

Psalm 70 – Bible Study Notes Emergency: Help Me Now!

Primary Focus: The urgent need of God’s help!

Background Info: Author is unknown, though possibly David. This psalm is nearly identical to 40:13-17 with only small changes. It is likely a compilation of various psalms by a single editor.

Basic structure:

- I. Cry for immediate help (v. 1)
- II. God turns away the enemy (vv. 2-3)
- III. God receives all the glory because of his salvation (v. 4)
- IV. Cry for immediate help (v. 5)

Verse 1 – Psalmist cries out for God’s immediate help

Some versions include “be pleased,” “please,” or “graciously” and some do not.

Those with phrase: New American Bible, New Jerusalem Bible, New Living Translation, New Revised Standard Version, Revised Standard Version

Those without: American Standard Version, English Standard Version, Jewish Publication Society OT, King James Version, New American Standard, New International Version, New King James Version

Those adding it borrowed it from Psalm 40:13.

God’s help is needed immediately because of how critical his situation seems.

Verse 2-3 – God will defeat the enemies

Verse 2: The word “all” (NIV)/“together” (NASB) was removed by author of Psalm 70.

This emphasizes the urgency by being terse.

Verse 3: Some translations say “Let those be appalled” while some say “be turned back.”

The correct translation is “be turned back.”

The change by some is done to allow this verse to conform to Psalm 40:15.

The psalmist believes God will send his enemies away from him.

God will shame, dishonor, and defeat those who gloat over the psalmist’s trials.

Life Questions

Describe a time you were in a crisis and needed God immediately. Describe a time when your enemies seemed to gloat in your trouble or downfall?

Verse 4 – God alone shall receive the glory because God alone provides salvation

Two phrases call for praising God for his salvation:

“Let all... rejoice and be glad in you” (NASB).
“Let God be magnified” (NASB).

We must praise God for his work of salvation.
We cannot save ourselves.
Salvation comes only from God.

Verse 5 – A second cry out for God’s immediate help

“God... O God... O LORD (Yahweh)” in verses 4b-5 corresponds to “LORD (Yahweh)... Lord (master)... my God” in Psalm 40:16b-17.

“Hasten” in verse 5 replaces “mindful of me” in Psalm 40:17.

The psalmist contrasts his status to God’s status.

God is a strong, powerful deliverer.

Man is poor, weak, and needy.

The psalmist closes by repeating the petition for immediate help.

This repetition emphasizes the panic he feels.

From his perspective, the situation is critical and immediate help is needed.

Life Questions

Read John 12:27-28. How is God magnified in our times of trouble and weakness? Why is God’s salvation worthy of praise and worship?