

Psalm 20 • Intercession for the King

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Psalm chapter 20. The first part of this Psalm appears to be the voice of the people who are crying out for the Lord's favor on behalf of David, the king.

Look what they say in verse 1. *“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob protect you! ² May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion! ³ May he remember all your offerings and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices!*

⁴ May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans! ⁵ 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!” (ESV)

What do we see in these first verses of this Psalm? We see the cry for the Lord's favor, and the idea here is that David is about to go to war. He's about to go into a battle situation where there's going to be danger, there's going to be difficulty, there's going to be bloodshed, there's going to be death.

And so the prayer for David is for all of these things: for protection, for help, for support, that the Lord would remember all that he has done in the past in the way of sacrifices and so forth.

That God would grant his heart's desire and may we then shout for joy over the victory that the Lord gives in the name of our God, and so forth and so on. And then in the final 4 verses of this Psalm, David then responds to this intercession.

And he says in verse 6, *“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. ⁷ Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. ⁸ They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.”*

How incredibly easy it is, right, to rely on our own abilities rather than the Lord. David says, *“Some trust in chariots and ... horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD, our God.”*

What a great attitude going into a battle situation. Cause you know that chariots and horses are going to be used, and swords and bows and arrows. And I

suppose any other implement of war that was common back in those days. And yet David says, that's not what we're going to, we're not going to go into this thing, trusting in those things. We're not going to obsess over how many horses we have versus how many horses they have. We're not going to get worried if they end up having twice, or 3 times, or 4 times chariots that we have. Because, having a chariot back in those days in warfare was a huge benefit, a huge advantage.

And yet David says very clearly here, some trust in those things, but not us. We will not trust in the conventional implements of war. We are going to trust in the Lord, and you know what the end result is going to be? They are going to fall and we're going to stand, because our trust is in God.

And then it simply ends with the words, *“O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call.”* And I look through this Psalm, and it's a fairly short Psalm, and I think to myself, okay, what is this Psalm?

Well, it's essentially a prayer of intercession, calling upon the Lord for the favor of God at a time of warfare.

But it really shines forth, I think, the importance of intercession and particularly for those who are called to positions of leadership. Because you see here that the people are praying for David, they're laying out this prayer for their king.

And I think that whatever positions of leadership a person may be in, there is a burden that goes along with every calling of leadership that God has given upon people. And it is such an incredible blessing to know that people are praying.

Let me tell you, it's just, I mean, I can tell you. Not to turn this Psalm into something that's completely self-serving, but I can tell you that as a pastor, I am so blessed when I just hear that people are praying for me. Depending, regardless of what I'm going through, situations I'm going through.

Sometimes I'm not going through anything that I really know of, but somebody will contact me and just say, you've really been on my heart. I've been praying for you. I'm praying for you constantly.

You might remember it, on our 25th anniversary, we showed a video of a young gal that I had met over the internet who lives in Canada, but she's actually Chinese. And I still am in contact with her. She's in fact, working on staff at a church doing youth ministry, but she'll just write me a note every so often and just say, just want you to know, I'm praying for you. Just out of the blue, just

want you to know I'm praying for you. I feel personally so blessed by that and I know that I'm not the least worthy of any of it, but I accept it. Knowing that it's God moving upon the hearts of people to intercede.

But I really believe that intercession is so, so important. One of the things that we established a number of years ago that frankly isn't very well manned is our prayer groups that meet during the services and pray over in the other building for our services.

It was an idea that I had a number of years ago because I really was going through a period of time where the Lord was speaking to my heart about the importance of prayer. And I really felt led to create, or to encourage people to just gather, go to first service. And then during second service, go over to the room that we call the meeting room upstairs in the children's ministry building, and just pray during the service.

Pray for me, pray for all of the other people, pray that the Holy Spirit would move on hearts. And I really believe that's a really important ministry, but I'm having a hard time convincing people of it. Because, like I said, it's a weak spot here at Calvary Chapel.

One of the reasons that I started doing it was I was listening at one time to a pastor who was telling about in his own ministry. And it was years ago when they just moved into their new facility. He and the church was going through just an incredible time of real, just spiritual, I guess warfare is a good word. Just spiritual attack, just difficulty, spiritual difficulty.

And he described that period of time in his ministry as like trying to walk with big galoshes on that were heavy, and burdensome, and cumbersome. And he said that it was just, everything was hard, just doing things was hard. And he'd get up to teach the Word and it was hard, and the people listening were just, there was a deadness and it was just...

So he did that same thing, he encouraged these people, we need to pray during our Sunday morning service. And so he established that same kind of a ministry. We're going to set aside this one room and we're going to ask people to intercede during a service that they didn't attend, so they attend one, they intercede.

And he said that they started doing that a number of years ago, and he told how that the kind of difficulty they dealt with when they first came into that

building, he said, we've never seen that since. Because we've kept up a consistent time of intercession.

Anyway, if that's something that's in your heart, man, I would love to see more people pray. If you're looking for a way to get involved in one of the most powerful ways that you can possibly serve, then join our prayer group over in the other building. You don't have to sign up for anything. It's just upstairs, next to the office. Go to one of the services, and then at the other service, just go and pray.

And just call upon the name of the Lord, ask for God's Spirit to move powerfully. Ask for the teaching of the Word to be sharp, and beneficial, and fruitful, and ask for the worship to be full and blessed. That's what we want to see going on.

And pray that the enemy would be far at bay, that the Lord would keep the enemy at a great distance from the work that He's doing here at Calvary Chapel, Ontario.

That would, I can't even begin to tell you how much it would bless me.