

"Make Haste to Help Me"

A Cry for Immediate Help

Psalm 70

This psalm is virtually identical with the final verses of Psalm 40 (vs. 13-17). In that psalm, these words are the closing plea of a testimony psalm. Here, they begin and end with urgency. Psalm 40 teaches us to praise God after deliverance; Psalm 70 teaches us how to pray when deliverance has not yet come.

We find some familiar things in the superscription (title/heading) of the psalm and something only seen one other time (in the 38th Psalm).

"To the Chief Musician" – although this is an intensely personal psalm, it was given to be sung in public and not just a private prayer. It seems the purpose for this might be to use it as a model prayer for God's people in times of urgent need.

"A Psalm of David" – Although there is no timeframe given nor indicated for this psalm, it is safe to say that David was not young and this was not his first time in need of help. He was a man who had repeatedly experienced deliverance. The prayer comes from tested faith, not a panicked heart.

"To bring to remembrance" – this phrase is the most important element of the superscription. As stated often, even if these headings were not inspired Scripture, they were historically attributed for a purpose. The purpose historically here was "to remember, to call to mind." This is not David reminding himself, but David calling upon God to act in remembrance of His covenant faithfulness, His promises, and His prior acts of deliverance.

- This is not to imply that God forgets. It's considered "covenant language," appealing to God to act in accordance with His revealed character. It expresses

faith that God's past faithfulness is relevant now.

- This helps explain the psalm:
 - Why the psalm is short – it is meant to be quickly recalled.
 - Why it repeats Psalm 40 – it is intentionally used for recurring need.
 - Why urgency is the theme – remembrance is requested now, not eventually.

I. A PLEA FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERANCE – VS. 1

A. The urgency of the cry

1. The repetition of “make haste” (הַשָּׂה) sets the tone for the whole psalm.

The word means “to hurry, to act quickly.” It conveys immediate action, not simply willingness. The repetition in verse 1 and in verse 5 leaves no room for delay.

2. David is not questioning God's ability to help, but appealing to His timing. Biblical faith does not hesitate to ask God to act *now*.

B. The nature of the request

“Deliver me” and “Help me” – God's help is not just a momentary intervention but continuing care.

1. “Deliver me” (נָצַל) – to snatch away, rescue from danger
2. “Help me” (עָזַר) – aid, support, assistance

C. The grounds of the appeal

Notice the use of the names for God in this verse. The psalmist appeals to “God” (Elohim - the Mighty Creator) for demonstration of power (“deliver

me”), but he appeals to the “LORD” (Jehovah – the Covenant Lord) for relational help.

D. The normalcy of such prayer

This type of plea is found in several other psalms, showing that such pleas are normal, not exceptional.

Psalm 22:19

¹⁹ But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Psalm 38:22

²² Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.

Psalm 71:12

¹² O God, be not far from me: O my God, make haste for my help.

II. A PETITION FOR THE DEFEAT OF THE WICKED – VS. 2-3

A. The character of the enemy (vs. 2a)

They are defined not just by opposition, but by delighting in David’s hurt.

B. The nature of the judgment requested (vs. 2b-3)

1. “Confusion” (vs. 2) and “shame” (vs. 3) are judicial terms – David is asking God to reverse the situation.
2. “Let them be turned back...” (יְסוּגוּ אֲחֹרַי) – this suggests a military rout (defeat without pursuit). David isn’t asking God to kill them; he is asking God to neutralize their efforts.

C. The sin of mockery

“Aha, aha” (הָאָהָה הָאָהָה) reflects mockery and triumph over perceived defeat. When the world mocks the believer, our defense is to hand the battle over to

the Lord.

Psalm 6:10

¹⁰ Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly.

Psalm 35:4

⁴ Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

Psalm 129:5

⁵ Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

III. A PRAYER FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE GODLY – vs. 4

There is a change in direction here from the enemies (vs. 2-3) to the family of God.

A. The identity of the godly

1. They that “seek” Him (מִבְקְשֵׁי)
- a) The word means to pursue, to desire earnestly. It indicates active, ongoing pursuit.
- b) This contrasts sharply with the enemies who were “seeking” David’s hurt.
- c) The same verb is used for seeking God’s will and presence in Psalm 27:8.

Psalm 27:8

⁸ *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.*

- d) There’s an application to be made here towards the New Testament teaching of “Whosoever will...” – “all those that seek thee...”

2. They that “love [His] salvation”

B. The effect of God's deliverance

1. Rejoicing among God's people
"Rejoice and be glad in thee"
2. It's not just personal – it also strengthens the worship of God's people.

C. The ultimate aim

"Let God be magnified"

1. This reveals the ultimate aim: God's glory.
2. David shows here that he still wanted others to rejoice even if he was going through a trial.

Psalm 5:11

¹¹ But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

Psalm 34:3

³ O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

Psalm 35:27

²⁷ Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

IV. A PERSONAL CONFESSION OF TOTAL DEPENDENCE UPON THE LORD – VS. 5

While the people of God (the church today) may rejoice, the psalmist was still suffering.

A. The honest confession

Of the psalmist: "I am poor and needy" – "The language would describe the condition of one who was afflicted and was at the same time poor; of one

who had no resource but in God, and who was passing through scenes of poverty and sorrow" (Barnes).

Psalm 86:1

¹ Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy.

Psalm 109:22

²² For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

B. The exclusive confidence

In the LORD: "my help and my deliverer" – God is confessed as both "help" and "deliverer," not a last resort but the only One.

Psalm 121:1-2

¹ I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

² My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

C. The final plea

"Make no tarrying" – the psalm ends where it began: with a plea for God's timing.

Conclusion:

When deliverance has not yet come, when enemies still oppose, and when strength is gone, God's people are not left without words. This short psalm was given "to bring to remembrance," not because God forgets, but because we must be reminded that the God who has helped before is still our help today. Whether the prayer is long or short, quiet or urgent, the confidence of the believer remains the same: "*Thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.*"