



Living Lent | April 5

## Praising All The Day Long

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*Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;  
O Lord, make haste to help me.  
Let those who seek my life be ashamed  
and altogether dismayed;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune  
draw back and be disgraced.  
Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back,  
because they are ashamed.  
Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever,  
"Great is the Lord!"  
But as for me, I am poor and needy;  
come to me speedily, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer;  
O Lord, do not tarry.*

**Psalm 70 (NRSV)**

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### Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

What causes you to cry out to God to deliver or help you?

We are not inclined to cry out to God when we are in the green meadows, or by the still waters. We usually cry out to God when we are in the valley of the shadow of death, or when we know we need divine intervention, direction, or forgiveness!

Moments of need are ultimately some of our most important moments because we are learning to rely on God's grace instead of relying on our own abilities. We learn

to rely on God for grace, grace that gives us the ability to accomplish what God has for us to do, and grace that forgives us for our sin.

As Christians we are called to work towards the goal of helping the world come into a relationship with God. The hardest people to share the love of God with are often those who are against us. Without a heart bent towards God this Psalm could justify praying for harm against our enemies. Shame, confusion, dishonor are the words the Psalmist uses to pray his enemy's experience.

Instead of thinking of this as, "Smite my enemies," we can better understand this as a prayer for God to get those who are against us to the place where they too will call out to God. How glorious life is when our "enemies" turn into our partners in ministry. Saul was the worst enemy of the early Christian community until he had an encounter with God and was struck blind for three days. Then he became the biggest evangelist to the Gentiles and is responsible for writing more of the New Testament than anyone else. As you prepare for Good Friday and Easter, what do you need to die too, how do you need to call out to God? Then be ready to embrace the Resurrection, the new life, God will bring. Who in your world are you at odds with? How can you pray for them to have an encounter with God so they will receive and share the light of Christ with the world?

Because we know the power of the resurrection, we can rejoice and be glad, we can say, "God is great" even while we are waiting for new life to come to fruition. We can rejoice because we know God is our help and our deliverer.

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### ***Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ***

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