33:1.** Shout for joy in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright.*

The Hebrew writer tells us:

***Heb 13:15. ISV.** Therefore, through him let us always bring God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips that confess his name.*

## IV. Psalm of Promise

As we read this Psalm God's promise shines through. That is the hope of the Psalmist and that is the hope that God calls us to.

*[V 12]. "For evils beyond number have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; They are more numerous than the hairs of my head, And my heart has failed me."*

This is the section what we called the 'Mindful Provision'.

### a. EVILS BEYOND NUMBER

David is exactly where we find ourselves often. We seem to be pulled from every direction; and all of which is designed to get us down.

**Promise:** It is during those times that David is recounting the deliverance of God and we read that **v. 5** and **12**. It is good then to compare these two verses in at least one aspect.

- **V 5:** We read,  
*"...wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; ... They would be too numerous to count."*
- **V 12:** We read,  
*"...evils beyond number have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; They are more numerous than the hairs of my head,"*

I am thinking, if God's goodness to me on one hand is beyond number; and on the other hand, if the evils that surround me are more than my hair, I am thankful I am losing hair. Then with each marching day I will have fewer and fewer problems. In my own humorous way this is another way of enjoying the truth -- *"each day is better than the day before"*.

Hair or no hair, one thing is for sure. It is that God's thoughts towards me are more than all the evils put together.

### b. HEART HAS FAILED ME [VV. 12]

Look also at the other part of verse 12.

*“...And my heart has failed me”.*

*“I lost heart”*; this often is the saddest thing most people face.

This in fact is the most used tool in the *Devil’s workshop*. This is his multi tool. It comes with attachments of despair, dejection, anger, and frustration; the very things that get us in to the miry pit.

It is usually the last straw on the camel’s back that makes us lose heart.

- *You do something sincerely and still you face criticism.*
- *You labor in love over somebody and they turn around and scorn you.*
- *You are working on something and you seem to end with one problem or another.*
- *Your health is so down and chronic that your mind gives up the fight.*

It is at this time the Psalmist turns to the LORD and encourages us to do likewise.

*V. 13. “Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; Make haste, O Lord, to help me.”*

*The Psalm ends not with deliverance but with dependence and hope.*

I am thankful it did end that way—it tells me that the doors of grace do not close after deliverance from the second pit. Psalmist has this hope of future deliverance.

In fact Grace does not close the door at 70 times 7. I am grateful that just like the Psalmist I can say

*Vv. 5. Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count.*

## **V. Psalm of obedience**

Lessons from this Psalm do not end with Patience – Pit – and Promise. There is this element of *Perfect Obedience*.

*Illustration:* Arabian horses go through rigorous training in the deserts of the Middle East. The trainers require absolute obedience from the horses, and test them to see if they are completely trained. The final test is almost beyond the endurance of any living thing. The trainers force the horses to do without water for many days. Then he turns them loose and of course they start running toward the water, but just as they get to

*the edge, ready to plunge in and drink, the trainer blows his whistle. The horses who have been completely trained and who have learned perfect obedience, stop. They turn around and come pacing back to the trainer. They stand there quivering, wanting water, but they wait in perfect obedience. When the trainer is sure that he has their obedience he gives them a signal to go back to drink.*

*Now this may be severe but when you are on the trackless desert of Arabia and your life is entrusted to a horse, you had better have a trained obedient horse.*

*We must accept God's training and obey Him.*

[Source Unknown. Accessed: June 3, 2014. <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/o/obedience.htm> ]

### **Let us back up to Vv. 6-8.**

This is the section that we called the 'Messianic Promise'.

I am thankful this passage appears in between the two pits. I am grateful that God's rescue plan from the pit of destruction is well positioned.

*However, let us first see how this fits with David and his experience.*

And as a King, David is aware of his unique role, which he mentions in [verse 7](#) when he says it is written of him in the scroll of the book (*according to John Piper this is likely a reference to [Deuteronomy 17:14-20](#). When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me;...*).

David wanted to be a king who would be doing the will of the LORD. More than once he recognizes that offerings and sacrifice were not sufficient, especially when he fell woefully short due to sin.

Remember [Ps 51:16-17](#).

The Psalm he writes after his encounter with Nathan the prophet over Bathsheba.

**[Ps 51:16-17]** *For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

See how the [Psalm 51 ends](#):

**v. 19.** *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.*

First and foremost a right heart, a broken spirit and a contrite soul. Only then will the sacrifice be of any use.

Psalmist says that is what he wants to give God – his heart, his total obedience.

V. 8. *I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.*"

Let me read to you **J. J. S. Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*** [Zondervan], p. 335),

*"My heart is full of Your abundant goodness towards me. How can I express it? In times past, I might have thought that an offering was the proper thing to do. But now I realize that what You really desire is an obedient heart that delights to do Your will."*

*In other words, David is affirming what Samuel told the disobedient King Saul (1 Sam. 15:22), "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams."*

David recognizes that for what God has done sacrifice of an animal seems too feeble a response.

We have often prided ourselves of the sacrifice we have made, the tithes and offerings we have been diligent about; or the church services we have attended – while all these are legit they fall woefully inadequate to the obedience of the heart that God demands.

### Rendering in the Book of Hebrews

In fact, I want to see how this passage is quoted in Hebrews referring to our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Heb 10:5-7.** *Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a **body have you prepared for me**; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'"*

As you know, the author of Hebrews applies these verses to Jesus (Heb. 10:5-7). There, the author quotes the LXX, which translates the second line of verse 6, "a body You have prepared for Me." This was apparently an **interpretive paraphrase**, where they used a part (the ear) and expanded it to the whole body (F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* [Eerdmans], p. 232). The Hebrew text (of Ps. 40:6) is literally, "My ears You have dug." It has wrongly been interpreted to refer to the master's piercing the servant's ear with an awl (a different Hebrew word; Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17). But the idea here is that God opened the ear of His servant so that he would be obedient to His Word, which was in David's heart. Applied to Jesus, that obedience was unto the cross (see Isa. 50:5-7). [Source: <https://bible.org/book/export/html/21946> ]

In short, having your ears opened and having heard God wants not just your ears but your whole self.

The greatest difference is that David can only desire and hope but never fulfill what the Incarnate Son of God alone could.

## Incarnation

That is why this Psalm is a [Psalm of incarnation](#). It is said of Jesus, "*Behold I come...*", reminding us that he existed before He came to this earth. He came in flesh to do the will of the Father.

We hear him verbalize His surrender in the Garden of Gethsemane.

*"Not as I will, but as you will" (Matthew 26:39)*

Therefore, David's strong confidence in a rescue is not because of himself but because of the Incarnate Son of God of whom it is written, "*Behold I come to do thy will O God*"

## Application

***So how does this passage relate to us?***

First, we are thankful for God's pit-proof salvation plan.

Second, we are called to respond like Jesus in delighting to do God's will.

*Ps 40:8. I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."*

A delight to do God's will, where our stony heart is removed and God's law written on it, just like we read in Jeremiah. [Jer. 31:31-34 \(NET\)](#)

*"Indeed, a time is coming," says the Lord,*

A delight to do God's will and a desire to follow His Word; to do this at all cost. May this be our life's ambition.

The Psalm ends with a cry for help and without a seeming help. We know the truth help will come.

*Ps 40:16-17. Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let those who love Your salvation say continually, "The Lord be magnified!" Since I am afflicted and*

*needy, Let the Lord be mindful of me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.*

Let our desire and discipline be for the rest of the days that God gives us:  
*"I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."*