



Standing By The Power Of God Because Of A Praying People

Psalm 20:1-9



- Help from the sanctuary for the battle of life. A liturgical psalm, which was sung on behalf of the king, who was about to go forth to battle.
- It was chanted in alternate voices by the congregation and the priest or Levite who led the choir.

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- As the king stands within the sanctuary, offering his sacrifice, the crowd of worshippers in the spacious courts lift up their voices in the prayer of the first five verses; then the answering chant of the priest or leader from verses 6 to 8; then all join in the prayer of the ninth verse, “God save the king!”
- Help from the sanctuary for the battle of life. Influences to be gathered there.

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I. A Sense Of God's Helpful Relations To Us.

Psalm 20:1–3 (NKJV)

1 May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob defend you;

2 May He send you help from the sanctuary, And
strengthen you out of Zion;

3 May He remember all your offerings, And accept
your burnt sacrifice. Selah

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- He hears us when we are in trouble, defends us in danger, and strengthens us for conflict; and therefore helps us by means of the worship of the sanctuary.
- It is consequently He remembers our offerings and accepts our worship.

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**“Battles are won the day
before,” - Marshall Foch**

Commander of the Allied forces in World War I

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Deuteronomy 20:1–4 (NKJV)

1 “When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

2 So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people.

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3 And he shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them;
4 for the LORD your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

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- Before the army went out to battle, the Jewish law of warfare required the officers and soldiers first to dedicate themselves to the Lord, and this psalm speaks of such a dedication service.
- The word “may” is used four times in verses 1–3 and it is used two more times between verses 4-5 as the people prayed for their king and the men of Israel because they wanted God to give them victory.

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It Was A “*Day Of Trouble*”

Jehovah is a “very present help in trouble” (*Ps. 46:1*).

Psalm 50:15 (NKJV)

Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.”

Psalm 59:16 (NKJV)

But I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defense And refuge in the day of my trouble.

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Psalm 102:2 (NKJV)

Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble; Incline Your ear to me; In the day that I call, answer me speedily.

Psalm 46:1 (NKJV)

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

- The people prayed that God would answer the king's prayers and lift him and Israel up above the enemy ("defend").

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The God of Jacob

- It suggests that God works on behalf of those who are weak and in special need.

Genesis 35:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother.”

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The God of Jacob

2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments.

3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.”

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- David brought the ark of the covenant to Mt. Zion, which meant that God was enthroned among His people and would help them.

Psalm 80:1 (NIV)

Hear us, Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. **You who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth**

Psalm 99:1 (NIV)

The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; **he sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake.**

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His Holy Name Was Upon The Sanctuary, And Therefore His Glory Was At Stake.

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Deuteronomy 14:23 (NKJV)

And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

Deuteronomy 16:2 (NKJV)

Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name.

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Deuteronomy 16:11 (NKJV)

You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.

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- Many times David brought sacrifices to the altar and dedicated himself to the Lord (*burnt offerings*) and given thanks to Him, and he would have offered sacrifices before coming to lead the army.
- The Lord did not forget these offerings which were given as memorials to His great name. But David did more than worship God; he also sought the Lord's will concerning strategy for the battle.
- The people prayed that God would bless those plans, for petitions and plans must go together.

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**II. God Grants The Desires
And Accomplishes The
Plans, Which Are In-Line
With His Service.**

Psalm 20:4 (NKJV)

May He grant you according to your heart's
desire, And fulfill all your purpose.

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II. God Grants The Desires And Accomplishes The Plans, Which Are In-Line With His Service.

- In parallel lines (*verse 4*) the wish is expressed that Jehovah give the king his heart's *desires* (*literally "according to your heart"*) and fulfil all his plans, a reference to victory in the coming battle.

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- May he ... fulfill all your plans may often be rendered as “may God enable you to do all the things you have been thinking about” or “may God make it possible for you to succeed in your plans.”

Psalm 37:4–5 (NKJV)

4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

- “If we ask anything according to his will, we know that he hears us.”

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We Can Win The Battle Only So Far As We Realize That It Is God's Battle.

Psalm 20:5–7 (NKJV)

5 We will rejoice in your salvation, And in the name of our God we will set up our banners! May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.

6 Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand.

7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

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- “In the Name of our God must we set up our banners.” He is the Captain of our salvation, and if we are loyal to him we shall rejoice in a victorious cause.
- Not only were the lives of the king and his army involved, but so also was the glory of the Lord.
- The central verse in the psalm is verse 5, a confident affirmation of victory before the battle even started.
- Raising the banners and waving them was a sign of victory, and “Jehovah our banner” was one of God’s special names.

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- The theme of salvation (victory) is repeated in verses 6 and 9.

Exodus 17:15–16 (NKJV)

15 And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner;

16 for he said, “Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

- You have to know who you represent as you are led into battle.

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IV. True faith in God is assured of victory before the battle is fought.

Psalm 20:6 (NKJV)

Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand.

- “Everything rises and falls with leadership,” Dr. Lee Roberson often says, and he is right.
- Now the king speaks and assures his people that he is confident of success because the Lord has chosen him (“anointed”) and heard his prayers.

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- Just as God's hand reached down and saved David in the past, so His hand would deliver him from the enemy.

Psalm 18:16–18 (NKJV)

16 He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters.

17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, From those who hated me, For they were too strong for me.

18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, But the LORD was my support.

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- In the covenant God made with David, He promised him success in battle, and David claimed this promise by faith.

2 Samuel 7:11 (NKJV)

since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house.

- God promises David victory, and rest.

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V. “Right Is Might” To All Who Have Been Taught Of God.

Psalm 20:7–8 (NKJV)

7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

8 They have bowed down and fallen; But we have risen and stand upright.

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- Was the enemy coming with horses and chariots? There was no need to fear, for Israel's faith was in the Lord.
- Israel's kings were commanded not to acquire great numbers of horses and chariots.
- God defeated Egypt's best troops, and He could defeat the enemy attacking David (*Ps. 33:16–17; Prov. 21:31; 2 Kings 19:20–23*).

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Psalm 33:16–17 (NKJV)

16 No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

17 A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.

Proverbs 21:31 (NKJV)

The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But deliverance is of the LORD.

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- If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).
- God’s people don’t boast in their human resources but in the God who alone can save them in every situation.
- Only this kind of faith will honor the strong name of the Lord.
- The enemy will go down in defeat, but Israel will stand upright as victors.

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V. The Persistent And Final Cry Of The True Worshipper Is For The Salvation Of God.

Psalm 20:9 (NKJV)

Save, LORD! May the King answer us when we call.

Save - 3467 [yasha' /yaw-shah/] v. 1 to save, be saved, be delivered. 1a (Niphal). 1a1 to be liberated, be saved, be delivered. 1a2 to be saved (in battle), be victorious. 1b (Hiphil). 1b1 to save, deliver. 1b2 to save from moral troubles. 1b3 to give victory to.

- We desire for the Lord to save us and our leaders from all potential harm.
- The request that the Lord would answer is at the beginning and ending of the psalm.

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