

Psalm 70

Title: Prayer For Help and Deliverance

Author and Date: David

Key Verses: Psalm 70:1, 5

Type: Lament (Individual Complaint)

Outline

- A. Cry: “make haste” (verse 1).
- B. Contrast: “let them” (verses 2-4).
- C. Confession: “thou art” (verse 5).

Notes

Title: “For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David; to bring remembrance.” The words, “to bring remembrance”, may have been placed in the title as a notation for a particular worship service or a particular sacrifice. These words are also found in the title of Psalm 38.

Summary: Psalm 70 is another lament (individual complaint) of the psalmist as he cries to God for help from his enemies and his persecutors. He cries out to God to make haste, to bring him prompt help and deliverance from his enemies (verse 1). He states three negative desires (imprecations or curses) for his enemies: “let them” be put to shame, be brought to dishonor, and be turned back (verses 2-3). He then states two positive desires: “let” those that seek God rejoice and “let” God be magnified (verse 4). The psalmist closes by repeating his initial request for the Lord’s prompt help (verse 5). Psalm 70, except for a few minor variations, matches the wording of Psalm 40:13-17.

Verse 1: “Make haste”, here and in verse 5, shows the urgency of the psalmist. The psalmist knows the delicate balance between pious urgency (“make haste to help me”, Psa. 22:19; 38:22; 40:13; etc.) and patient waiting (“I wait for thee”, Psa. 25:5, 21; 39:7; etc.).

Verses 2-3: These verses form the imprecatory (curse) portion of the psalm. The psalmist desires or wishes (“let them”) that his enemies be judged by God (see also Psa. 69: 22-28; etc.). He wants his enemies to be divinely judged and brought down (see the notes on Psalm 35:4-8, 25-26). The words “Aha, aha” are words of mockery (Psa. 35:21). Compare Psalm 35:25-27 with Psalm 70:2-4.

Verse 4: This verse states the positive desire or wish (“let all”) of the psalmist (see also Psa. 69:29; etc.). Note the contrast in this verse with verse 2. There are those who “seek” to hurt others (verse 2) and there are those who “seek” God and love him (verse 4).

Questions

1. What request does the psalmist have for God (verse 1)?
2. What desire does the psalmist have for his enemies (verses 2-3)?
3. What do the enemies say (verse 3)?
4. What does the psalmist call upon those to do who seek God and love him (verse 4)?
5. How does the psalmist describe himself and what request does he have for God (verse 5)?

Applications for Today

1. The Lord is willing to help us with our troubles and trials (verses 1 and 5). What did the Syro-Phoenician woman ask Jesus for (Mt. 15:25)? What did Paul get from God (Acts 26:22)? Who does Jesus help (Heb. 2:16) and how does he give help (Heb. 4:14-16)? What will the Lord not do (Heb. 13:5)?
2. When you are persecuted and mocked, pray to God (verses 2-3). What did Jesus do when he was mocked (Lk. 23:34-37)? How are some faithful people tried and tested (Heb. 11:36)?
3. Those who seek God and love him will rejoice and be glad (verse 4). What did David say in 1 Chronicles 16:10 (Psa. 105:3)?
4. Let God be magnified (verse 4). What did David say about God and why (2 Sam. 7:26; 1 Chron. 17:24)? Who was magnified in Paul (Phil. 1:20)?