

Psalm 20

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!
 May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!
 May he send you help from the sanctuary
 and give you support from Zion!
 May he remember all your offerings
 and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices! Selah

May he grant you your heart's desire
 and fulfill all your plans!
 May we shout for joy over your salvation,
 and in the name of our God set up our banners!
 May the LORD fulfill all your petitions!

Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed;
 he will answer him from his holy heaven
 with the saving might of his right hand.
 Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
 but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.
 They collapse and fall,
 but we rise and stand upright.

O LORD, save the king!
 May he answer us when we call.

INTRO: So goes the king, so goes the kingdom.

1. If Joshua would be careful to observe the Lord's commandments, the people would inherit the land.
 2. If the kings would be careful to keep the Lord's commandments, the people would dwell secure in the land.
 3. If David's kingly line gets cut off, then the promises of God fail.
- So goes the king, so goes the kingdom.

CONTEXT: Psalm 20 is a war song. Written by King David himself. Delivered to the choirmaster. The men would likely sing this song as they marched out to battle behind their king.

CONTENT:

*Look with me at the content of this Psalm before we summarize its doctrine.
 (I'm going to move through these quickly...)*

Psalm 20 contains seven petitions for the king

The first four concern the king himself

1. **v1a** May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!
 - The king has much to worry about around him. If the men cower, if his armor fails, if the plan does not succeed, he will be exposed to trouble.
 - **May God deliver the king from trouble**
2. **v1b** May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!
 - The king has real enemies in front of him who want to destroy him.
 - **May God protect the king from his many enemies**
3. **v2** May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!
 - The king has a difficult assignment. He needs wisdom. He needs courage. He needs strength.
 - **May God help the king perform his assignment**
4. **v3** May he remember all your offerings and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices! Selah
 - The king does not deserve success at the Lord's hands.
 - **May God not deal with you according to your sin**

What follows are three more petitions for the success of the king

5. **v4** May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans!
 - "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps. (Proverbs 16:9)
 - **May God make the king's plans to prosper**
6. **v5a** May we shout for joy over your salvation, and in the name of our God set up our banners!
 - "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD." (Proverbs 21:31)
 - **May God make the king's people victorious**
7. **v5b** May the LORD fulfill all your petitions!
 - The assumption is that the king will be praying continually as he engages with the enemy.
 - **May God fulfill all the king's petitions**

Next, Psalm 20 shows us three marks of the faithful

1. **v6** Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.
 - God made a promise to preserve David's line until the coming of Christ.
 - **The faithful know that God will deal faithfully with the king**
2. **v7** Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.
 - **The faithful trust in God and not their own strength**
3. **v8** They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.
 - When beaten down, they get back up. When assailed, they stand fast.
 - **The faithful will rise and stand firm**

One final petition with an enforcing reason

1. **v9** O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call.
 - **God save the king, for we have no hope apart from him.**
 - So goes the king, so goes the kingdom.

David is dead, but God has not left His people without a king. Psalm 20 is a song for the church militant, marching forward, banners raised, behind their conquering King.

DOCTRINE: God will preserve and prosper His Anointed, and the King's people will rest secure in Him alone.

Q. Who is the LORD's Anointed?

- **Acts 2:29-36** "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, *"The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."* Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."
- Christ = "Anointed"
- **Do you believe this?**
- *Christ is seated at the right hand of God, and He has declared...*
- **John 16:23** Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.
- **Q. What does this mean?** That every petition for our resurrected King in Psalm 20 is sealed with this promise, God will grant it!

I. GOD WILL PRESERVE THE BODY OF CHRIST

Look with me again at this Psalm, and remember that the first three petitions concern bodily provisions for the king that God will be faithful to grant

- Now Christ's glorified body is in heaven, furnished with all that He needs, but...
- **1 Corinthians 12:27** Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1. God will deliver the body of Christ from trouble

- **v1a** May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!
- What troubles you, beloved? What concerns steal your sleep at night? What un-mortified sins wage war in your soul?

2. God will protect the body of Christ from His and their enemies

- v1b May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!
- Beloved, you have enemies. And the ones you can see are the least to be concerned about.

3. God will help the body of Christ perform their many functions

- v2 May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion!
- Have you ever felt the weight of your God-given assignment?
- **CHILDREN:** When your toe is stubbed, do you limp on the other foot to alleviate the pain? When your eyes struggle to see, do you assist them with glasses? When your arm is broken, do you put it in the sling to allow it to heal? When your arms can handle it, do you exercise them to make them stronger? Jesus calls believers members in his own body, and he will likewise care for them.

4. God has forgiven the body of Christ for all her sins

- v3 May he remember all your offerings and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices! Selah
- **Q.** What was Christ doing on the cross? Resurrection? Ascension?

II. GOD WILL MAKE PROSPER THE PLANS OF CHRIST

What follows is four more petitions for the success of the King, and God will be faithful to grant every one of them

- **Psalm 2:8** Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

5. God will make all of Christ's plans to prosper

- v4 May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans!
- **Q.** What are Christ's plans?
- **1 Corinthians 15:24-26** Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.
- **Isaiah 53:10** the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
- Let me just ask you, does Psalm 20 lead you to expect the success or failure of Christ's great commission? Does God teach you to pray for that which He does not intend to give?

6. God will make Christ's people victorious

- v5a May we shout for joy over your salvation, and in the name of our God set up our banners!
- **Q.** Can anything stop Christ's people from conquering?
- **Romans 8:37-39** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Hear is a call to raise joyful songs in the midst of suffering. To face hardship with banners raised high.

7. God will fulfill all of Christ's petitions

- v5b May the LORD fulfill all your petitions!
- **Q.** Does the King ever live to intercede? But what does He petition of His Father?
- **John 17:11** Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.
- Do you believe this? Do you carry yourself like more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus? Do you build with the expectation that Christ's plans will prosper? God will grant the King success.

III. CHRIST'S PEOPLE WILL REST SECURE IN HIM ALONE

Q. Why will believers rest secure?

1. Because God will deal faithfully with His King

- v6 Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.
- Beloved, get your eyes off of yourself. Your King is worthy to receive what He has purchased, and God will act faithfully for Him.

2. Because God will do what horses and chariots cannot

- v7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.
- Some trust in chariots and some in horses. Some trust in their own strength and some in wisdom. Some trust in bank accounts and some in relationships. But we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

3. Because God will make them rise and stand firm

- v8 They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.
- You know this is true. Think upon your own trials in which God has picked you back up and made you to stand firm.

4. Because the resurrected Christ hears them when they call

- v9 O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call.
- The church militant marches forward. God did not leave their King to decay in the ground. He was raised. He was exalted. He was furnished with all rule and authority. And He will answer when they call.

IV. FOUR DIRECTIONS

1. Pray in faith for the advance of Christ's kingdom.
2. Stop trusting in chariots and horses.
3. Trust in Christ alone.
4. Learn and sing Psalm 20 as you march behind your King.