

O LORD, DO NOT DELAY – PSALM 70

INTRODUCTION

1. Psalm 70 is another psalm that is attributed to David.
2. It is almost identical to Psalm 40:13-17 from Book I of the Psalter but there are several differences.
3. No one is sure whether this psalm was a stand-alone work or whether it was adapted from Psalm 40.
4. Regardless, this short lament resonates with us whenever we feel desperate for deliverance.
5. Let us reflect on David's plea to God to come quickly and deliver him.

DISCUSSION

I. DAVID'S PLIGHT

- A. As is so often true in these kinds of laments, David finds himself in serious trouble.
- B. It is so serious that he urgently pleads with God to "make haste" (ESV, NKJV, NASB), "hurry" (NET), "come quickly" (NABRE), to "pay attention" (LES) and deliver him (**Ps. 70:1, cp. Vs. 5**).
- C. We are not exactly sure what the trouble is or who it is with.
- D. But we do know that it concerns some enemies who not only mock him but who also desire to take his life (**Ps. 70:2-3**).
 - i. Of course, the most likely period of time that comes to mind is when David was fleeing Saul or during Absalom's rebellion.
 - ii. Either way, as King of Israel surrounded by hostile neighbors, David probably faced danger most of the time (**Ps. 40**).
- E. And this is something we would do well to stop and reflect on.
- F. While David was no perfect man with a sinless life, he was a man who loved the Lord and who always tried to walk in God's will and ways.
- G. In fact, Scripture says God called him a man after His own heart (**1 Sam. 13:14**).
- H. And yet, his life was not without trial, struggle, difficulty, and tragedy.
- I. If that was true for David, then why should we be surprised if that is our experience too?
- J. Job, the prophets, Jesus, and the apostle Paul, all remind us that "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (**Acts 14:22; cp. 2 Tim. 3:12; John 15:18-25**).
- K. There are probably very few among us who haven't felt like David, desperately pleading with God to hurry up and rescue us.
- L. And so let us not allow such times to overwhelm us, or surprise us, but turn us to God in urgent and fervent prayer (**Jas. 5:16-17; Luke 18:1**).

II. DAVID'S PRAYER

- A. This is exactly what this desperate situation did to David.
- B. And what did David pray for?
- C. Well, the first thing we notice is that he prayed for himself (**Ps. 70:1**).
 - i. Perhaps this seems strange to us since most of us begin a prayer with adoration or praise to God no matter how we structure our prayers.
 - ii. And most of us try to focus on the needs of others more than ourselves.
 - iii. After all, this is keeping with the example of Jesus (**cp. Matt. 6:9-10**).
 - iv. David's words remind us that prayer is not some rote, rigid template but is a dynamic experience where we get real with God.
 - v. Sometimes desperate situations call for us to get right to the point.

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- D. Next, David prays to God about those who are troubling him, that they would be stopped and humiliated (**Ps. 70:2-3; cp. Mark 15:29**).
 - i. This isn't the first time we have encountered this kind of language.
 - ii. And in the previous psalm, David was even more intense (**Ps. 69:28**).
 - iii. But is this the kind of prayer Jesus called for (**Matt. 5:43-44**)?
 - iv. If we desire our enemy's salvation, then we should be praying for their evil to be stopped so that they might turn to God (**Matt. 6:13; 2 Cor. 7:9; Ps. 1, 2**).
- E. It is on the heels of these petitions that David then turns to the godly (**Ps. 70:4**).
 - i. David seems to understand that he is not the only godly person in the world nor is he the only one who suffers (**1 Kings 19:10, 18**).
 - ii. This is important for us to remember too (**1 Pet. 5:8-9**).
 - iii. And his prayer also reminds us that if we need prayers because we are struggling then our brethren in other places do too!
 - iv. "Let your trials teach you how to pray for other Christians" (**Luke 11:1-2**).¹
- F. There is something else here we need to notice about his prayer for the righteous.
 - i. David prays that the godly would seek God and rejoice in Him always!
 - ii. And this is extremely important for us to appreciate and to take to heart.
 - iii. David's desire and ours is to be delivered when hard times come, and we hope and pray that God will bring us through, and we can go on with our lives.
 - iv. But can we rejoice in God and say "God is great" even when that doesn't happen (**Php. 4:11-13; Dan. 3:16-18; Job 1:20-21**)?
- G. May we be those who not only fervently seek God's presence and deliverance in prayer, but who also rejoice in God no matter what (**Php. 4:4-7**).

III. DAVID'S PERSUASION

- A. David's urgent and fervent prayer ends in the same way it begins – with a plea for God to quickly deliver him from his troubles (**Ps. 70:5**).
- B. But notice how David describes himself in the opening of this verse – he is "poor" and "needy."
- C. Even though he is the powerful King of Israel, he is sure that he cannot save himself without God's help.
- D. Do we recognize this about ourselves?
- E. After all we have learned about God from His word, do we ever still sometimes think we can take care of it all by ourselves (**Deut. 8:17; Rev. 3:17**)?
- F. May God help us to know that we need Him in all things and that in our weakness He can not only deliver us, but also equip us to do all He desires of us (**1 John 1:8-2:2; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 9:8**).

CONCLUSION

1. David's cry for God to "make haste" and deliver has long been the cry of God's people (**Rev. 6:10**).
2. Though we hope for the best each day, the Lord has told us to expect trouble (**John 16:33**).
3. When those times come, let us not be discouraged, but take up David's prayer and cry out to the Lord to come quickly (**Rev. 22:20**).

¹ Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 42–106: An Expository Commentary*](#) (p. 589). Baker Books.