

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

PSALM 41

Introduction:

The psalm anticipates one of the most important life lessons that Jesus ever taught—those who extend mercy and forgiveness to others will receive mercy and forgiveness from God. David did not see it as clearly as the King of Mercy, but he did see the truth. He saw it demonstrated in the lives of others and experienced it in his own life. This prompted the writing of this teaching psalm—all of Israel needed to know that the merciful are blessed!

The circumstance out of which this lesson became such a passion in the heart of David is rather well-known. It happened toward the end of his life when he was suffering from a chronic sickness. His rebellious son Absalom persuaded David's most trusted counselor and confidant to join him in a plot to overthrow David. Ahithophel, who had been his bosom-friend and prime-minister of state, joined Absalom in the plot. David wrote this psalm in the aftermath of that humiliating and frightening experience. David was not the only person to undergo such a painful experience. Many of us have experienced betrayal. It often occurs when you seem to be at your weakest point, when you are least able to bear it. Even our Lord knew the

kind of pain that David knew, and actually appropriated these words to describe his experience.

I. (V.1-3) THE MERCIFUL ARE BLESSED.

1. The human deed of mercy (v. 1)
2. The divine response to mercy (v. 2-3)

II. (V. 4) THE MERCIFUL STILL NEED MERCY.

1. They need mercy because of their sickness of soul.
2. They need mercy because of their sinfulness against God.

III. (V. 5-9) THE MERCIFUL WILL BE BETRAYED BY THE
WORLD.

1. The world takes advantages of our weaknesses.
2. The world desires to do us harm.
3. The world rewards our kindnesses with betrayal.

IV. (V. 10-13) THE MERCIFUL CAN EXPECT MERCY FROM
GOD.

1. The merciful can expect mercy because God is merciful.
2. The merciful can expect mercy because God keeps His promises.