

THE PSALMS

Series: Selected Psalms Phase 1

Psalm 20: Pray for Leadership Psa. 20:1-9

Today's Study: Psa. 20:1-9

1. Pray for Your Leader Vv. 1-4.
2. Promote (Encourage) Your Leader in the LORD v. 5.
3. Protection Assured . . . God Preserves His Sanctified Leaders v. 6.
4. Place Your Confidence in God . . . He is Your Ultimate Source Vv. 7-8.
5. Petition Can Be Made Continuously for Your Leader v. 9.

INTRODUCTION

1. Highlights from Psa. 15

(a) Quotes Introducing Psalm 15

(1) Matthew Henry

“The scope of this short but excellent psalm is to show the way to heaven, and to convince us that, if we would be happy, we must be holy and honest. Christ is Himself the way, and in whom we must walk as our way, has also shown us the same way that is here prescribed in Matt. 19:17 . . . ‘If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.’”

(2) Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible

“It is very similar to Psalm 24, which was written for the occasion (referring to the Ark being transferred to Jerusalem . . . insert mine). The Ark of the covenant represented God's presence among the people of Israel. The mercy seat of the ark was the precise spot where God's presence dwelled (Ex. 25:22). This psalm teaches us how to live daily in God's holy presence—in close fellowship with Him. It is a psalm of instruction and a psalm of examination.”

(b) Questions of the Hour Psa. 15:1

The psalm begins with two questions (*actually, one question which has been repeated*); although they are easily understood, their importance should **not** be overlooked! Obviously, what is made known from these questions, are not only the desire of **sojourning**, having temporal fellowship with God as the Jews did when they made their long arduous journey to the Tabernacle annually in Jerusalem but there is the earnest desire to **dwell**, which speaks of permanent residence, in the very presence of God!

(1) Established Life in God's Presence (Psa. 15:1a).

- The idea conveyed for **“abide”** (v. 1) as used in our text is to **“sojourn”**; that is to abide in a place as a sojourner; not permanently.

- The idea is taken from the word **tabernacle** or **tent**, which naturally associates the thought of sojourning, rather than permanent abode.
 - This does not mean that residence with God would be temporary, the idea of permanency is strongly expressed in **part b of this verse, (v.1)**.
 - To **abide** in the **tabernacle** of the LORD means to establish one's life in God. **"LORD who may abide in Your tabernacle?"**
- (2) **Enduring Relationship with God** (Psa. 15:1b).
- We should desire to be in the continued presence of God (example Psa. 42:1-2):
As water is essential for the physical life, so God and His presence are essential for satisfaction and wholeness of life. True believers will hunger and thirst for God and His grace, blessing and supernatural activity in their lives.
 - **"Who may dwell in Your holy hill?"** (Psa. 15:1b NKJV).
 - The word **dwell** has a more permanent sense than the word, **abide**, used in the previous line.
 - To **dwell** adds to the idea of being at home, a member of the household, having permanent status in the family.

(c) **Qualifying Characteristics Necessary Psa. 15:2a**

The righteous life is not obtained by animal sacrifices or **ritual purity**, as it was among religions of the Near East, but moral righteousness gives access to the LORD God of Israel (basic covenant law. . . Ex. 20:1-7; also Isa. 1:10-17; 33:14-16; Jer. 7:2-7; etc.). As we grow in our relationship with Him it can often be measured by the way we reflect His standards in our daily activities.

(1) **Stay in the Path of Righteousness and Speak the Truth** (Psa. 15:2).

- Walking describes a habitual way of living.
- Herein, we observe that the righteous man's **walk is not just the words he speaks . . . He walks uprightly!**
 - He is like a man **walking a tightrope**; if he leans to one side he will tumble over!
 - C. H. Spurgeon notes:
"Walking is of more importance than talking. He only is right who is upright in walk and downright in honesty."
- **The righteous man's morality has its place in the heart, and is not based on religious formalism. His actions are the expressions of upright intentions and purposes, and are not executed for selfish and hypocritical reasons. He is someone who is genuinely righteous!!**

(2) **Slander and other Evil He Abstains from** (Psa. 15:3).

- The righteous has no slander on his tongue. Whether it was individually originated or it was passed on . . . tales that are injurious to the reputation of others is a sin that has no place in the life of Zion's citizens!!
- ***"Nor does evil to his neighbor . . ."*** (15:3). The idea is that the man who will be admitted to dwell on the ***holy hill of Zion*** (15:1); the man who is truly righteous is one who does no injury to anyone; he is one who does what is right to others.

(3) **Separated from Habitual Sinners/Loves Righteousness and is Reliable** (Psa. 15:4).

- Heed carefully taken not to affiliate with the workers of iniquity. The citizens of Zion do not rejoice in the account of iniquity; neither does he condone sin and whitewash conduct that is violation of God's law.
- The righteous is not liable to show respect to a man of corrupt or bad character on account of his wealth, his position or his popularity in life.
- It is unfortunate that so many believers invalidate themselves from experiencing continued fellowship with God because they admire, or at least excuse the behavior of the ungodly with whom they are intertwined.
- Meticulously, there is a great contrast between those who sincerely reverence God and live in obedience to Him in comparison with those who consistently live sinful lifestyle.
- ***He who swears to his own hurt and does not change.***" (Psa. 15:4c NKJV) The righteous has made a promise or entered into a contract that is likely to turn out contrary to his expectations, most likely to his disadvantage; but he is still attached to his commitment!

(4) **He abstains from Scheming and Other Deceptive Acts** (Psa. 15:5a).

- ***"He who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent."*** (15:5a & b NKJV)
 - In the first part of the verse (v. 5a) . . . the very important message being communicated has to do with exorbitant or unreasonable interest and this evil practice is a common factor that continues on a large scale in today's world!
 - ***"Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent"*** (15:5b NKJV). The righteous does not accept financial gifts or compensation or any other solicitous consideration to persuade him to decide a matter against justice.
- **The righteous is a person of integrity and NOT for sale! Here is someone who will NOT be influenced by the suggestion of achieving monetary or any other such assurances.**
- In the ancient eastern world, the balance of justice was slanted towards the rich.

- In both civil and criminal affairs, the wealthy often bribe witnesses and judges; a practice that continues throughout history.
- As in those ancient days the average citizen—those who were not wealthy were powerless and oppressed in this corrupt system (Ecc. 4:1-3).

(d) **Qualitative Reward Assured Psa. 15:5c**

(1) **Satisfactory Lifestyle**

- The righteous person will not be removed from God’s tabernacle (Psa. 15:1) . . . that is from God’s presence.
- **If we live righteously, we will live uninterrupted, unbroken fellowship with the LORD!**
- **We will know the incomparable joy of God’s presence each day of our lives here on earth, and afterward, we will dwell with Him eternally in heaven** (Psa. 23:6).

(2) **Saints are Unmovable** (Psa. 15:5c)

- The righteous will reap the benefits of living a righteous life and receive just as stated in the Word of God (Gal. 6:7-8; etc.)
- Perfect love cast out fear (1 John 4:8); therefore, an upright person has no fear of God’s judgment because his sins have been forgiven and he has been enabled to live by God’s standards.
- The life of righteousness will yield its fruits over and over again and the believer will feast the **“*peaceable fruit of righteousness*”** all the days of our lives!! (Heb. 12:11).
- Spurgeon notes:
“No storm shall tear him from his foundations, drag him from his anchorage, or uproot him from his place of privilege and blessedness.

... ..

Let us commit ourselves to prayer and self-examination, for this Psalm is a fire for the gold, and as a furnace for silver. Can we endure its testing power?”

2. **Introduction to Psalm 20**

The following is a quote by C. H. Spurgeon:

*“We have before us a National Anthem, fitted to be sung at the outbreak of war, when the monarch was grinding on his sword for the fight. If David had not been vexed with wars, we might never have been favored with such psalms as this. There is a need for trials of one saint, that he may yield consolation to others. A happy people have plead for a beloved sovereign, and with loving hearts cry to Jehovah, **‘God save the King.’**”*

We gather that this song was intended to be sung in public, not only for the matter of song, but also for its dedication ‘To the Chief Musician.’ We know its author to have been Israel’s singer, from the short title ‘A Psalm of David.’

The particular occasion which suggested it, it would be mere folly and conjecture, for Israel was always at war in David’s day. His sword may have been hacked, but it was never rusted. it is clear that the king is the subject as well as composer of the song.

It needs but a moment’s reflection to perceive that this hymn of prayer is prophetic of our LORD Jesus, and is the cry of the ancient church on behalf of her LORD as she sees Him in vision and enduring a great fight of afflictions on her behalf. The militant people of God, with the great Captain of Salvation at their head, may still in earnest plead that the pleasure of the LORD may prosper in His hand.”

3. Divisions

We will be discussing the lesson noting five main points:

- (a) Pray for Your Leader Vv. 1-4.
- (b) Promote (Encourage) Your Leader in the LORD v. 5.
- (c) Protection Assured . . . God Preserves His Sanctified Leaders v. 6.
- (d) Place Your Confidence in God . . . He is Your Ultimate Source Vv. 7-8.
- (e) Petitions Can Be Made Continuously for Your Leader v. 9.

A. Pray for Your Leader Psa. 20:1-4

We have in this account an example of fervent effectual praying, by both David and the people, as they prepare to go into battle. At first we have the people praying that God would bless the king during the battle (note: “. . . in the day of trouble” v. 1). It was the people’s desire that God would provide support for David: spiritually—from the sanctuary v. 2—and militarily—“from Zion” v. 2. Definitely, the battle is and has always been the LORD’S!! (1 Sam. 17:47; 2 Chron. 20:15; etc.).

“May the LORD answer” (Vv. 3-4) is the language of prayer on behalf of the king. Five similar requests are noted in verses 1 to 5. It is a request presented to the True and Living God. *“The God of Jacob”* (v. 1), is a significant reference to the God of Israel because the twelve sons of Jacob became the twelve tribes of Israel. *The name of God* (Vv. 1, 5, 7) *represents the power and love of God Himself.*

1. May God Heed and Defend (Psa. 20:1)

“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you.” (Psa. 20:1 NKJV).

- (a) Deliverance desired for the king (20:1a)

“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble . . .” (20:1a NKJV)

- (1) This is the voice of the people on behalf of their king!

- It was their deepest desire that their king would be protected while he was engaged in battle.
 - They not only desired protection for their king but victory in the battle!
- (2) The word **“trouble”** (v. 1) implies that David was besieged and was exposed to difficulties and dangers by his enemies.
- He was preparing to go into battle to deliver his country from trouble and he offered prayers and sacrifices in order to secure Divine favor (see v. 3).
 - Most likely, it was at this time of prayers and sacrifices that the people poured out their earnest prayers on behalf of their beloved leader.
- (3) Even the greatest of men may be exposed to a great deal of trouble and anguish!
- Satan continues to seek and to destroy, especially those who are wholeheartedly committed to God (1 Peter 5:8)
 - In reality, it was a day of trouble (Psa. 20); a time of disappointment, distress and perplexing circumstances!
- Matthew Henry notes:
“Neither the crown on his head nor the grace in his heart would exempt him from the trouble.”
- (4) The people were aware of the immediate situation and were firmly united in their support for their beloved leader!
- Their prayer was demonstrated as a blessing upon their anointed leader and he was encouraged by their intercession as he prepared for war.
 - The people were also convinced that David, likewise, would be seeking God in prayer for favor, strength and for His assistance.
- (5) A powerful lesson here, is, the necessity for **ALL** men to be in much prayer!
- **It is unfortunate to note that so many are driven to pray ONLY in times of trouble, but when circumstances are going well they have little or no time to labor in sincere and consistent communication with the Almighty God!! HOW SAD AND UNFORTUNATE!!**
 - David was not someone who sought God only in time of need. He was a man of worship, a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).
 - Although David was a man of business and a man of war, he was constant to his devotions, he had in his service prophets and priests and other loyal people who faithfully prayed for him, yet, he did not neglect the necessity to pray for himself!!
 - **Prov. 29:2a NKJV**
“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice . . .”
 - Having a godly leader is undoubtedly a blessing, a great blessing to any group of people!
 - *“The people of Israel were surely comforted to know that, in time of severe trouble, their king would be seeking God.”* (POSB)

- **Matthew Henry notes:**
*“Let none expect benefit by prayers of the church, or of their ministers or friends for them, who are capable of praying for themselves, and yet neglect it. **The prayers of others for us must be desired, not to supersede, but to second, our own for ourselves.** Happy the people that have praying princes, to whose prayers they may say **Amen.**”*
- (b) Defender of the anointed (20:1b).
“May the name of the God of Jacob defend you.” (20:1b NKJV).
- (1) The word **name** is frequently used in Scriptures for the person himself as a result *“**may the name of the God of Jacob defend thee**”* can be stated: *“**May the God of Jacob defend thee.**”* (See Psa. 5:11; 9:10; 44:5; 54:1; Ex. 23:21).
 - (2) *“**The God of Jacob**”* or *“**The God of Israel**”* is referring to the **Protector** of the nation (Israel).
 - Knowing who they served and His continued comprehensive care, they earnestly desired and appeal for His protection.
 - Their desire was that God, the Great Protector of Israel, would now defend the king in the dangers that besieged him and in the campaign which he had undertaken.
 - (3) *“... **the name of the God of Jacob**”* (20:1b) . . . **God’s name** illustrates all that He is, for example, it portrays His presence, power, faithfulness, mercy, authority, justice, truth, love, etc.
 - *It is the revealed character of the LORD as His people know Him in so far as the character is summed up in His holy name.*
 - *“It also represents His reputation. Israel’s God was known among other nations for His mighty and miraculous acts on behalf of His chosen people (2 Sam. 7:23).”* (POSB)
 - (4) *“... **the name of the God of Jacob.**”*
 - God has revealed His personal name **“Yahweh”** (Ex. 3:14-15) . . . through the years of translation we have in the English **“Jehovah”**.
 - The people (Psa. 20) were making their needs known to God, based on the fact of the covenant they (The Israelites) had with God.
 - God had made a covenant with their father, Abraham, in which He promised them success over their enemies (Gen. 22:17).
 - He had also made a covenant with King David assuring him that he would have rest over his enemies (2 Sam. 7:1-11, NB v. 11).
 - God has made it explicitly known that He would be faithful to His word (Num. 23:19; Deut. 7:7-9; etc.)
 - (5) *“... **defend you**”* (20:1) the Hebrew renders as **“set you on a high place.”**
 - The meaning conveyed here is that he (David) would be positioned on a high place, a tower, a mountain, a high-rise rock, where his enemies would not reach him.

- **Psa. 20:1b**
 - **NASB 1995 Edition**
“May the name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high!”
 - **Amplified Bible**
“May the name of the God of Jacob set you up on high [and defend you]”

(6) The names of God are windows through which His character is seen. The names tell us that He is the Most High God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth. Matthew Henry notes the following encouragements to motivate us to study the names of God . . . These are excerpts:

- **“The better God is known the more He is trusted.**
Those who know Him to be the Father of Spirits, and an everlasting Father, will trust Him with their souls as their main care and trust in Him at all times, even to the end.
- **The more God is trusted the more He is sought.**
If we trust God we shall seek Him by faithful and fervent prayer, and by a constant care to approve ourselves to Him in the whole course of our conversations (manner of living).
- **God never did nor ever will disown any that duly seek to Him and trust in Him.**
Though He afflict them, He will not leave them comfortless; though He seems to forsake them for a while, yet He will gather them with everlasting mercies (Psa. 9:10).”
 Note also 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:23; 11:11; Rom. 4:21

2. **May God Help and Support by His Very Presence** (Psa. 20:2).

“May He send you help from the sanctuary, And strengthen you out of Zion” (20:2 NKJV)

(a) Supplying what was needed from His holy abode (20:2a).

“May He send you help from the sanctuary” (20:2a NKJV).

(1) Briefly defining **“sanctuary”**:

- The portable sanctuary was constructed by Moses as a place of worship for the Hebrews during the period of wilderness wandering (the **sanctuary** Ex. 25-31 and 35-40, etc.; **wilderness wandering** Num. chaps. 13-36; NB chap. 32:6-15, highlight Vv. 6-12; etc.). The sanctuary was a special dwelling place of the LORD among His people (**Ex. 25:8**; 40:34-38; Lev. 8:10; etc.).
- **Sanctuary** refers to the tabernacle, the home of the ark of the covenant, that sacred spot where God’s presence was manifested (2 Sam. 6:17).
- **It is also important to note that this was a holy place (Ex. 28:43; 29:42-44: etc.) where God was worshipped and where He dwelled (Ex. 25:8-9). This was His seat; His throne, where He abode among the people.**

- (2) The essence of the people's prayer is that God would accept those offerings and supplications made by David (see v. 3) and would now send the desired help from the sanctuary where He resided; that is the help and protection their king needed.
- (3) This enabling of David was for the benefit of the nation and such **help** would come out of the **sanctuary** and **strength out of Zion**, not from any other source.
- The people prayed that God would be faithful to David as He had been faithful to Jacob through his difficult life.
 - They asked the LORD to do exactly what Jacob testified of what God had done for him.
- Gen. 35:3 NKJV**
 "... I will make an alter there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress . . ."
- **Matthew Henry notes:**
"Mercies out of the sanctuary are the sweetest mercies, such as are the tokens of God's peculiar love, the blessing of God, even our own God."
- (b) Support for the leader in time of need (20:2b)
*"And strengthen you out of **Zion**."* (20:2b NKJV).
- (1) As noted when we discussed Psa. 14, "**Zion**" can refer to one of three places:
- **The hill** where the most ancient areas of Jerusalem stood (Psa. 48:1-2).
 - **The city of Jerusalem** itself (Micah 4:2).
 - **The dwelling place of God** (Psa. 132:13).
- (2) "... **my holy hill of Zion**" (Psa. 2:6). . . . Note a few highlights:
- **Zion** was the southern hill in the city of Jerusalem (Isa. 1:8).
 - It was made the capital by David after he took it from the Jebusites, eventually it obtained distinction (Example see 2 Sam. 5:5-9; **1 Chron. 11:4-9**; 2 Chron. 5:2; etc.).
 - **Zion** was called the "**holy hill**" or "**the hill of my holiness**," because it was set apart as the seat of the Theocracy, or the residence of God (Psa. 3:4; 9:11; 132:13).
 - **Zion** became the place where God reigned and where His worship was celebrated, it was the place where the tabernacle was kept.
- (3) The Ark of God was symbolic of the very presence of the true and living God!
The following statement has been made by someone with whom we have some different opinions, but herein are some facts we can safely share:
"The weakness of the flesh will not suffer men to soar up to heaven, and therefore God comes down to meet them, and by the external means of grace shows that He is near them. Thus the ark of the covenant was to His ancient people a pledge of His presence, and the sanctuary an image of heaven."
- (4) Note the powerful descriptive language that was used in their appeal to God on behalf of David

- **The LORD:** Using *Yahweh (Jehovah)* the covenant name of God (Psa. 20:1)
- **The God of Jacob:** Remembering Israel's patriarch (Psa. 20:1)
- **From the sanctuary:** Call to mind the tabernacle, that which was the center and central focus in their daily lives (Psa. 20:2)
- **Out of Zion:** Referring to the hills of Jerusalem (Psa. 20:2).

(5) David Guzik notes:

*"The prayer that God would **strengthen you out of Zion** is fitting for more than the fight of battle. It is appropriate for the church pulpit, which is a field of battle in a spiritual sense."*

He, David Guzik, went on to quote Spurgeon:

"This verse is a benediction benefitting a Sabbath morning, and may be the salutation either of a pastor to his people, or a church to its minister."

3. **May God Hold Dear to His Heart Your Worship** (Psa. 20:3).

"May He remember all your offerings And accept your sacrifice. Selah." (20:3 NKJV).

(a) Special offering made . . . may they be remembered (20:3a).

"May He remember all your offerings" (20:3a NKJV)

(1) The word "**offerings**" as used here refers to: "*a sacrificial offering usually bloodless and voluntary.*" It is sometimes referred to as **offering** and sometimes as **oblation**.

- The word means an offering of any kind or anything that is presented to God, except a blood sacrifice—anything offered as an expression of thankfulness, or with the thought of obtaining a favor.
- It is distinguished from blood sacrifices, which are referred to by the word in the following clause (of this verse ... v. 3).
- **Offering** as used here occurs only in the Psalms, in the following places: Psa. 20:3; 40:6; 96:8; where it appears as **offering** and **offerings**. In Psa. 45:12 it is rendered as **gift**—72:10 rendered as **presents** and 141:2 rendered **sacrifice**.

(2) The use of the word (**offerings** 20:3) proves that such offerings had been made to God by him who was about to go to war; and the prayer of the people here is that God would grant the blessing which he had desired and made by those who sought to obtain these petitions.

(b) Sacrifices offered—may they be remembered (20:3b).

"And accept your burnt sacrifice. Selah" (20:3b NKJV).

(1) What we have here is a continuation of the people's desire for David, expressed in their appeal to God.

(2) The word "**accept**" (v. 3b) in the Hebrew, means: **to make fat or marrowy** (compact, concise, effective, meaningful) (Prov. 15:30); **to pronounce or**

regard as fat; to be fat or satiated (fully satisfied) or abundantly satisfied
(Prov. 13:4).

- The prayer here seems to be that God would regard the burnt-offering **“fat”** that is, God approving the sacrifice as favorable and fully accepted.
- Another important factor in these prayers is that the sacrifice made (20:3b) was aimed at obtaining Divine favor for David in the war he was about to enter into . . . the people and David sought God’s favor and protection.
- A very powerful practical lesson taught here is that we should **always** enter any undertaking by our solemn acts of worship or by petitioning Divine blessings; in other words: **We are to acknowledge our dependence on God, and ask for His guidance and protection.**

(3) It was a custom in the time of David for kings to offer sacrifice before going to war; as noted above it was a way to invoke God’s presence, protection and providence.

- This was done by David’s predecessor, King Saul.
 - Such sacrifices were the responsibility of the priest to officiate (example see 1 Sam. 7:7-10)
 - Note also King Saul’s folly by assuming such responsibility was one of the reasons resulting in him losing the continuation of his dynasty to the throne (see 1 Sam. 13, NB Vv. 8-14)
- The primary reason of such sacrifice (Psa. 20:3) was not limited to the forgiveness of sins but to seek God’s help, strength, favor and deliverance.
 - With the expiation of their sins they were securing Divine favor. We observe for example when Israel was defeated by Ai because of Achan’s transgression, normalcy was restored when the transgression was properly addressed (see Josh. 7 and 8)
 - David (Ps. 20) and his people were making sure of their standing with God and made sure they were in the position of securing Divine favor.
 - In this situation, we are referring to **“blood offerings”** (20:3b); the blood of the sacrificial animal was spilt at the altar and the flesh consumed by fire.

(4) **A strong lesson here is, as we observe in the example noted (Psa. 20:1-4); in similar circumstances we approach God, not only by an offering which we make, blood or bloodless, but through the one great sacrifice made by the Redeemer on the cross for the sins of the world.**

4. **May God Gives Your Heart’s Desire** (Psa. 20:4).

“May He grant you according to your heart’s desire, And fulfill all your purpose”
(20:4 NKJV).

(a) Desires of the heart . . . may they be granted (20:4a).

“May He grant you according to your heart’s desire” (20:4a NKJV).

- (1) As seen before the people’s desire for David that God would grant: *“according to his wishes” or “according to the desires of his heart.”*
- (2) That God would honor all his undertaking and noble designs for the public welfare with the success he so earnestly desired.
 - This they prayed in faith because they knew that David was a man of God’s own heart and would do what is pleasing and acceptable to Him.
 - **It is an established fact that those who make it their business to glorify God may expect that God will grant the desire of their hearts (Psa. 37:4; 91:15; Isa. 58:9; etc.).**
 - One of the outstanding traits of David is that it was always his objective to do God’s will; he did not fight solely for personal reasons or for self-glory but that God would be glorified (See 1 Sam. 17:26, 36). David fought to defend God’s nation and His city Jerusalem
- (b) Decisions that were made for the battle . . . may God fulfill them! *“And fulfill all your purpose” (Psa. 20:4b NKJV).*
 - (1) Those who walk in God’s counsel have the assurance that He will prosper their undertakings!
Job 22:28a NKJV
“You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you . . .”
 - (2) **“And fulfill all your purpose”** (20:4b) . . . this may be read: *“all that you have planned or undertaken in this matter; may He (God) enable you to execute effectively your objectives.”*
 - (3) Hereby expressing the joy, beauty and benefits of fulfilled goals so greatly anticipated. This statement (Psa. 20:4b), can also be applied to the great desire and purpose of the King of Kings as He went into battle to accomplish our salvation.
 - Jesus struggled in the Garden of Gethsemane but persevered and went on to fulfill His mission here on earth and made a way for lost humanity!
 - For each of us, God has given us a **purpose** to fulfill in His great plan. The key to a life of fulfilled **desire** and to achieve our purpose is to find our place in His great plan, instead of hoping to make God an actor in our plan.
 - *“Jesus knew this fulfilled desire and purpose shown by His prayer in John 17: ‘I have finished the work You have given me to do’ (John 17:4).” (David Guzik).*
 - *“The Apostle Paul knew the fulfilled desire and purpose, shown by these words toward the end of his earthly life. ‘I have finished my race; I have kept the faith.’” (David Guzik).*

B. Promote (Encourage) Your Leader in the LORD Psa. 20:5

As noted above *“the name of God”* represents the power and love of God; note also:

1. ***The name of our God*** (v. 5) is the manifestation of His character (noted above) (Ex. 3:14-15; 34:6-9). His name has no different existence apart from the LORD but is identical with the LORD Himself in His compassionate manifestation and availability to His people.
2. ***Note the following a partial quote from the NIV Study Bible . . . based on Psa. 5:11:*** *“The name of the LORD protects (see Psa. 20:1; Prov. 18:10); the LORD saves by His name (see Psa. 54:1); and His saving acts testify that His name is near (Psa. 52:9). Accordingly, the godly ‘trust in’ His name (Psa. 20:7; 33:21), ‘hope in’ His name (Psa. 52:9), ‘sing the praises of’ His name (Psa. 7:17; 9:2; 18:49) and ‘rejoice in’ His name (Psa. 89:16)”*

The prayer of the people (Psa.20:1-5) is that David’s entreaty for victory would be granted. In placing their trust in God the people looked forward to celebrating the victory that is assured by God through their king.

“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.” (Psa. 20:5 NKJV).

1. **Rejoicing in God’s Deliverance** (Psa. 20:5a)

“We will rejoice in your salvation” (20:5a NKJV)

- (a) As seen in the preceding verses David was preparing to go to war, the people interceded for him and, as seen here, (v. 5a) expressed their faith in his victory and for which they would jubilantly rejoice!
 - (1) these words (20:5a) express the joy they had in the expected deliverance from danger and their conviction that through God’s enabling such victory would be fully realized!
 - (2) The word **salvation** used here generally means **deliverance**, deliverance from anticipated danger.
- (b) This is a continued emphasis of their faith that God would intervene to save them; it also expresses their confidence in such victory and that such deliverance would fill their hearts with great joy and rejoicing!

2. **Raising the Banners** (Psa. 20:5b)

“And in the name of our God we will set up our banners! (20:5b NKJV).

- (a) Raised to the honor and glory of the Almighty God! *“. . . in the name of our God”* (20:5b).
 - (1) This indicates a sense of dependence on God and also that their mission was focused on promoting the honor and glory of God!
 - (2) They were also acknowledging that their current undertaking was not dependent solely on their own ability, nor was it to promote personal ambition, but it was their determination that God would be sincerely honored.

(b) Raising those banners, declaring whose we are!

(1) They were saying, we will erect our standards; it may also be stated as: we will unfold our flags.

- All people, when they go to war, have standards or banners, whether flags or some other emblem, around which they follow; under which they fight; and which they feel bound to defend.
- Beloved! Strength and purpose come from God—**Our Banner!** Let us never forget His faithfulness as we lift up the banner of our God and petition Him for His desires and purposes to be fulfilled in our lives.

(2) The people were resolute and assured that God’s presence would be with them and intervene in the battle. Listen to them speak with certainty and clarity:

- “We will wage war in His name; we will see that our cause be good and make His glory our end goal in every expedition.”
- “We will seek Him for advice, we will adhere to His directions and continue to implore for His help and will wholly depend on Him; in all our ways we will acknowledge Him.”
- “The battle is God’s and we will celebrate our victories in His name!”
 - “When we lift up our banners in triumph, and display our trophies, it shall be in the name of the God that we serve.”
 - “God shall have all the glory of our success, and nothing, absolutely nothing shall have any part of the honor that is due to God.”

3. Request Presented . . . May They Be Granted (Psa. 20:5c)

“May the LORD fulfill all your petitions” (20:5c NKJV)

(a) What were these **“petitions”**? The prayers offered when making his **“offerings”** and **“sacrifices”** (see v. 3).

(b) The people trusted in the LORD and believed that He would answer the prayers of His servant. As a result, they continued asking God to **“fulfill all your petitions” (v. 5)**—every single thing that David requested of the LORD.

We noted that David spoke prophetically of Christ in this psalm; time would not allow but only for a brief comment . . . The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible notes the following:

“This scene points to the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘who for the joy was set before Him endured the cross’ (Heb. 12:2). Imagine the glorious celebration when He ascended and re-entered heaven, victorious over Satan, sin and the grave. He sat ‘down at the right hand of the throne of God’ to reign eternally over all.”

C. Protection Assured . . . God Preserves His Sanctified Leaders Psa. 20:6.

“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.” (20:6 NKJV).

1. **Anointed of God Assured of Prayers Answered** (Psa. 20:6a)

"Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from heaven."
(20:6a NKJV)

(a) At this time, we have David speaking; note the change from **"we"** (v. 5) to **"I"** (v. 6).

(1) His statement to the people was done with courage and faith.

- **"Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed"** . . . may also be read: *Saveth, or will save, the king, who had been anointed, or consecrated by anointing to that office.*
- It expresses his (David's) confident assurance of success and was further encouraged by the overwhelming support of the people.

(2) The people had demonstrated so much zeal in the undertaking, and had offered earnest petitions, that he could not doubt that God would smile favorably, granting them victory in the battle.

(3) Even before going into battle, David was fully assured that he would be victorious over the enemy. Note also that he spoke of **"saves"**; he spoke as though it was already realized (Rom. 4:17).

(b) He firmly declared the conviction of his heart: **"He will answer him from His holy heaven."**

(1) David was a mighty, valiant warrior and a brilliant strategist, but he did not depend on his own skills for victory. He wisely acknowledged that victory could come only from the LORD.

(2) **"He will answer from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand"**

David Guzik notes:

"This confirms and strengthens the idea that "the LORD saves His anointed."

- *He is saved by an **answer**; God is not silent to His anointed.*
- *He is saved from **heaven**; God hears and sends help from His throne.*
- *He is saved with power, **with the saving strength**.*
- *He is saved with skill and favor, with the **strength** that comes from **His right hand**.*
- *Each of these was true for King David, but even more perfectly true of the Son of David, the ultimate **anointed** of the LORD."*

(3) **Psa. 34:22 NKJV**

"The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned."

D. Place Your Confidence in God . . . He is Your Ultimate Source Psa. 20:7-8

1. **False Trust in Comparison to the True Source of Victory** (Psa. 20:7).

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God." (20:7 NKJV).

(a) Futile source to rely on (20:7a) *"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses"*
(20:7a NKJV).

- (1) What we have here is a general pattern characterizing David and his people that is seen through the psalm.
- They hereby expressed their complete confidence in God and revealing their well-grounded reliance on Him.
 - The general meaning is ***that their total trust was in God! Him and Him alone! He is worthy of such un-moveable allegiance!!***
 - Their trust in God has been placed in strong contrast with those who relied on that which secures.
- (2) David and the people placed their trust in Him who is able, The True and Living God (Jer. 10:10-18; etc.). Their hope was not in man, military might or any other human, or created sources . . . but on Him who is above all (Ex. 15:11; Deut. 33:26; 2 Sam. 7:22; etc.).
- (3) Adam Clarke notes:
In reference to Psa. 20:7a: *“Makes it likely that the war with the Ammonites and Syrians is that to which reference is made here; for they came against [David] with vast multitudes of horsemen and chariots” (2 Sam. 10:6-8; 1 Chron. 19:6-7).*
- (4) Obviously, we observe a graphic difference between worldly people and godly people as to their source of confidence.
- the children of the world trust in secondary sources, and believe that all is well, they feel safe, secure and sure of all their hearts desires.
 - The nation of Israel was to focus solely on God, and not secondary sources . . . note briefly these references (*focus continues on our text*):
 - The king was not to acquire many horses (Deut. 17:16)
 - When Joshua conquered the Northern Alliance, he was instructed to incapacitate the horses and burn the chariots (Josh. 11:6, 9).
 - Israel was to focus on the fact that no source other than God is adequate to meet human needs (**Psa. 33:12-19, NB Vv. 16-17**; Prov. 11:28; etc.).
 - Matthew Henry notes:
Those who make God and His name their praise may make God and His name their trust.”
- (b) Firmly fixed on trusting God (Psa. 20:7b)
“But we will remember the name of the LORD our God” (20:7b NKJV).
- (1) David and his people remained God focused; they were affirming or saying:
“We will not forget that our reliance is not on armies or anything else, but on the true and living God!”
- (2) They were firm and resolute; irrespective of whatever instrumentality that they used, they will always remember that their (our) hope is in God, and that success comes only through Him!!
- (3) Israel was built on and fully relied on ***Yahweh (Jehovah)***; they knew that He could be relied on:

Deut. 20:1 NKJV

“When thou 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.

(4) Note the following quotes:

- *“In the spiritual war, in which we are all engaged, the first and necessary step to victory is, to renounce all confidence in the wisdom and strength of nature and the world; and to remember, that we can do nothing, but in the name, by the merits, through the power, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and our God.” (Horne)*
- *“Alas, how many in our day who profess to be the Lords are as abjectly dependently upon their fellow-men or upon an arm of flesh in some shape or other, as if they had never known the name Jehovah at all.” (Spurgeon)*

2. **Fall of the Wicked/Establishment and Continuation of the Righteous (Psa. 20:8).**

“They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright” (20:8 NKJV).

(a) Fall of those who trusted in false sources (20:8a).

“They have bowed down and fallen” (20:8a NKJV).

(1) **“They”** . . . those that trusted in chariots and horses (v. 7a).

- The enemies against whom David was about to engage with in war, and he was certain that they (the enemy) would be defeated.
- Here again David spoke in futuristic language . . . note he spoke as if it was already done: **“They are brought down.”** (20:8a KJV).
- He sees them (the enemy in anticipation prostrate and triumphed over; he goes forth to war with the certainty on his mind that victory would be fully realized.

(2) The words **“brought down”** (KJV) **“bowed down”** (NKJV) means: **“to bend, to bow”** (the knees); consequently, it refers to one who bows down before an enemy, that is the one who has been triumphed over (see Isa. 10:4; 65:12; Psa. 72:9; 78:31).

(3) Israel’s enemy was defiant in their attack on Israel.

- The attitude most likely displayed was similar to the enemies conquered by Israel in Canaan, or the Philistines for example with their champion Goliath as well as so many other examples. They were confident of their superiority both in man-power and having more advanced weapons of war.
- Once more David’s faith foresaw the end result and was certain that the enemy would be annihilated . . . **Faith is the victory! faith in the True and Living God!!**

(b) Fixed and firmly established are those who hope in God (Psa. 20:8b).

“But we have risen and stand upright” (20:8b).

- (1) Keep in mind that David continued to speak as if the victory was already realized (Rom. 4:17) . . . note also “. . . **he who comes to Gods must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him**” (Heb. 11:6).
- (2) Oh, beloved, at times we may feel overwhelmed or depressed but we must maintain our faith in God . . . **“My faith Looks up to thee; Thou Lamb of Calvary! Savior Devine!!**
- (3) Matthew Henry notes:
“Those that trusted in their chariots and horses are brought down and fallen, and their chariots and horses were so far from saving them that they helped to sink them, and made them the easier and richer prey to the conqueror, 2 Sam. 8:14. But we that trust in the name of the LORD our God not only stand upright and keep our ground, but have risen, and have got ground against the enemy, and have triumphed over them
- (4) Matthew Henry also states:
“A believing obedient trust in God and His name is the sure way both to preferment and to establishment, to rise and to stand upright, and this will stand us in stead when creature-confidence fail those that depend upon them.”

E. Petition Can Be Made Continuously for Your Leader Psa. 20:9

“Save, LORD! May the King answer us when we call.” (Psa. 20:9 NKJV).

1. Petition Continued . . . Focus on God Steadfastly (Psa. 20:9a)

“Save, LORD!” (20:9a NKJV)

(a) The earnest prayers of the people continue.

- (1) They were confident of success yet they did not forget their dependence on God; they did not forget that victory comes by and through God!
- (2) Indeed, there was rejoicing but it was rejoicing in the belief that God would give them victory . . . it was rejoicing that was connected with and originated from prayer.

(b) Prayer is not inconsistent with the most confident anticipation of success in any undertaking; and confidence of success can only come from fervent prayer.

(c) **“Save LORD!” . . . Note the following:**

(1) Morgan

“This is the language of faith, not after the battle but before it.”

(2) Kinder

“This final phrase, literally ‘in the day of our calling’, has a telling echo of the opening verse.”

2. Parallelism and Connection . . . God alone is Our Hope! (Psa. 20:9b)

“May the King answer us when we call” (20:9b NKJV).

- (a) The parallelism (similarity, etc.) and connection requires the acknowledgment of God, beloved, our prayers are made **ONLY** to God! In this situation He is acknowledged for who He is, the Almighty God, the Supreme Monarch!!
- (1) David, the king, was going to war and he implores the protection of a greater king than himself—the King of all nations, and in whose hand the ultimate outcome of the war was dependent on Him.
 - (2) The people prayed, focused not only on God blessing David, **“save LORD, and give him success,”** but that God would make David a blessing to them!
- (b) As noted before, the close of this psalm corresponds with the beginning (see Vv. 1-4); there is an earnest desire by the people that God would hear their entreaties in the day of trouble.
- (1) Beloved, we have here a powerful demonstration of the desire for blessing presented in prayer, for **only God** can grant that which we really need.
 - (2) The entire psalm, is an expression of a strong confidence in God; there is that deep awareness and an attitude of complete dependence on God! At the same time their faith remained strong and they were assured of their victory through God’s intervention.
 - (3) The psalm serves as an ideal model for us to imitate whenever we commit to any great and challenging enterprise.
 - (4) Barnes notes:
“Never should we look for success unless our undertaking has been preceded by prayer; and when our best preparations have been made, our hope of success is not primarily and mainly in them, but only in God.”
- (c) The following quote is taken from Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible:
*“Psalm 20 is both a portrait of a supportive people and of a godly leader. Good people will find it easy to pray for and support a leader like David. **Note his action in this psalm.***
- (1) *He prayed and called upon the LORD (v. 1).*
 - (2) *He worshipped the LORD—offered sacrifices to Him (v. 3).*
 - (3) *He sought the counsel of others and, more importantly, of the LORD (v. 4).*
 - (4) *He believed God’s Word and spoke in faith, not doubt (Vv. 5, 8).*
 - (5) *He recognized his calling and his responsibility to the LORD (v. 6).*
 - (6) *He depended upon God rather than his own power and abilities (v. 6).*
 - (7) *He led the people to trust the LORD (v. 7).”*

Isa. 54:14 Amplified Bible

“You shall establish yourself in righteousness (rightness, in conformity with God’s will and order): you shall be far from even the thought of oppression or destruction, for even the thought of oppression or destruction, for you shall not fear, and from terror, for it shall not come near you.”

DO NOT JUST READ THE BIBLE STUDY AND OBEY IT

2 Tim.2:15 NKJV

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJV

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

PSALM 20

Review Questions

1. Complete by choosing the correct answer.
(A sentence from introduction for Psalm 20, by C. H. Spurgeon)
“There is a need for trials of one saint that he may _____
_____.”
- (a) show others his determination
 - (b) yield consolation to others.
 - (c) be able to boast
 - (d) show who he is

2. **“May the LORD answer”** . . . (a) this or similar thoughts have been used five times in Psa. 20:1-5, list all five with their respective verses. (b) Briefly explain its significance.

3. Briefly explain **“trouble”** as used in Psa. 20:1.

4. Complete the following:
“It is unfortunate to note that so many are driven to (a) _____ **ONLY** in times of (b) _____, but when (c) _____ are going well they have (d) _____ or no time to (e) _____ in (f) _____ and (g) _____ communication with the Almighty God.

5. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

(Taken from a quote by Matthew Henry . . . on Psa. 20:1)

“The prayers of others for us must be desired, not to supersede, but to second, _____.”

- (a) church’s intercession for us
- (b) our family praying sometimes
- (c) the pastor’s public prayers
- (d) our own for ourselves

6. Briefly, explain **some** significant facts (*minimum 2 . . . maximum 3*) relating to ***“the name of the God of Jacob”*** (Psa. 20:1b).

7. Briefly list and explain two reasons why it is beneficial to study the names of God.

8. (a) List, with references, the three places ***“Zion”*** can refer to. (b) Note at least one important fact relating to ***“Zion”***.

9. In making their appeal to God on behalf of David what powerful descriptive language was noted in Psa. 20:1-2?

10. Briefly explain “*offering*” as used in Psa. 20:3a.

11. Briefly explain the difference between “*offerings*” and “*sacrifice*” (Psa. 20:3).

12. What is the key to a life of fulfilled desire and accomplishing our God given purpose?

13. What is the significance of **“banners”**, used by armies . . . example, as noted in Psa. 20:5b?

14. Complete each of the following.
 (Noted in our lesson . . . a quote by David Guzik)

Psa. 20:6b: “He will answer from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand” (NKJV).

*“This confirms and strengthens the idea that **‘The LORD saves His anointed’**”*

(a) He is saved by an _____; God is not _____ to His anointed.

(b) He is saved from _____; God _____ and _____ help from His throne.

(c) He is saved with power, _____.

(d) He is saved with skill and favor, with the _____ that comes from _____.

(e) Each of these was true for David, but even more perfectly true of the Son of David, the _____.

15. Complete by choosing the correct answer:

“Those who make God and _____
 may make God and His name their trust.”

- (a) His cause as secondary
- (b) His name their praise
- (c) His church last option
- (d) His glory non-essential

16. Briefly explain **“brought down”** (KJV) **“Bowed down”** (NKJV) as used in Psa. 20:8a.

17. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer.
“Confidence of victory is not inconsistent with prayer.”

18. Complete the following:
 “David the king, was going to (a) _____ and he (b) _____ the (c) _____ of a (d) _____ king than himself—the King of all (e) _____, and in whose hand the (f) _____ outcome of the war was (g) _____ on Him.”

19. Complete by choosing the correct answer:
 (Statement relates to Psa. 20:9b)
 “The entire psalm, is an expression of _____; there is that deep awareness and attitude of complete confidence dependence on God!”
 (a) strong confidence in one’s might
 (b) power of a mighty army
 (c) man’s determination to be brave
 (d) a strong confidence in God.

20. Match the actions on the left with their verses on the right. **These presents a summary of David’s actions noted in Psalm 20.**

ACTIONS OF DAVID NOTED IN PSALM 20	CORRECT VERSE	JUMBLED VERSES
He prayed and called upon the LORD.		Vv. 5, 8
He worshipped the LORD—offered sacrifices to Him.		v. 7
He sought the counsel of others and, more importantly of the LORD.		v. 1
He believed God’s Word and spoke in faith, not doubt.		v. 6

He recognized his calling and his responsibility to the LORD.		v. 3
He depended upon God rather than his own power and abilities		v.4
He led the people to trust the LORD		v. 6