

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School
Placerita Baptist Church
2006

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Psalm 70 — An Urgent SOS

1.0 Introducing Psalm 70

- Psalm 70 is almost identical to Psalm 40:13-17.
 - ✓ Psalm 70 is the third to the last psalm in Book 2, while Psalm 40 is the second to the last psalm in Book 1.
 - ✓ “David appears to have written the full-length Psalm [40], and also to have made this excerpt from it, and altered it to suit the occasion.”— Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, 3 vols. (reprint; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, n.d.), 2/1:203.
- Psalm 71 has no heading, so some commentators believe that Psalms 70 and 71 should be treated as one psalm.
 - ✓ “Hasten” (70:1, 5; 71:12) translates an unusual Hebrew word that occurs only once outside Psalms (1 Samuel 20:38). It occurs in Psalms 22:19; 38:22; 40:13 (= 70:1); and 141:1.
 - ✓ “Shame” occurs in 70:2, 3; 71:13, 24.
- The psalm heading (“for a memorial”) is also found on Psalm 38. Perhaps the psalm was sung in conjunction with a sacrifice that would help “remind” the Lord of the psalmist’s request (cf. Leviticus 2:2; 24:7; 1 Chronicles 16:4).
- Psalm 70 is a very short version of the message of Psalm 69.

2.0 Reading Psalm 70 (NAU)

70:1 *A Psalm* of David; for a memorial.

O God, hasten to deliver me;
O LORD, hasten to my help!

70:2 Let those be ashamed and humiliated
Who seek my life;
Let those be turned back and dishonored

Who delight in my hurt.

70:3 Let those be turned back because of their shame
 Who say, “Aha, aha!”

70:4 Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
 And let those who love Your salvation say continually,
 “Let God be magnified.”

70:5 But I am afflicted and needy;
Hasten to me, O God!
 You are my help and my deliverer;
 O LORD, do not delay.

3.0 Understanding Psalm 70

3.1 Outline

- I.** Call for Rescue (v. 1)
- II.** Call for Retribution (vv. 2-3)
- III.** Call for Rejoicing (v. 4)
- IV.** Call for Rescue (v. 5)



3.2 Notes

Psalm 70’s Ties to Other Psalms

Psalm 70	Psalm 40	Psalm 35	Psalm 69	Psalm 71
v. 1	v. 13	v. 2 (“help”)	v. 14 (“deliver”)	vv. 2 (“deliver”), 11 (“deliver”), 12 (“make haste to help me”)
v. 2	v. 14	vv. 4, 26	vv. 1 (“my life”), 6 (“ashamed ... dishonored”), 10 (“my soul/life”), 19 (“shame ... dishonor”)	vv. 10 (“my life”), 13, 23 (“my soul/life”), 24
v. 3	v. 15	vv. 21 (“Aha, aha”), 25 (“Aha”)		
v. 4	v. 16	v. 27		(vv. 14, 19)
v. 5	v. 17	v. 10 (“afflicted/poor ... needy”)	vv. 29 (“I am afflicted”), 33 (“the needy”)	v. 12 (“make haste to help me”)

Chart of Comparisons for Psalms 40 and 70

Psalm 40	Psalm 70
13 <u>Be pleased</u> , ¹ <u>O LORD</u> , to deliver me; Make haste, O LORD, to help me.	1 <u>O God</u> , ¹ <i>hasten</i> to deliver me; O LORD, hasten ² to my help!
14 Let those be ashamed and humiliated <u>together</u> ² Who seek my life <u>to destroy it</u> ; ³ Let those be turned back and dishonored Who delight in my hurt.	2 Let those be ashamed and humiliated Who seek my life; Let those be turned back and dishonored Who delight in my hurt.
15 Let those be <u>appalled</u> ⁴ because of their shame Who say <u>to me</u> , ⁵ “Aha, aha!”	3 Let those be <u>turned back</u> ³ because of their shame Who say, “Aha, aha!”
16 Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let those who love Your salvation say continually, “ <u>The LORD</u> be magnified!”	4 Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; <u>And</u> ⁴ let those who love Your salvation say continually, “Let <u>God</u> ⁵ be magnified.”
17 Since I am afflicted and needy, <u>Let the Lord be mindful of me</u> . ⁶ You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, <u>O my God</u> . ⁷	5 But I am afflicted and needy; <u>Hasten to me, O God!</u> ⁶ You are my help and my deliverer; <u>O LORD</u> , ⁷ do not delay.
¹ Focus on the LORD’s favor. ² Added word speaks of total or complete humiliation. ³ Specifies the goal or purpose, which is understood in 70:2. ⁴ Speaks of shuddering, being horrified, desolated. ⁵ Specifies indirect object. ⁶ Divine title emphasizes lordship. ⁷ Personalization of the relationship.	¹ “God” is expected change in Book 2, which uses “God” more often than “LORD.” ² “Hasten” emphasized as the only imperative. ³ Describes the enemies’ shrinking or drawing back. ⁴ Adds the conjunction. ⁵ See note 1, above. ⁶ Completes the inclusio with v. 1. Also, see note 1, above. ⁷ Providing a match for v. 1.

- **v. 1 “hasten”**
 - The sense of urgency dominates this psalm (as also Psalms 69 and 71).
 - See, also, Psalms 22:19 and 38:22.
 - Prayer is the amplifier for the small voice of the saint in desperate need.

- **v. 2 “Who delight in my hurt”**
 - It is a sad reality of fallen human nature, but you will at some time in life have an enemy who delights in your hurt and harm.
 - Such enemies will hate you in spite of or even for your virtues.

- v. 3 “Aha, aha!”
 - The meaning is something like “Too bad, too bad.”
- v. 4 “Let God be magnified.”
 - Spurgeon observed that this “doxology” is “infinitely more manly and ennobling than the dog’s bark of ‘Aha, aha’” (*The Treasury of David*, 2/1:204).
- v. 5 “I am afflicted and needy”
 - “Afflicted” (or, “poor”) refers to one who is a victim in a situation or condition that is not of his or her own choosing.
 - “Needy” in this connection and context refers to the fact that David is completely dependent upon someone else for deliverance.
 - God alone is able to help David and deliver him from his enemies.

4.0 Singing Psalm 70

Make Haste

Tunes: “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”



Make haste, O God, my soul to bless!
My help and my deliv’rer thou;
Make haste, for I’m in deep distress,
My case is urgent; help me *now*.

Make haste, for I am poor and low;
And Satan mocks my prayers and tears;
O God, in mercy be not slow,
But snatch me from my horrid fears.

Make haste, O God! Make haste to save!
For time is short, and death is nigh;
Make haste ere yet I’m in my grave,
And with the lost for ever lie.

Make haste, O God, and hear my cries;
Then with the souls who seek thy face,
And those who thy salvation prize,
I’ll magnify thy matchless grace.

— Charles Haddon Spurgeon

5.0 Praying Psalm 70

- Father, help me now. [v. 1]
- Lord, take care of those who oppose Your people. [vv. 2-3]
- God, be magnified—You are great. [v. 4]
- Thank You for being my help and my deliverer. [v. 5]

6.0 Applying Psalm 70

- Prayer should be our first action, rather than our last resort.
- In desperate circumstances, depend on God.