

Psalm 20

"Prayer for the King Going into Battle" ¹

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(A Royal Psalm) ²

For the director of music. A psalm of David.

A1 THE PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE 20:1-5

B1 Their Prayer for Their King 20:1-4

- C1 For Protection in Battle: {1} May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you *securely* on high!
- C2 For Deliverance from the Sanctuary on Mt. Zion! {2} May He send you help from the sanctuary And support you from Zion!
- C3 For Acceptance of His Offerings: {3} May He remember all your meal offerings And find your burnt offering acceptable! *Selah*.
- C4 For Granted Request and Accomplished Strategy: {4} May He grant you your heart's desire And fulfill all your counsel!

B2 Their Praise of Faith 20:5

- C1 Their Promised Victory Song: {5} We will sing for joy over your victory,
- C2 Their Promise of Banners at the Successful Return of the Troops: And in the name of our God we will set up our banners.
- C3 Their Agreement with His Petitions: May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.

¹ Title: (Allen P. Ross, "Psalms," *The Bible Knowledge Commentary [TBKC]*): "This brief chapter is a royal psalm; the king was about to go to war, but before he did he stopped to pray in the sanctuary, where he was joined by the congregation who interceded for him. Having rehearsed the intercessory prayer of the people for their monarch who was praying for victory, the king expressed the assurance he had received from the Lord for an overwhelming victory."

² Category - Royal Psalm: "Psalms in which the anointed king is in the foreground are called royal psalms. The text refers to some high point in the career of the monarch, such as his coronation (Ps. 2), his wedding (Ps. 45), or his going forth into battle (Pss. 20; 144). The Davidic Covenant is set to poetry in Psalm 89. Psalm 110 anticipates the king's coming in conquest, and Psalm 72 envisions his glorious reign" (Allen P. Ross, *TBKC*). In many of these royal psalms there are overtones of the ultimate anointed one, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, who awaits His reign on the throne of David here on the earth.

A2 THE ASSURANCE OF THE KING 20:6-8

B1 His Assurance from Yahweh of Victory! 20:6

- C1 {6} Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed;
- C2 He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand.

B2 His Confident Reliance on Yahweh Rather Than Military Might 20:7-8

- C1 The Reliance of Some on Military Might: {7} Some *boast* in chariots and some in horses,
- C2 The Israeli Army's Confidence in Yahweh: But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.
- C3 His Prediction of the Upcoming Defeat of the Enemy: {8} They have bowed down and fallen,
- C4 His Prediction of the Upcoming Victory of Israel: But we have risen and stood upright.

A3 THE CLOSING PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE TO YAHWEH, THE GREAT KING, FOR SALVATION 20:9

B1 Requesting Salvation from Yahweh: {9} Save, O LORD;

B2 Requesting Instant Response from Yahweh, the Ultimate King: May the King³ answer us in the day we call.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 20

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³ 20:9: Keil and Delitzsch admit that the accents favor this (NASB) translation, but they opt for the NIV translation on stylistic grounds and on the ground that in no other psalm is Yahweh specifically designated The King (Ha Melech), but He is designated, rather, such as "Great King" in Psalm 48:2 and the like. LXX and the Latin Vulgate both favor the NIV translation as do RSV and NRSV. KJV, NASB, NNAS, and NKJV all favor the translation subscribed to here. NIV reads, "O Lord, save the king! Answer us when we call!"