

Make Haste O Lord

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[0 : 00] Let's turn now to the book of Psalms, Psalm 70. The book of Psalms and Psalm 70, page 580.

We'll read this psalm, it's a short psalm. Make haste, O God, to deliver me. O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be put to shame and confusion who seek my life.

Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt. Let them turn back because of the shame who say, aha, aha. May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.

May those who love your salvation say evermore, God is great. But I am poor and needy. Hasten to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer.

O Lord, do not delay. I think it's true to say, certainly within the Christian life, that troubles tend to drive us to God.

[1 : 12] Sadly, not always, but often. And as we know, troubles will always be part of life. But they will certainly be part of the Christian life.

And here we have David running to the Lord in desperation and in urgency. You can catch the real urgency of this prayer. As we said, this psalm, Psalm 70, is very, very similar to the last, from verse 13 to the end of Psalm 40.

Really, the most significant difference is in the beginning of the psalm. In Psalm 40, verse 13, David has a much more, you would almost say, gentle way of approaching the Lord.

Or you might almost say a more reverent way of approaching the Lord. He says, be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. And there's almost this kind of gracious approach, this kind of humble approach, even although he is in dire straits.

But there isn't that kind of gracious beginning in this psalm. It's make haste. It's straight away he just comes blurring right in, Lord, hurry up.

[2 : 29] That's really what he's saying. Hurry up. Lord, please, make haste. And in many ways, you tend to think, this is amazing language from David.

But often, when you look at the Davidic Psalms, you see amazing language. I'm quite sure there are times, as we read through the psalms, we would say, you know, I don't think I could actually pray like that.

There's an incredible boldness. Sometimes the language that is used is, you would say, it's daring language. We might kind of recoil sometimes to use the kind of language that David uses as he approaches God.

But I think this gives us an insight into the incredible intimacy that David had with the Lord. He lived with this great sense of God around him.

He was so conscious of God with him at every step. And here, whatever the particular situation, it's a life and death matter. And David is just coming straight into the presence of God.

[3 : 47] And it's a great encouragement to us to know that we can come to the Lord. And I'm sure there have been times that for some of you in here, in your agony, the agony of your soul, the agony of your heart, as you've gone through different circumstances, that maybe the kind of reverent, polite way that we may approach God wasn't there.

You can identify maybe to a certain extent with something of David's pain, David's urgency, David's agony, the reality of this.

As he's coming, just throwing himself in total anguish, in total desperation upon the Lord. There were times when we follow the history of David, we know that he barely escaped with his life.

And David was one of these people who, for differing reasons, was often hounded and hunted. We know that for seven years, Saul chased David all over the land.

And David was an outlaw. Anybody could kill him. It was, in fact, you would receive a reward from the king if you were able to kill David. So it was very tough living like that, just day by day, barely escaping with your life.

[5 : 04] Then again you remember, after David was well established as a king, how his son Absalom led a revolt. And Absalom's order, David who loved Absalom with all his heart.

And remember when Absalom died, it's one of the most pathetic, in a sense, heart-rending cries, where we find David saying, oh, Absalom, my son Absalom.

And yet Absalom had given orders, kill my father. Make sure, kill my father. If you can get my father, we've got the kingdom. And you see the incredible difference of heart.

The one, the son, wanting to kill the father. And the father, although he's having to run away and gather troops, he's still saying, oh, don't harm, don't harm Absalom.

He's my son. But remember how Job killed Absalom. But that's another story. But David's life so often was a life that was lived on the edge.

[6 : 08] So often there was, as he said it himself, he said, there's just a step between me and death. Be very hard living in these kind of circumstances. Living under that kind of constant pressure.

Just a step between me and death. And so we find David, he's praying here. But it's very interesting because David prays for two different groups of people.

He prays for his enemy. He prays about his enemies. And he prays about his friends or about those others who are seeking the Lord. He's praying here, first of all, about those who seek after his soul.

That they might be put to shame and confusion. Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt. Let them turn back because of their shame who say, aha, aha.

That latter part is those who are laughing when those who follow the Lord, when shame or trouble comes upon their life.

[7 : 12] And there are people who will gloat when the Christian falls or when the Christian is hurt. Or when the church of God takes a knock.

There are many who will gloat and laugh. They will love it. So that's the kind of people that David's talking about here. But he's saying, let them be put to shame and confusion who seek my life. Now some people will say, well, David, aren't you flying directly against, say, for instance, the teaching of Christ?

Where Jesus says to bless, to pray for those who persecute you. To bless those who speak evil against you and so on.

Is that not inconsistent? Isn't it our duty to pray? Well, yes, that is absolutely true. But what we've got to remember here in this particular situation is that David wasn't just about himself.

David was representing the Lord and his cause in this world. David stood for God's kingdom in this world.

[8 : 21] He was marked by everybody as God's representative in this world. Everybody knew where David stood. His passion in life was for the glory of God.

So David was looking at this picture as far bigger than just himself. It's not just about me, David, to say. It's about God. And when you follow through David's life, you will see that the cause of the Lord, God's kingdom, was even more precious to David than his own life.

David, so we've got to realize that some of David's prayers aren't just personal with regard to himself. But it's about the glory of God and about the cause of God in this world.

And David realizes that if, and he's really saying, if I'm taken out of the picture, if I am destroyed, it will give the enemies of God a chance to triumph and gloat.

And it's going to be a tremendous victory for the kingdom of darkness. And it's going to be a terrible blow for the kingdom of God. So we've got to remember that this is where his prayer is coming from.

[9 : 38] And he's praying that they will be turned to confusion. And I've got to ask the question, we have to ask this question. Do we pray like David prayed?

Are we entitled to pray in such a way? Well, to a certain extent, I think we are. In the sense that those who are determined to overthrow the Christian faith in the land, whose whole agenda, whose whole desire is to wipe out and remove every trace of Christianity.

And let's remember, there are many people in our land, and that is their agenda. And I believe that we have a right to pray that their agendas will turn to confusion.

We're not asking for hurt upon themselves. We will pray for their soul. We will pray that the Lord will open their eyes. We'll pray that the Lord will have mercy upon them and bring them to see the sin of what they're doing.

But I think we are absolutely in our right to pray that their plans, their intentions, and all that they're about will turn to utter confusion.

[10:53] And that maybe through that confusion, and to see that they'll be brought to see something of what they're doing. Because we're living in dangerous times. And we know that just now, it's often talked about this militant atheism, or this aggressive atheistic teaching.

That is getting so much airplay, and getting so much media coverage. People like Richard Dawkins, and people like that, who are hearing some of that even teaching for parents.

Teaching their children about the ways of the Lord as a form of child abuse. Well, you know, if we as a nation, and take on board, if we nationally go down this road, where we push God completely out of the picture, we're finished.

I don't even want to be part of that nation anymore. I don't think there is a worse state or place that we could possibly come to than if the Bible is removed.

God's word, the way of God, is obliterated. You know, there are many. We could speak this morning about loads of national sins.

[12:24] And while there are many things we ourselves get sucked up into, and such like, because the seed of every sin is within our own heart. As long as there's a God awareness and a God consciousness in people's hearts.

As long as we still have the freedom of the word. And as long as we have these things. As long as a nation has a God consciousness in its heart. Despite all its sins.

I still feel there's hope for the nation. And that's why we could highlight loads of particular sins. But bad and although they may be.

It's not at this level. This is the worst of the lot. Where people are determined to remove God out of the picture. Because what will happen? Well, if they get their way.

And people are influenced. And eventually the whole nation begins to turn that way. And as has happened in other nations of the world. Where God is not.

[13:26] What happens? God says, I will give you what you want. He's done that in many of the nations of this world. You don't want me?

Right. And so God will remove his restraining hand. His preserving hand. His protecting hand. His guiding hand.

He will pull back. And pull back. Until we are a world. Or a nation. Completely without God.

And if we open our books. Our history books. Or even within the 20th century. And you look at the nations. In China.

And in Russia. Say under Stalin. Cambodia under Pol Pot. All these. There is no God there. That was their teaching. God is dead.

[14:21] Nations plunged into darkness. And millions upon millions and millions and millions. Countless millions. Annihilated. Because. We're just.

We're just matter. There's no soul. There's no God. There's nothing. What. You know. When I look at history. When I sometimes look at these things.

And supposing you pick up a book about Russia. And about it in the time. You know. I see it. As a country that's gray. I can almost see the color over it.

It's almost as if the sun. Is hiding its face. And even in the beautiful areas of this world. Where the sun does shine. There's a fearful blackness. Over it all.

Because God. Has been removed. In people's consciousness. So you and I have a duty. To pray.

[15:19] Because if we don't. If we don't pray. Who's going to pray. And pray that the God of heaven will answer. And that. His cause will be preserved. His word will be preserved.

Because it's. It's a worse judgment. That could happen upon us. And so to a certain extent. I think. This is something of the heart of David. As he is praying here.

But then we see in verse 4. That David's prayer changes. And he says. May all who seek you.

Rejoice. And be glad in you. May those who love your salvation.

Say evermore. God is great. And this is what I love about David. Although he's in dire straits. And things are pressing in on him. And his life is in danger.

He still finds time to pray for others. Is that what our prayer life is like? Do we pray about the nation? Or are we confined just.

[16:17] Is our prayer life just about ourselves? And as far out as it reaches. As far out as life touches. And affects ourselves. Or do we branch right out? Does our prayer life.

Touch not only the nation. But the nations of this world. Do we even when things have hemmed in on us. Do we pray for others? Are we remembering God's people in our prayers?

Well that's what David does. And that was one of the wonderful things. About David's life. His prayer life was so intercessory. David had a great sense of identity.

With other people. Even when he was in dire straits. At this particular moment. We've got to say how different David is to Elijah. Elijah. When Elijah.

The pressure is on. He's saying Lord. Just take me away. I'm all my own. There's nobody else left but me. Just take me away. Lord is saying no.

[17:15] There's another 7,000. That haven't bowed the knee to Baal. We don't find that. Glaring self-pity. In David's heart. Even although he's a step from death.

He's still praying for other people. And that's part of why it tells us in the Bible. That David was a man after God's own heart. This great love for others.

And so we find that David. As we say. Has this great prayer. And he's saying that. Part of what we find in praying for. That may all who seek you rejoice.

And be glad in you. My friends. Are you today rejoicing in the Lord? You may say to yourself. I'm finding very hard today to rejoice.

Because. I've got difficulties. I've got problems at home. I've got problems at work. I've got problems with my health. I've got. I've got so many problems.

[18:14] It's hard to rejoice. It's not your. Nobody's asking you to rejoice in your problems. It's to rejoice in the Lord. And that has got to be your focus.

This was part of the reason why Paul. The Apostle Paul. Was always rejoicing. And we've got to remember. Here's a man who was stoned. Here's a man who was. Beaten up.

Left for dead. A man who was imprisoned. Nearly everywhere Paul went. To preach. He got a real doing. Not just a punch or something. But real.

He was mugged. All over Europe. For proclaiming the word. And was there ever a man. Who rejoiced more. He didn't rejoice in the fact.

That he was being beaten up. He rejoiced in the Lord. His sight of the Lord. His love for the Lord. His passion for the Lord. Was so great. That irrespective of the circumstances.

[19:12] He was still able to rejoice in the Lord. And that's what we've got to learn to do. And so there was this song. In Paul's life. Just as there was song in David's life.

The Bible is full of songs. Songs of deliverance. Remember when the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. We have the song of Moses. We have the song of Hannah. When the Lord answered her prayer.

And there are so many songs in scripture. Psalm 40. We sang about a new song. That all God's people sing. Remember how it goes.

He took me from a fearful pit. And then he took me out of the miry clay. And he set my feet on a rock. And he established my way. It's a wonderful picture of salvation that.

When you see yourself in a miry pit. And if you're in a miry pit. The one thing you can't do. You can't get yourself out of it. Because you can't climb up it.

[20:16] If it was solid. If there was even solid earth in the pit. You might be able to sort of work your way up. With feet one way.

And your back against another. And be able some way to pull yourself up. But not the miry pit. It's totally beyond escape. But the Lord took you out of this.

And that's where you were. That's where you were by nature. That's where you were. And you came to this place and point. And said Lord deliver me. And the Lord did.

And he took you out of that miry pit. And he put your feet. Upon a rock. The rock that is Christ. And he established your way.

And he put a new song in your mouth. And all the Lord's people. Sing that new song. Even if you don't have a voice to sing. Some of God's people haven't been blessed.

[21:14] With a voice. To sing. They just can't sing. That's one of the things. They long for glory. But you know. We still sing.

The Lord hears the song of the heart. Where we begin to praise him. Where everything becomes new. We see things in a different way.

I don't know how it is for you. But when I came to faith. I saw the world in a different way. Even the Moors. Even the Peets. Even the law.

Everything. Took on a different color for me. In the sense that. Somehow I could see God. In everything. And so it is.

He puts this new song. Within our mouth. And so there's no end. To the. To the thanksgiving. But of course. The ultimate moment. Of that song.

[22 : 10] The ultimate moment. Of rejoicing. Is when we will be brought. Into glory. Into the presence. Of the King. They come with gladness. Mirth.

On every side. Beautiful expression. That joyous. Overflowing. Of laughter. And sheer. Exuberance. And happiness. And delight.

That's how it will be. As we enter into the palace. Of the King. Joy. And bridal joy. And that's. Why we're told.

To rejoice in the Lord. Those who love. Your salvation. Say evermore. God is great. And that's why you say. You love God's salvation. You have experienced it yourself.

And because you've experienced it yourself. You want others. To experience it as well. And you want to tell others. About it. I don't believe.

[23 : 07] There's any person. Who's come to faith. In Jesus Christ. Who doesn't want others. To have experienced. What they experience. You find that about the disciples. When Jesus.

Called one. Another one. Would go off. Like Philip. Went straight off. To find Nathaniel. Oh he says. Come on. Come with me. The woman of Samaria. It's the same thing. Come.

Come see a man. There's this. There's this desire. In your heart. That others. Will also come to know. What you've discovered. But you know.

In this psalm. There's a contrast. We find this contrast. About those. In the first part. In verse 2. Let those who seek my life.

Be put to shame. In other words. Those who are bent. On the destruction. Of God's cause. May they be put to shame. But then there are others. In verse 4.

[24 : 01] Those who seek the Lord. So David is highlighting. In this psalm. Two different groups. One. Who is for the Lord. And the other group.

Who are against the Lord. Can I ask you. Into which category. Do you fall. Today. Are you those. Who are for the Lord. By seeking him. Or is it possible. That you are against. The Lord. Today. Well I hope not.

I actually would find it. Quite strange. You being here today. If you were against the Lord. I don't. Believe. There's anybody here.

Who has a. A militant. Form. Of. Being against the Lord. However. We can be in that. Kind of neutral position.

[24 : 58] While you're saying. I'm not against the Lord. But I'm not seeking the Lord. And you know. That's a dangerous place to be. Because. Jesus says.

If you're not for me. You're against me. You make sure. My friend. That you're seeking the Lord. Seek him. Because you see.

If you end up. And you don't seek him. And you are to die. And having. Without seeking the Lord. Or finding him. You would then.

All the restraint. And all God's goodness. Will be stripped away from you. And you would turn. Completely. Like those. Who hate God. You see.

In this world. God's. Mercy. And his grace. And his goodness. Is affecting. And influencing. And there's no doubt. Whatever. Within. Communities.

[25 : 53] Where the gospel. Is still flourishing. And growing. Although people may think. And sometimes. It isn't. It is. There's a great influence.

In it for good. And God's spirit. Is still at work. And that's a wonderful thing. My friend. Don't harden. Against that. But yield. You shall. Ask the Lord.

For the grace. To yield to him. So that you will know. The security. The safety. The wonder. Of being safe. In him.

And then. There's this final plea. Where he says. But I am poor. And needy. Hasten to help me. O God. You are my help. And my deliverer. O Lord. Do not delay. And really.

The psalmist. Is saying here. Lord. If there is to be. Any deliverance. It can only be by you. And he's prepared. To give God. All the glory. That's how it is.

[26 : 48] It's only. By the Lord. So the way. We live our lives. Where we're saying. Well Lord. Lord. My life. Is dependent. Upon you.

It's only. In you. And by you. And through you. I am able to do. What I do. Ask the Lord. To give you the grace. To live. In that way.

Every day. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We give thanks for the encouragement that the Word gives us and the direction that the Word gives us.

And we pray that we may learn from it, that we may shape our lives by it. And we pray, O Lord, that the Word will influence us for good.

Guide us in all that we're about. Cleanse us from all our sin. Take us all home safely, we pray, and be with us all this day. Indeed, all the rest of our lives.

[27 : 48] Forgive us for Jesus' sake. Amen.