

## Psalm 71: 4-18 (ESV): Even to Old Age and Gray Hairs

**Main point:** God is with you throughout your entire life, even to old age.



**Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.**

**Background:** A psalm of David, written in his old age and intended for the people of God to use in their afflictions, especially in their elder years. Several times David alludes to the realities of age.

### Focus of the study:

- <sup>4</sup> Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.
- <sup>5</sup> For you, O Lord, are my hope,  
my trust, O Lord, from my youth.
- <sup>6</sup> Upon you I have leaned from before my birth;  
you are he who took me from my mother's womb.  
My praise is continually of you.
- <sup>7</sup> I have been [an example] to many,  
[because] you are my strong refuge.
- <sup>8</sup> My mouth is filled with your praise,  
and with your glory all the day.
- <sup>9</sup> Do not cast me off in the time of old age;  
forsake me not when my strength is spent. ...
- <sup>14</sup> I will hope continually  
and will praise you yet more and more.
- <sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell of your righteous acts,  
of your deeds of salvation all the day,  
for their number is past my knowledge.
- <sup>16</sup> With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come;  
I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.
- <sup>17</sup> O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
- <sup>18</sup> So even to old age and gray hairs,  
O God, do not forsake me,  
until I proclaim your might to another generation,  
your power to all those to come after me.

### Questions:

1. *v. 4: Who is David addressing? What is David asking?*
  - a. David is talking to God, saying, Help! Rescue me!
2. *I wonder why David needs help? Why might a person need help in this world?*
  - a. In verse 4, David talks about his "unjust and cruel enemies." We need help from God because the world isn't easy!
3. *How does David describe God?*
  - a. v. 5: my hope, my trust

4. *How long has God been with David?*
  - a. v. 5-6: from my youth; from before my birth; from my mother's womb: always!
5. *What kind of life has David had? I wonder who knows some of the stories of David's life? (You can take some time to talk about these, which people may remember from Sunday school lessons, especially Goliath)*
  - a. Difficult! Battles (Goliath), enemies (Saul, the previous king, wanted to kill David, as did other armies against God's people), adultery and murder (Bathsheba and Uriah)
6. *And through all these difficulties in life, who has David called on, leaned on?*
  - a. v. 7: God: "you are my strong refuge" – *What is a refuge?*
    - i. place of safety, strength, shelter, hiding place, fortress
7. *v. 9: David speaks again of his length of days: "in the time of old age; when my strength is spent." When David is feeling weak and old, what might be his feeling about the things that are against him, the things that are hard to bear?*
  - a. David may feel he doesn't have the strength on his own to withstand enemies and hardship
8. *What does David need God to do? How is David feeling in his old age?*
  - a. Asks God to stay close; help!
  - b. David feels, understandably, tired and spent. *Do we ever feel this way?*
9. *And then: How does David's tone change in v. 14? Why?*
  - a. But I will hope continually and praise you yet more and more
  - b. v. 15: David **remembers** God. What does David list as the things he remembers about God?
    - i. Righteous acts
    - ii. Deeds of salvation
    - iii. Might deeds
    - iv. How many? "number is past my knowledge"
10. *What does David recall again in v. 17-18? How long has God been with him? What is the timespan of God's faithfulness?*
  - a. From my youth you have taught me
  - b. To old age and gray hairs
11. *What does David want to do with the rest of his life?*
  - a. Proclaim God's might to another generation, God's power to all those who come
12. *Who is in your next generation?*
  - a. Everyone! children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, friends ... on and on
13. *What have you seen God do in your own life? How has God helped you? [generate as many ideas as possible]*
14. *So what do we need to proclaim to the next generations? What kinds of things do you want to tell the next generation about God? [generate lots of ideas!]*
  - a. God's power
  - b. God's righteousness
  - c. God's great deeds
  - d. Who is like God??

- Ask for any prayer requests for today.
- Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
- End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

## Psalm 71

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