

Psalm 20

Written by K B Napier
Sunday, 27 February 2011 13:00

Many Christians today are very worried; they are joining with groups consisting of heretics and genuine believers, in the hope that this show of force will bring the desired help.

But, what they are doing is acting out of desperation, not hope. Joining with spiritual enemies to produce a godly result is never a good idea, and does not work. What they think is a show of force is but a mirage, a weak shadow of what could be, and it is 'too little, too late'.

The answer to today's wicked movements and their impact on Christians is to repent as individuals, to pray in the sure power of God's promise (that if we pray without doubting we will receive what we ask for), and to live only in the strength of the Holy Spirit. Nothing else will do, as I have warned many times before.

God hears the calls of His repentant children! He WILL defend us! "Let the king hear us when we call"! This Psalm was not just written for the chief musician and singers of the Temple; they are for all of us today.

Verses 1-3

1.

The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee;

2.

Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion;

3.

Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah.

David is unequivocal – Jehovah WILL hear us in the "day of trouble". The verb, 'hear', 'anah, includes the idea of answering and response. It is not just a mere vague hope, but a definite

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and vibrant positive truth, that God *will* answer when we are in trouble. (Sometimes by urging us to fortitude). By “trouble” is meant tsarah – distress, severe straits, adversity, tribulation. It also refers to an adversary. The root also includes ‘to be besieged’ or silenced.

It cannot be denied that Christians today are in a time of tribulation. At least it is for those who are genuine. Those who are nominal, toeing the line set for them by evil governments and people, know no such trouble, because they hide under the bedclothes, refusing to act truly, in godly, upright manner. So, they are left alone by the enemy. Satan makes sure of that, because he wants Christians to be compliant with his schemes and wicked regimes.

Note that it is the “name” of God that will save and protect us. His *shem* is a reference to His name (God) being covered in His glory and reputation. What reputation do you recognize of God? Is it your own self-devised, impoverished invention, or the true God, Almighty and all-powerful, known in scripture?

“Name” includes to mark with His sign, to show His absolute authority. At the time of David, God’s name was renowned throughout the Middle East and beyond. Those nations who did not necessarily honour God, nevertheless recognised He was more powerful than their own false gods, so they revered Him anyway.

We do not see this today, because Satan has infused Christians with paralysis and unbelievers with pride and arrogance. All ridicule Almighty God, or lower Him to below, or equal-to, humans. They think that by demoting Him they thereby get rid of Him. What fools! Their idiocy makes no difference to His power or might, His status or position. And one day they will know it for themselves. His ‘name’ means everything God stands for and is. It is not just a sterile word on a page!

Once again, in this verse, David uses two different words for ‘God’ – the first instance is Jehovah; the second (“the God of...”) is the more personal ‘elohiym. This personal God, this living and real God, will “defend thee”. This phrase includes the unmentioned ‘WILL’. It is, then, an imperative fact.

He *will* “defend thee! – sagab; place you on high ground where you will be safe. He will exalt you for your righteousness. I have often told hearers that whenever I have been given help by

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God, it makes me feel like I am above the situation, looking down. I see all the trouble and distress, but am able to rise above it, secure in the knowledge that God is protecting me.

This can happen in any situation that causes us trouble or fear. It is not a psychological delusion, but a very real act of God. Just as unbelievers did not see Christ talking to Paul on the Damascus road, so they cannot see a real God in our lives. They cannot see because their spirits are dead. Do YOU see God in your distress? Or, do you only see the distress?

Those who God allows in positions of power have become evil; their powers are now from Satan and not from God. Therefore, we are not bound by them. All the more reason to call out to God, Who is the true 'power behind the throne'.

We may not call out to false leaders whose role, but not their persons, are allowed by God. They are defying the One Who gives them their authority, but if their power comes from Satan, God no longer views them as valid rulers. Rather than gain the help of a prayerful Christian people, they desire only their own selves and the support of Satan's people. Thus, they will fall.

God will send His help from the sanctuary. God helps all believers generally, but in times of crisis or real trouble, He specially sends His angels as His envoys, to protect and deliver us. We see here what God does for those whose lives are solely centred on God, through Christ. Many Christians, who do not bother much with God normally, will cry out in their distress. They see God as an emergency service, and not as a personal Lord Who gives them everything and listens to their prayers. They carry out their normal daily routines and jobs, etc., without any thought for God!

So, when real troubles hit, they are sent into a panic and hypocritically call on God to help them. He may, or may not, do so (I am not privy to His will for others in this matter), but I do know that when we live holy lives, God is literally walking besides us all the time, so our calls are answered quickly.

When we live haphazard pseudo-spiritual lives, we suffer greatly during troubles, and it takes a long time to 'adjust' to being holy – or what we assume to be holy. This confusion, if not hypocrisy, is noted by God, and He may not answer us, because of it. But, He WILL answer the righteous straight away, in some form or another – it will always result in spiritual strength,

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which is the key to suffering and help.

God's help, then, comes straight out of Zion, which, though referring to Jerusalem, also refers to Heaven. The name 'Zion' agrees with that of 'Name', because it suggests a sign or position of conspicuousness. The "sanctuary" is a place apart from the world, holy and sacred, God's 'otherness'. That is why our worldly enemies cannot touch it or ruin it, and we have a direct link to God, Whose help flies to us unhindered by the evil-doers. (The "thee" in this text is God, not man).

David now asks (verse 3) that God will accept His rightful sacrifices, made to God as a plea for success in battle. For us, today, this transfers to giving God *ourselves*, in a spiritual sense. When we do so, and then ask for help, He will readily give it. He sees the red-hot desire in our souls and hearts to serve Him, and so He responds with love and power. It is assured – not just a vague hope. David ends this verse with the statement "Selah", which not only is an interruption or accentuation of music in the Temple, but also an exaltation of God. It is, then, an expression of sureness.

Verses 4-6

1.

Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

2.

We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

3.

Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

It seems that a large number of Christians think they can secure God's mercy simply by calling out for it. That is, they get it because they have asked. This is not so. God always answers according to His own will. He will speak to us the words He wants us to pray, and when we obey

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and pray those words, He always answers... because it is all of grace and none of works. Few understand that.

David knew this truth, for He says "Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel". This clearly tells us that what He does is according to what He has desired in the first place, and not according to what we want. It reverses the usual pretence that most Christians think is holiness, that starts with themselves. God WILL fulfil His own counsel or thoughts, no matter what we get up to on earth, spoiling our own spiritual lives.

Because God WILL help those who are righteous, David says we will "rejoice in (His) salvation". Do we? After the excitement we feel after salvation, do we really rejoice in it over time? It is a fact of life that most of us go through what is sometimes called a 'desert experience'. It usually occurs a while after the 'buzz' of salvation slows down; we go into what we think of as a 'dry' period. Most come out of it again and then carry on. But, what is it, *really*?

I would suggest to you – because it is such a regular and widespread activity – that it is God testing us, *not* our minds churning out rubbish to make us disbelieve. After the elated feelings that often go with salvation and the excitement of finding new friends and experiencing early Christian lives, we need to be put on trial by God. We need to see that what we have is real and fine gold. So, we enter a desert.

But, deserts are not lonely or dry. In deserts there are countless creatures and cycles of activity. We do not see it, or relate to it, because it is uncomfortable and seemingly without life. Not so! It is life of another kind, beginning to grow within. It is a way God is using to refine us and bring us closer to Himself.

When we submit to the trial and seek God, He moves us from the desert to another place, the place of lifelong faith. The period we called 'dry' was not dry after all, but a time of reflection and budding reliance on the Lord. It was uncomfortable because it was a necessary removal of self and a replacing with God. It was a discomfort bringing newer and better life. For this reason we can rejoice in His salvation!

David had been through many literal deserts in an effort to escape his enemies. He ran out of water and food, and knew the pounding of his heart in the night-time battles of body and soul.

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He came through well. Will you?

David was so delighted with God, he “set up banners” “in the name of our God”. That is, they were set up because His God was renowned and powerful. These are not the pretentious banners and flags set up by modern charismatics! David’s were battle banners, standards used in war to focus the soldiers and bring them to the side of their commander. Today, we must set up our battle banners, for we have gross enemies, dark souls ready to destroy us. But, God is all-powerful and we must rally to His standard. *His standards, His Name!*

Because He is our commander and His standards identify His presence, we cannot lose: “the LORD will fulfil all thy petitions.” That is, our prayers, pleadings and desires. Do you believe it? Remember the demand of God – to be obedient and faithful, to live righteously. When we do that no man can come against us with success... God WILL prevail. What prevents it today is not God’s lack of power, but our lack of faith and righteousness. Think of that every time you see the enemy winning against us. Set up your banner. Let the world know who you are in Christ, and you will know salvation from your enemies.

As David said: “Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed.” Strictly speaking, the text here refers to David as king of Israel. But, it can also apply by extension to us in our day, who obey the Lord, for we who are saved are also anointed to salvation.

The next phrase is not understood unless we realise the meaning of ‘hear’. It includes the dynamic of acting or responding to a prayer. Thus, we could paraphrase it as ‘He will hear me in Heaven and respond to my prayers, by defeating my enemies in battle’; God’s “right hand” symbolising power and strength. Note that it IS ‘saving strength’. We do not pray to a miniscule or weak God, but to the most powerful supreme God. He MUST win the day.

Verses 7-9

1.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

2.

They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

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3.

Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call.

Now we come to our modern day. Christians tend to trust in what they can do themselves; they rely on their skills and knowledge, their friends and money, their staunch mind; their steady emotions. And so they lose.

In his day, David was a mighty king, known for his battle skills and success. He had many horses and chariots, and many champions in his army. Yet, he was not a fool; he recognised the reality of the situation: “but we will remember the name of the LORD our God” (‘the Jehovah our ‘elohiym’). David always attributed success to God, not to himself or his army. It was the supreme God of Heaven, Jehovah, Who was his personal Lord and saviour, ‘elohiym.

When David says “we will remember” he is not saying it as we might say it: “Oh yes, while we are thinking of success we must bear in mind God”. No, rather, he is saying by ‘remember’ that God is foremost and always in prime place. So, David not only remembered God in retrospect – he held His name before him in battle and in every part of life. If you walk with God, it is what you will do, automatically.

Whilst God removes and destroys the enemy, He uplifts those who belong to Him. We are His special people, His adopted children. So, He will see to it that we are safe. The enemy will be brought down; but we are risen. “And stand upright”? Do we stand upright? This is the stance of people who win; those who lose are cowed-down with head facing the ground. Stand upright and be proud, not of self but of God. It will make a difference to the way you act in life and it banishes depression and anxiety.

“Save LORD”! (Verse 9). “Yasha Jehovah”! This is a clarion call by David, for God to liberate us, to deliver us from enemies (including ourselves in our stupidity and moral errors). It is also a call to give us victory.

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This is not the same as being overly confident, but a simple acknowledgement that when God acts, He always wins. And, by definition, so do we. When David spoke those words I can almost hear him shouting in triumph! Don't confuse this with 'triumphalism', which is an human error based on pride.

"Let the king hear us when we call"! David is not referring to himself in this verse, but to God, the true King of Israel and of all human kings. Let Him hear us when we call, for when we are righteous and He hears us, He WILL answer. Remember it always. Like David, sing it in the temple of your soul, where the Holy Spirit resides. Make it your everyday melody, so that when battle commences your immediate reaction is to rely on God, not self. Selah!

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