

In God We Trust

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[0 : 00] So, Psalm 20 is what we'll be going through tonight. May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble.

May the name of the God of Jacob protect you. May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion. May he remember all your offerings in regard with favor your burnt sacrifices.

May he grant your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans. 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. 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.

Some trust in chariots and some in horses. But we trust in the name of the Lord our God. They collapse and fall. But we rise and stand upright.

[1 : 03] O Lord, save the king. May he answer us when we call. So, this psalm, I think, has a lot to do with security.

As we conceive of it, maybe in modern terms. It's kind of tough to interpret. I don't think any of us here have gone off to war before. I don't know anyone well enough to know for sure.

But I don't think any of us have any military experience I'm looking at. So, just kind of in terms of that, this is, you know, asking God for assurance as they go forth into battle, basically.

And so, I think, like, our more peacefully minded security for us might be something like a retirement account, actually. And that's something that's drummed into our heads, particularly as some of us here are millennials.

I've read that we should be saving 20% of our income if we want to retire successfully at 65 or whatever. Which, yeah, everyone laughs at that, obviously.

[2 : 02] And so, like, there's a lot of, like, all of financial, like, responsibility training is all about, like, building security for yourself, basically. And the way that you invest your own resources. And so, that emphasis is on building security through amassing numbers, basically.

And I think that, so that's kind of the feel that we get of security. That feeling of, like, oh, I have a full retirement account. Or, oh, I don't have a full retirement account. I'll never be secure like that. And I think this psalm takes us, and it says, God redefines and achieves security for his people.

And so, just again, that's God redefines and achieves security for his people. And so, kind of stepping back a little bit, maybe working a little more to jump that gap between war and where we are.

This psalm is combined with Psalm 21, the psalm afterwards. And this psalm is before Israel goes to war, and the next one's after they go to war. And spoilers, the Israelites win. You'll figure that out next week. Sorry.

I don't have to come next week now. And this psalm is kind of ritualistic feeling. And you notice, like, it's we, and it's something the congregation is all saying together.

[3 : 12] And so, it's kind of broken down into three parts. It's, you know, people praying for the king. Kind of these may we statements. May God support him, essentially, in the battle. The king's representing his people in battle.

In verse 6, there's a declaration of victory that's going to happen because they've appealed to this. And then the rest of it is trusting in the security of the victory that they know that they're going to get at this point.

And so, kind of brief thoughts on God having, like, his people engage in war, which is sometimes, like, a tense topic. And this is, like, the really, really quick rundown. But basically, in the Old Testament, God's people were a nation.

They were an actual physical, like, sovereign nation within the nations surrounding them. And so, part of that is national security and caring for their people. And in that time, nations fought regularly for territory as they were more nomadic and able to move around more easily.

So, war is not, I mean, that's not a full explanation. That's just, like, a brief overview of, like, it's not like God was bloodthirsty in the Old Testament. It was part of living as a nation in that time.

[4 : 18] They needed to be ready to defend themselves. And I think that, kind of, us now, we're, the church is entirely different in a sense. That, you know, we're not a sovereign nation, but a multi-ethnic, like, multi-national family.

And we have precedence for peace now because we are the church all across all of the nations. And so, when we think about Psalms, so, like, you know, I don't pray this before I go out and fight somebody in the morning.

What I think about in Psalms is, you know, God promises us things that are necessary to live. In the same sense, it's necessary to achieve victory in this war. Or the things we can pray this over.

Or for the church to be able to thrive. Or things we could pray this over. You know, fellowship or evangelism or prayer or whatever it might be. These are the kind of things we come to God with in these kind of war terms.

So, going back kind of to the theme of the psalm then. You know, God, first God redefines security. And one part of that is that he takes action to secure his people.

[5 : 23] They're not the ones doing it. I think when we think security, we think of us being proactive. Like, I go out and I research. Like, we replaced the locks in our house because someone literally, like, walked into our house the other month.

And, like, they must have picked the lock or something when they thought we were asleep or gone. And so, like, that was an act of me, like, going out and buying new locks and then putting them in the door and installing them.

So, it feels like I'm responsible for that security. Like, I've bettered myself. But in this psalm, we see that God's entirely the active one in bringing his people security.

And so, this is the full list of things that God does in this psalm. And I think I moved from, like, the top verse to the bottom. But, you know, it says God answers. God protects. God helps. God supports.

God remembers. He regards with favor. He grants your heart's desire, talking to the people. Fulfills your plans. And then in the last few verses, he repeats, saves a lot is what God does.

[6 : 21] And the only thing that I could find that we, the people, do is shout for joy over salvation. And so, particularly that first five verses is just showing that God is the one who is active in that sense of security for us.

And then the second thing is, too, that God often redefines the terms of victory to, like, make it clear that he's the one that's at work, not us. And I think that that shows a lot in verse 7, which says, some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

And this is a big theme all through the Old Testament. And it clearly shows that it's God makes it clear that he's the one that saves. In this statement here, chariots and horses are kind of like the most, like, powerful weapons at the time.

Like, they would overwhelm just people on foot. So you think of kind of what we think of now as, like, advanced military technology. Like, superior technology will win wars. And so lots of chariots and horses would win wars.

And so that's why they say, you know, many. It could be many trust in chariots and many in horses. That's how nations based their military is on. And interestingly, in Deuteronomy, God prevents any kings of Israel from owning large amounts of horses.

[7 : 37] That's, like, an explicit command. So I think he's saying here, you know, we're not trusting as we go into battle on the size of our own might, but on the Lord's might. And so this happens again and again in the Old Testament.

And I pulled out some, you know, Jericho and Moses parting the Red Sea. But there are other smaller ones, smaller ones. You know, Abraham routes four countries with 300 people to save his brother-in-law.

Shamgar, the judge, kills 600 Philistines with an ox skull and judges. And Hezekiah, when Jerusalem is besieged by the Assyrians, like, which is one of the greatest nations at that time, rather than calling to another country for help, praise.

And the angel of the Lord comes and decimates the entire Assyrian army. And it's really fascinating, actually, like, the seminary tidbit here. The history part of that, that the Assyrian nations rarely kept history when they lost battles.

Like, Israel was unique for that. The Assyrians talk about, yes, we went up to the foot of Jerusalem and we surrounded the hills and we mock the people. And that's, like, where the history ends right there.

[8 : 46] It's like they don't talk about actually taking the city. And it's just, you know, God brings His people into these situations of infathomable odds and brings them out.

And so that kind of leads into God's chief security. He doesn't just redefine it, but He ultimately follows through on it. And that's one of the coolest parts of this passage is verse 6.

And it says, And so this is before the battle that He says, I know this is going to happen.

And this might be, it says, I, it might be the king, it might be a priest who's kind of leading the ceremony that's going on. But it's still a proclamation of all the people, clearly, after that, that they say, you know, we're going to stand upright after bowing to the Lord, essentially.

And our enemies will fall. And I think this confidence is ultimately achieved for us in Jesus. That Jesus redefines victory as well.

[9 : 43] In dying, He vanquished death. You know, in being perfect, He was able to vanquish sin and evil. And in being humble. And so that's what enabled us to say, like, I know the Lord saves His anointed.

And so God still, I think, calls us to this kind of trust and security today. And it's not always in as obvious of ways. But I think of, like, the commands, like, the command to take a Sabbath.

Like, to take one day off a week. There's a, you can get into all kinds of debates over what exactly that means. But, you know, to take a day in a highly competitive society where you're pushed to work every minute to get ahead, basically.

To say, I'm going to take a day off from doing that and rest in the Lord is a really big step. You know, the Bible encourages people to radical and even painful giving. Regardless of whether we're really rich or whether we're really struggling to get by.

It pushes us to give. And our encouragement to do, like, whatever, you know, it's in Corinthians, it says, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.

[10 : 52] That kind of jives with our culture that, like, glorifies entertainment. And just the idea that we can just waste away our life. And so, John Piper, his famous phrase, like, don't waste your life, that, like, spawned a book.

And his whole spiel has been making the rounds again, basically. And I think that his, the story that he told then was really a story that kind of shows that achieving and redefining security.

And so, what that came from was he was sharing, he was preaching and he was saying, basically, you know, sharing two different stories of retirement. And in one, there were two older women who were in their 80s and they were both nurses for their entire lives.

I think one was a medical nurse who did missions for her entire life. And they died in a tragic accident in a Jeep driving off a cliff while they were in a poorer country serving people there.

And John Piper was asking, you know, was that a tragic death or not? Like, is that a tragic end to life? And he said, no, like, that's not a tragic end to life.

[12 : 01] Let me tell you a tragic end. And he shares a clip from Reader's Digest that basically, you know, just two people were tired when they were in their mid-50s. They got off a little early because they saved their money and they spend their days, you know, sailing on a boat and golfing and collecting seashells on the shore.

And after sharing those stories, he says this. Picture them before Christ at the great day of judgment. Look, Lord, see my shells. That is the tragedy.

And today, people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream. Over against that, I put my protest. Don't buy it.

Don't waste your life. And so I think that this, I bring up this story not because it's directly about security, but I think that this is what this psalm and this part of scripture teaches is what really grounds that and girds us for that, to know that we are safe in Christ, to be able to go and do great things for him.

I know. All right. Thank you.