**Old Testament Quote**

Psalm 40v6-8

**Audience**

The audience for this psalm was firstly for God by David, but later on recorded and written into a song for the chief musician of the temple, and the Israelites who visited the temple and listened to the music.

**Context/Author**

The author of this quote is David. David recorded this psalm in his exile in the wilderness, fleeing from Saul who was hunting him down, in hopes to kill him because of jealousy and anger.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this psalm was praise to God, and a cry out for help from David who was in a very desperate situation and wanted God to know that even though he couldn’t offer sacrifices he knew God would deliver him, as he was faithful, and had the law in his heart. It was also for David to remind himself that God would help him through the good and bad, stay with him throughout the suffering, and be faithful.

**Meaning of passage**

David was limited in the fact that he couldn’t offer sacrifices whilst running away from Saul. But David knew in his heart that offering sacrifices wasn’t important or necessary at the time. But what was more important was the spirit of the law that lived within him, that he practiced and meditated on it. Through the psalm, he says that understanding the law and having it in your heart is more important than doing the law. He says this in Psalm 40v8 “I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.” David knew that having faith and understanding the law rather than offering sacrifices was the only thing David could do while fleeing, and more important to God. David knew that God had helped him in the past, so David’s cry out to God helped him understand that God will save him from persecution.

**New Testament Quote**

Hebrews 10v5-9

**Audience**

Paul wrote this letter to the Hebrews, a Jewish community of Christians in Jerusalem.

**Context /Author**

The author of Hebrews was Paul, who wrote the letter in the latter half of the 1st century. It was at a time when Jews were still following the law, and the ecclesia were still unsure of keeping the law or not. At this time, certain believers were considering turning back to Judaism and to the Jewish system of law to escape being persecuted for believing Jesus Christ to be the promised Messiah.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this letter was to remind the ecclesia that they didn’t need to follow the law or do sacrifices. Paul wanted to remind the Jewish Christians that Christ was the true sacrifice, and it was more important to have the spirit of the law. There was pressure on the new church from other Jews to return to following the law. Paul writes to encourage the Jews to stay in their faith even through hardships and persecution.

**Meaning of passage**

Paul writes a letter, informing the Christian Jews that it wasn’t the law that would save them, the concept of repetitious sacrifices shows they were not effective. Because of Christ’s sinless life and perfect sacrifice, he fulfilled the law and now they were free and didn’t need to follow the law anymore, but the intent and spirit of the law. Paul in Hebrews 10 has referenced David’s words of Psalm 40 to make the connection to Christ’s life and sacrifice. God’s intent was that for his will to be completed through a “body”, in contrast to doing so through sacrifices. Paul says in Hebrews 10v5 “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a *body* you prepared for me.” This means that Christ’s perfect sacrifice has replaced all animal sacrifices and fulfilled the law. Paul tells the Jewish Christians to keep living faithfully, telling them that baptism and consistent faithfulness will allow them to be saved.

**Pauls use of quote:**

Paul quotes Psalm 40 as he knew it would connect to his Jewish audience in a way that they would understand. The Jews would relate to Paul’s reference of Psalm 40 as it was talking about their ancestors who would have listened to Davids psalms in the temple, and they would also be familiar with the Old Testament as they would have studied and learned about it. The Jews would also relate to this quote in its context, with David fleeing from the persecution of Saul relating to their own persecution as they take on their knew faith. It would have also been more meaningful to them as they would feel comforted that God would be with them, just as God had been with David. Paul is able to connect his audience and their past to Psalms 40 to make it more powerful and meaningful to them.

Paul quotes Psalm 40 as it helps get across the purpose of his letter, to explain to the Jewish Christians why having the spirit of the law was far more important than doing the law or offering sacrifices. This is because, at the time, the ecclesia was being pressured into following the law and persecuted for their faith. Paul quotes what David says in Psalm 40v6-8, “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire…I desire to do your will, my God”. This quote encourages the Jewish Christians and builds their confidence of faith and belief that it is better to understand they were free from the law. David knew that sacrifices could become mindless actions and knew that having the spirit of it and having faith was far more important to God, which is Paul’s point to the Hebrews. If the Jewish Christians could see that David’s words were looking to the future, that future had now arrived. It was to be their own heartfelt desire to do God’s will and follow Jesus.

Word count: 950