

“Make Haste, O God”
Psalm 70
(Preached at Trinity, July 3, 2011)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we come to **Psalm 70** one of the first things we notice is its similarity to **Psalm 40**. In fact it is almost identical with **Verses 13-17** of **Psalm 40**. Some believe that **Psalm 70** was detached from the earlier psalm for use in the later period, possibly a time of renewed trouble.
2. One thing we should notice about the life of David: Although he was anointed by God as the King of Israel and although, except for his sin with Bathsheba he walked consistently with God in righteousness, David was in continual hardship and difficulty. If this was true for David should we expect anything different for God’s people today.
Psalm 34:19 – “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.”
3. We find in this psalm that David is once again facing a serious trial and is calling upon God to help him before it’s too late:
Psalm 70:1 – “*Make haste*, O God, to deliver me; make haste to help me, O LORD.”
Psalm 70:5 – “make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.”
4. We can divide **Psalm 70** into three parts:
 - I. David’s Cry for God’s Help – **Verse 1, 5**
 - II. David’s Condemnation of the Wicked – **Verses 2-3**
 - III. David’s Confidence in God’s Sure Defense – **Verse 4**
 - I. David’s Cry for God’s Help – **Verse 1**
 - A. There is a great air of urgency in the prayer of this psalm. “Make haste!” “Make no tarrying.”
 1. The superscription of this psalm tells us that David is the author and that it is a psalm of remembrance. Some translations translate it “memorial” but the idea is that of calling to memory.
 - a. It is the word God used when He spoke to Noah:
Genesis 9:15 – “And I will remember my covenant,”
 - b. And the word used in the Fourth Commandment
Exodus 20:8 – “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
 - c. David is calling to remembrance our continual and urgent need for God’s rich provision and protection.
 2. David is crying out with urgency, but also crying out with the memory of God’s past acts of deliverance. He was crying out as an experienced believer.
 - B. This is the nature of prayer
 1. We must pray by faith – and faith is built through experience.

2. We must also pray with intensity.
 - a. This is the way God wants us to pray. Sometimes He delays in order to move us to more urgent prayer.
 - b. Matthew Henry – “Sometimes God seems to delay helping his own people, that he may excite such earnest desires as these.”
John Calvin – “Even when God delays to help us, it is our duty to contend against a feeling of weariness; but such is his goodness, that he permits us to use this form of prayer, That he would make haste according to our desires.”
 - c. Praying with urgency is not a lack of faith.
 - a. Urgent praying is boldly approaching the throne of God as the only source of our confidence.
 - b. In fact, this is when our prayer life is most effectual. When they are urgent, fervent, and earnest. When they are passionate pleas for the aid of our great God who is always present, perfect in wisdom and power.
 - d. David has an urgent need and offers up an urgent prayer

II. David’s Condemnation of the Wicked – Verses 2-3

A. David describes his enemies

1. **Verse 2** – They seek his life (שׁוֹנֵאִים)
 - a. David, once again, was in a life-threatening situation
 - b. The nature of our lost condition is that of hatred. The spirit of the 6th Commandment deals with matter of our heart.
Matthew 5:21-22 – “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: ²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”
 - c. “Raca” was a term of reproach used by the Jews during the time of Christ.
“Thou fool” was an expression of absolute rejection of the person as a human being.
Calvin - “Now, if we do not wish to violate the image of God, we ought to hold our neighbor sacred. And if we do not wish to renounce all humanity, we ought to cherish his as our own flesh”
 - d. David’s enemies saw no value in his life as a human being. This speaks volumes in our current generation – a culture of death.
2. **Verse 2** – They desire his hurt (עָוֵל) – a word that literally means “evil” – here it should be understood to mean ruin, misery, distress. David’s enemies desire his utter ruin.
3. They rejoice in the pain of others – “Aha Aha.” The word here describes joy but in this case malicious joy. They were mocking his pain.

- a. David is describing their cruelty and malice.
 - b. It is the height of wickedness when we can mock the pain of others. As Jesus hung torn and bleeding on the cross those who passed by behaved like animals.
Matthew 27:39-44 – “And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who *are going to* destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking *Him*, and saying, ⁴² "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. ⁴³ "He trusts in God; let Him deliver *Him* now, if He takes pleasure in Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" ⁴⁴ And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him.”
 - c. We can become so barbaric as to be without feeling. We can spend our days in mirth while turning our backs on the suffering of others. Do we pray for the countless martyrs today?
- B. David calls for God’s judgment upon them
- 1. David’s imprecatory prayer is this – The sole desire of my enemies has been my ruin. May their wicked desires be turned back upon them. David’s confidence was that God’s perfect justice would be accomplished. As we leave all vengeance to God we are constrained to behave towards them with compassion and kindness.
 - 2. “Let them be ashamed and confounded” –
 - a. Both words point to shame and humiliation.
 - b. This will be one aspect of the final judgment – shame, humiliation as every secret sin will be exposed openly. People will want to hide in shame and embarrassment but will find no shelter.
 - 3. “let them be turned backward, and put to confusion” -
 - a. Turned back – no further advancement. All of the success and advancement in this life will be reversed in the Day of Judgment.
 - b. Again, the idea of humiliation is set forth. The word points to shame and disgrace
- III. David’s Confidence in God’s Sure Defense – **Verses 4-5**
- A. David turns his attention to the community of faith
- 1. The confidence David has towards God is a confidence that pertains not only to him but to all of God’s people.
 “Let all those that seek thee rejoice
 - 2. As one of God’s people see God’s deliverance on behalf of another it encourages us. God is demonstrating His faithfulness. He is faithful to them. He is faithful to me.
 - 3. This section contains several parts:
- B. Joy and contentment in God –
 “Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee”

1. These words describe overwhelming joy in those who cast their hearts towards God. There is great joy that is common to all of God's people. It is consistent with our life in Christ.
 2. David is speaking these words in the midst of this trial. While the world was seeking his death he was filled with unspeakable joy as he set his eyes on God.
Acts 20:24 – “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”
1 Thessalonians 1:6 – “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.”
 3. How can this be? How is it that Christians can be filled with joy in the midst of suffering; in the midst of earthly loss?
 - a. A man's joy is always based upon acquiring the pursuit of his heart
 A man's heart is always drawn to his treasure
Matthew 6:21 – “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
 - b. For the people of this world their joy is always based upon earthly things: possessions, family, friends, prestige and power, pleasure, comfort
 If any of these things are removed all joy is removed.
 The truth is all of these things are transitory. They can leave us at any moment.
 - c. The Christian's joy is based upon other things. He too has possessions. He too has friends and loved ones. But they are not the source of his joy.
- C. Exaltation and praise of God –
 “let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified”
1. Those that trust God also exalt Him – continually
 Continually – in the midst of the trial and in the deliverance
 2. The word “magnified” means “to become large”
 - a. It means to see God as so immense that everything else pales before Him
 - b. We need to continually keep the greatness of God before our eyes
 His largeness, His vastness.
 - c. The problem for most is they see God as small. It reflects in how they live, how they worship, how they pray, how they respond during adversity.
- D. Personal helplessness - “I *am* poor and needy”
1. On the physical level we tend to measure our resources and base our confidence upon the result of the audit. David rested no confidence in his outward resources.
Psalms 20:7 – “Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.”

2. On the spiritual level the lost person does not believe this. He sees himself as self-sufficient. He is able to gain God's acceptance. He is able to help himself.
 3. Jesus declared that the wealthy man was the one who became bankrupt
Matthew 5:3 – "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
- D. Faith in God as our Deliverer –
"thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD"
1. I am needy O God, You are my help and my Deliverer
 2. The word for "help" is the same word describing Eve in Genesis 2 "Help meet" – It describes Eve as coming beside Adam in support God is our great aid as we face adversity. The distinction, however, is in the previous section. Because we are needy God is our only help.
 3. God is our only Deliverer

Conclusion:

1. The conclusion is:
I am weak, needy, and helpless.
God is our only helper and Deliverer.
Thus, "O God, make haste, do not tarry!"
2. This must be our life. Like David we face many trials. It characterizes our life. Yet God is our ever present help, our only sure Deliverer. And so we cry out to Him.
3. May these verses serve as an encouragement to all who trust in God.
 - a. We face many enemies – some physical, some spiritual
God forever stands as our great conquering King
Romans 8:37 – "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."
 - b. Matthew Henry: "When a child of God is brought into that horrible pit, and the miry clay, Satan cries *Aha! aha!* thinking he has gained his point; but he shall rage when he sees the brand plucked out of the fire, and shall be *desolate, for a reward of his shame. The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! The accuser of the brethren is cast out.*"
4. Let all who love the deliverance of God say continually, "The LORD be magnified."
May the greatness of God overshadow everything else in our lives.