

Triumphant Tuesday Bible Study

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PSALM 70 – HELP QUICKLY, O LORD



Let's start out with a little trivia as it pertains to the number 70

"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city (Jerusalem), to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up (finish) vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy (Jesus Christ)." Daniel 9:24

How the Number 70 Completes Bible Prophecy

NUMBERS have meaning in Scripture!!

The number 70 in the Bible, as shown in the examples below, symbolizes fullness, restoration, and an endpoint:

- The post-flood world was repopulated by 70 descendants of Noah, resulting in 70 nations (Genesis. 10).
- Terah, the father of Abraham, was 70 years old when Abraham was born (Genesis 11:26).
- The Nation of Israel began with 70 Hebrews who migrated to Egypt (Exodus 1:1-5).

- Moses appointed 70 elders to be the governing body of Israel (Numbers 11:16).
- Following the liberation from bondage in Egypt, the children of Israel camped at an oasis of 70 palm trees (Exodus 15:27).
- The Jews were liberated from captivity in Babylon after 70 years (Jeremiah 29:10).
- God's plan of redemption for Israel and Jerusalem is comprised of 70 weeks (of years = 490 years) (Daniel 9:24-27).
- Jesus sent out 70 disciples to harvest the field of believers (Luke 10:1 KJV).
- A typical human lifespan is 70 to 80 years (Psalm 90:10).
- Israel's greatest ruler, King David, died at the age of 70 (2 Samuel 5:4).

*This psalm is titled **To the Chief Musician.**
A Psalm of David. To bring to remembrance.*

This psalm is adapted to a state of affliction; it is copied almost word for word from the fortieth, and, some think for that reason, is entitled, "a psalm to bring to remembrance;" for it may be of use sometimes to pray over the prayers we have formerly made to God upon similar occasions, which may be done with new affections. David here prays that God would send, (1). Help to himself, versus 1, 5. (2). Shame to his enemies, versus 2, 3. (3). Joy to his friends, verse 4. These five verses were the last five versed of Ps. 40. He seems to have intended this short prayer to be both for himself and us a slave for every sore, and therefore two be always in mind; and in singing we may apply it to our troubles whatever they are. (Matthew Henry)

Psalm 70:1-5. ¹ Make haste, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.

² Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

Psalm 40:13-17 ¹³ Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me.

¹⁴ Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to the shame that wish me evil.

³ Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha.

⁴ Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as

love thy salvation say continually,
Let God be magnified.

⁵ But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.

¹⁵ Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame that say unto me, Aha, aha.

¹⁶ Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

¹⁷ But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.

“This prayer is the **shield, spear, thunderbolt** and defense against every attack of fear, presumption [and] lukewarmness...which are especially dominant today.” (Martin Luther, cited in James Montgomery Boice)

If these five verses sound familiar, it's because they are. Psalm 70 is almost a word-for-word repetition of Psalm 40:13-17. It is unknown what the time difference is between the writing of these two Psalms, but regardless, we can learn from the fact that at the time David wrote Psalm 70, he had unanswered prayers. So, what was his response? He prayed them again.

The commentator Matthew Henry reminds us that “it may be of use sometimes to pray over the prayers we have formerly made to God upon similar occasions, which may be done with new affections.” So, in these short five verses, David makes ten urgent pleas that he has formerly made to God. He asks for deliverance for himself and retribution for his enemies coupled with the reminder that there is great joy found in the Lord!

Psalm 70 is an encouragement to our prayer lives as believers. What it does is helps us understand we can communicate the deep yearnings of our hearts to God repeatedly. Also, we can be specific in asking God to answer us! It doesn't necessarily mean that God will answer in our timing, but it is a reminder to us that God is sovereign over time, and we will begin to see the goodness of God's timing. As a group of believers, we can learn to humbly and earnestly ask God to hurry, but for His Glory and our good.

This prayer for deliverance from one's enemies is nearly identical to (Psalm 40:13-17). It substitutes “God” for “Lord” (in verses 1, 4, and 5).

Psalm 70:1” [Make haste], O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.”

The phrase, "make haste", is supplied from the following clause in (Psalm 40:13). It is, "be pleased, O Lord", or "Jehovah".

"Make haste to help me, O Lord (see note on Psalm 22:19 But be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me).

We see David in a state of urgency with his prayer. Many times, we feel that God has not heard our prayer, because we are not immediately answered. The petitions in this form of the psalm emphasize the urgency of the matter. There is not a moment to lose; or so it appears. (Kidner)

David repeated the request for emphasis, but slightly changed his address to Deity. In the repetition he used the name Yahweh (Lord), the covenant name of God. By the using the additional name he hoped to secure additional speed in the reply.

Psalm 70:2 "Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that desire my hurt."

In Psalm 40:14 it is added, "together" (see note on Psalm 40:14). He was assured that the more they raged, the nearer they were to destruction, and he the nearer to his deliverance.

"That seek after my soul": Or "life". In (Psalm 40:14), it is added, "to destroy it"; for that was the end of their seeking after it.

"Let them be turned backward": (see note on Psalm 40:14).

David is asking the Lord to make the people, who are trying to destroy him, ashamed. This is as if David is saying, I can't show them, but you show them for me. Lord, make them ashamed of themselves for attacking one of yours.

Psalm 70:3 "Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame that say, Aha, aha."

In Psalm 40:15 it is, "let them be desolate"; which seems to respect their land and houses, here their persons (see notes on Psalm 40:15). By this we are taught not to mock at others in their misery, lest the same fall on our own necks.

"That say": In Psalm 40:15 it is added, "to me"; not to his people, but himself.

This was a bold request, because many times our enemies seem to have no sense of shame as they attack and oppose us.

"The kindest thing we can pray for people who do wrong is that their plans will fail, for it may be that in their frustration they will see the folly and true end of evil and be reached for God." (Boice)

ii. "Rest assured, the enemies of Christ and his people shall have wages for their work; they shall be paid in their own coin; they loved scoffing, and they shall be filled with it." (Spurgeon)

"Aha, aha": Rejoicing at his calamity and distress. The Targum is, "we are glad, we are glad" (see notes on Psalm 40:15 and compare with Ezek. 25:3).

This has the sense of scornful mocking. It was bad enough that David's enemies wanted him dead; they also poured ridicule on him. Their reward on judgement day will be everlasting punishment. The expression (aha, aha) is used by the devil's followers. This just shows who they really are.

Psalm 70:4 "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified."

The only change in this verse (from Psalm 40:16), is in the insertion of the word "and" in the beginning of the second clause, "and let such as love," etc.

In the last lesson, we gave the meaning of this. Those that seek God, find Him. We said it before, and it bears repeating again. Those who have found the Lord have much to be joyful about. They are the redeemed, and they should say so. The praise of the Lord should never cease from the lips of the redeemed. God should be magnified, not only with our lips, but by the lives we live.

Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You: David called the people of God – those who seek Him and love His salvation – to be happy in Him. We sense that it would be impossible for David to do this unless he also found some measure of joy and gladness in God, despite his urgent problem.

Let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified": David thought that to praise God was to *magnify* Him – that is, to make Him larger in one's perception. Magnification does not actually make an object bigger, and we can't make God bigger. Still, to magnify something or someone is to *perceive* it as bigger, and we must do that regarding God.

Those who love Your salvation: "All men are lovers as well as seekers; for all men love. Some love money more than God's salvation; others love pleasure, even the pleasures of sin, more than God's salvation; and others love bustle and business more than God's salvation." (Frame, cited in Spurgeon)

Let God be magnified: "It does not say, let God be magnified by me if he will please to make me successful in business, and happy, and healthy, but it leaves it open. Only let God be magnified, and he may do what he wills with me." (Spurgeon)

Psalm 70:5 "But I [am] poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou [art] my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying."

In Psalm 40:17 it follows, yet "the Lord thinketh on me"; instead of which it is here (see notes on Psalm 40:17).

"Make haste unto me, O God": Which repeats for sense the same petition (as in Psalm 71:1).

"Thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying": (In Psalm 40:17 it is), "O my God".

David could combine his sense of great joy in God with a realistic appraisal of his present need. Secure in the truth that God cared for and thought about him, David again appealed to God to be his help and deliverer, and he needed God to do this without delay.

"I am a poor man, and a beggar – an *afflicted beggar*; a sense of my poverty causes me to beg." (Clarke)

Spurgeon thought that the sense of being poor and needy was also appropriate for a congregation seeking God's blessing. "We are praying for a display of the Holy Spirit's power in this church, and, in order to have successful pleading in this matter, it is necessary that we should unanimously make the confession of our text, 'I am poor and needy.' We must own that we are powerless in this business." (Spurgeon)

Poor and needy: "With such a Father and such a Friend, poverty becometh rich, and weakness itself is strong." (Horne)

The request is repeated for emphasis: Make haste to me, O God! "But God is making haste. On the wings of every hour, quicker than light leaps from world to world, He is on his way. Delays are not denials but are necessary to the perfecting of his arrangements." (Meyer)

You are my help and my deliverer: David appealed to God on the grounds that he had *no other* help or deliverer. He would not look to self or the gods of the nations. God would answer this complete dependence upon Him.

Jehovah is the name of God here. Those who need and want God will be helped of God. The Lord came to help those who needed help, as we see in the following verse.

Matthew 9:12 "But when Jesus heard [that], he said unto them, they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

Notice, the use of "my" in the 5th verse above. This shows that salvation, deliverance, and for that matter, all gifts from God are for the individual. It is a decision we must make one at a time, that we need and want God in our life.

Matthew Henry Commentary
Charles H. Spurgeon
Bible Reading Plan.Org
Bible Studys.Org
Enduring Word – David Guzik
Study Bible.Org
KJV Bible

