



Daily Devotionals

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PSALM 70 DELIVERANCE FOR PRAISE

Written by Rev. Dr. Charles D. (Chuck) Alley, Ph.D., Rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Richmond, Va.

¹ Hasten, O God, to save me; O LORD, come quickly to help me.

² May those who seek my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace.

³ May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" turn back because of their shame.

⁴ But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "Let God be exalted!"

⁵ Yet I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay.

When you are under attack, is your desire for revenge or one in which you want God to remove whatever stands in the way of the people's praise? Bracketed by the psalmist's cries for personal deliverance are the statements about those who seek to destroy God's servant and those who seek God. The desire of the petitioner is that of salvation – his own and all those who love God. Even for his enemies he does not call for their destruction, but only their shame, confusion and disgrace. Each of these conditions is one that can form the basis for repentance and true faith. He urgently wants all people to turn to God in praise for the honor and glory of God.

We, like the psalmist, are not capable of achieving this goal for God. Indeed, we are more the problem than the solution. In our weakness and distress we express our doubt about God rather than our praise for him. In our own strength we try to eliminate those who would stand in our way or cause us grief. But that is not God's way. Only he has the strength to turn the tools of war into the implements of nurture. Only God can redeem our sorrows and turn them into joy. Only God is so faithful to his word that in spite of all evidence to the contrary, he will fulfill his promises. The fact is that he will be exalted, whether we proclaim it or not. The only question is whether we will be among those who seek to praise him or not.

Lord God, you are the only One worthy of our praise. May I ever seek after you and praise you before my neighbors, as well as those who have turned away from you. Strengthen my love for you and my neighbor so that I will be able to continually proclaim your goodness even to those who would hurt me. Amen.

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