

“Before the Battle!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. FYI - Just found out Rodrigo Rodriguez will be here on Aug. 15th.
- 1.2. Prayer: Lord, May **our Aim** be Your Glory; **our Path** be Your Will; & **our Passion** be Your Love!
- 1.3. Think of the Battle Hymns:
 - 1.3.1. Quote **Navy’s Hymn**; (*Anchor’s Aweigh*; actually written for Army/navy Football game); **Marine’s Hymn** (love the ending!).
 - 1.3.2. Of course, the **Battle Hymn of the Republic**. Written during our terrible Civil War.¹ (see back page)
- 1.4. Psalm 20 and 21 go together. **Both are Battle songs!**
 - 1.4.1. The 20th psalm precedes the battle and the 21st follows the battle.
 - 1.4.2. Ps 20 is a Psalm of **Prayer for the Battle**;
Ps 21 is **Praise for the Victory of the battle**. {next week}
 - 1.4.3. **Ps 20 Anticipates** victory; **Ps 21 Reflects on** the victory.
- 1.5. This Psalm was written by David *probably* during the period of his many wars recorded in **II Samuel 8-10**. [David was the warring King]
 - 1.5.1. His sword may have been **worn**, but at least it was not **rusty**.

2. BEFORE THE BATTLE! (1-9)

- 2.1. **D. L. Moody** didn’t want soloist *Ira Sanky* to sing the hymn “*Onward Christian Soldiers*” because he felt the Church was anything but a victorious army marching off to war.
 - 2.1.1. Unfortunately today, much of the church could be bettered compared to the **Carnival** across the street.
 - 2.1.2. **Yet**, it is the picture Paul gives to Timothy in 2 Tim.2.
- 2.2. This Psalm records an **intercessory prayer** for the king just before he encounters the enemy in battle. [Known as **Royal Liturgy**; also Ps.2,110,132]
 - 2.2.1. One thing is for certain, battles will arise! **Therefore** we must have **the goods** to get us through the hard times.
 - 2.2.2. **We want to listen** for what kept David through his battles.
 - 2.2.3. **Q:** How did David move from **Trouble** to **Triumph**?
 - 2.2.4. **Q:** How will we move from **Trouble** to **Triumph** in our situation?

¹ Mrs. Howe watched troops marching off to war singing “John Brown’s Body,” a song about a man who had been hanged in his efforts to free the slaves. Julia felt that the catchy camp meeting tune should have better words.

- 2.3. The Christian, like any other human being, is **deeply moved** and **affected** by **tragedy and crisis**; **but** the Christian, unlike many others, is **anchored to the hope** that in God *all things will work together for good, for who love the Lord.*
- 2.4. David gives us **5 factors** that lead us to **Triumph**, for our day to day battles:
 2.4.1. *Prayer; Surrender; Unity; Faith; & Trust!*
- 2.5. **[1] PRAYER!** (1-5)
- 2.6. This 1st step is vital, as it is **prayer** that releases **His Power**.
 2.6.1. David was going to battle, & he & his people gathered to pray.
 2.6.2. Note **vs.1-5** is sung/prayed by the **congregation**, or the **choir**, on the King's behalf. They are requesting victory in battle.
 2.6.2.1. Note repeated word "**May**" (it's a petition).
 2.6.2.2. The king responds in **vs.6-8**. [Then concluding prayer of the people vs.9]
- 2.7. In the face of great difficulty, the believing response to crisis & tragedy is **prayer**.
 2.7.1. **Prayer** is an act of **faith** and **submission** to the will of God.
 2.7.2. Prayer reflects a **decreasing dependence** on self; **and** an ever **increasing dependence** on God.
 2.7.3. And note 3 times "**the Name of God**" (1,5,7).
 2.7.3.1. His secret of victory was **the name of the Lord!** – The Lord he worshipped sincerely & sacrificially.
 2.7.3.2. David had a **great name**/reputation, **but** nothing in comparison to God's NAME!
 2.7.4. The bible records many names of God, & **all of them** can be trusted!
- 2.8. **[2] SURRENDER!** (3)
- 2.9. Before David & his army fought, they **worshipped** God.
 2.9.1. That affected his battle plan & his victory.
- 2.10. David's "**burnt offering**" indicated total surrender to God. (3)
 2.10.1. If we're not walking w/the Lord today, we'll not be ready when the battle comes.
 2.10.2. **BURNT OFFERING** - Hebrew *olah*. (i.e. "ascending") regarded as **ascending to God while being consumed**.
 2.10.2.1. Part of every offering was burnt in the sacred fire, but this was **wholly burnt, a "whole burnt offering."**
 2.10.3. Thus, it indicated a total surrender to God.
 2.10.4. **Ps:** It was the most frequent form of sacrifice, and apparently the only one mentioned in the book of Genesis.² [The difference between Abel's & Cain's?]
 2.10.5. "**When the will of God crosses the will of man, somebody has to die.**"
 2.10.6. Did you know, "**God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him.**" 😊 (Andrew Murray)

²Easton's Bible dictionary. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

- 2.11. Note the prayer was so his sacrifices would be **accepted**.
- 2.11.1. Still today, only insofar as Christ **sprinkles & sanctifies** our prayers with the perfume of His own sacrifice, will they ever be **accepted!**
- 2.12. **[3] UNITY!** (5)
- 2.13. David & his army had **one goal...God's Victory!**
- 2.13.1. They had **one Joy...to serve Him & do His will.**
- 2.14. The **12 tribes** of Israel give us a good picture of **unity**.
- 2.14.1. They have **1 army assembled w/12 tribes.**
- 2.15. Recognize, in the “heat of battle” there will be misunderstandings, conflicts and offenses...& we must remain united!
- 2.16. **Mark Twain** used to say he put a **dog & a cat** in a cage together as an experiment, to see if they could get along. They did, so he put in a **bird, pig & goat**. They, too, got along fine after a few adjustments. Then he put in a **Baptist, Presbyterian, and Catholic**; soon there was not a living thing left!
- 2.17. Maybe **John Wesley** nailed it when he said, “I want the **whole Christ** for my Savior, the **whole Bible** for my book, the **whole Church** for my fellowship, and the **whole world** for my mission field.”
- 2.18. **100 pianos** all tuned to the **same fork** are automatically tuned to **each other?**
- 2.18.1. They are of **one accord** by being tuned, **not to each other**, but to **another standard** to which each one must individually bow.
- 2.19. **Snowflakes** are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they **stick together**.
- 2.20. It is not just being *in union*. Because there can be **union without unity**:
- 2.20.1. **Just tie two cats together by their tails and throw them over a clothesline.** [it’s more than *doing something together*, but Harmony]
- 2.21. It’s **anticipating** waving their flags/banners after victory is won!
- 2.22. **[4] FAITH!** (6)
- 2.23. Now we have David’s response.
- 2.24. In Hebrew it is rendered “*He has saved*”.
- 2.24.1. That is, God **already has** given David the victory.
- 2.24.2. 1 Jn.5:4 “**For whatever is born of God overcomes** the world. And this is the victory that **has overcome** the world our faith.”
- 2.25. **The Lord saves His anointed** – Who is he speaking of here? Himself? (David) Yes; Jesus? Yes; Christians? (anointed ones) Yes!

- 2.26. **[5] TRUST!** (7,8)
- 2.27. We all **trust in** or **believe in** something.
- 2.27.1. Could be your money, credit cards, your strength, your personality, your wit, your expertise, or experience.
- 2.27.2. In their case it was making sure they weren't going to trust in **military equipment**...but again placing **full confidence** in the Lord!
- 2.27.3. **Here he clearly sets "the assistance of God" in opposition to "human strength"!** [No carnal confidence here!]
- 2.28. So what's the difference between **Faith & Trust?** (similar but different)
- 2.29. **Faith** – Belief in, devotion to, allegiance/loyalty.
- 2.29.1. Not **"blind-faith"** – that's demeaning to **Christians & to God**.
- 2.29.2. When the bible speaks to **"blindness"** it uses this image for people walking in darkness.
- 2.29.2.1. So, faith is the **antidote** to *blindness*, not the **cause** of it!
- 2.29.3. Big diff between **faith & credulity**. [**Credulity** = to believe something for no sound reason. It's what superstition is made of]
- 2.29.4. **Faith is built on consistent reasoning & empirical evidence.**³
- 2.29.5. Peter said, **"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty."** 2 Pet.1:16
- 2.29.6. It's one thing to **believe in God** & another thing to **believe God!**
- 2.29.6.1. The demons believe in the existence of God...& the tremble.
- 2.30. **Trust** – reliance. To have confidence in.
- 2.30.1. Trust then is at the **very root** of faith.
- 2.30.2. God demonstrates Himself to be **entirely trustworthy**.
- 2.30.2.1. He gives us ample reason to trust Him.
- 2.30.3. **We trust God for the future** in what he has accomplished in the **past!**
- 2.30.4. To **believe** God, to **trust** in him for our very life, is the essence of the Christian Faith.
- 2.30.5. It's when life moves us from singing, "*Jesus you're all I need*" to, "*Jesus you're all I've got.*"
- 2.31. **Q:** What are the **chariots & horses** we find ourselves trusting in & not the Lord?
- 2.32. (9) The people Recap, (ESV) **"O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call."**
- 2.32.1. Modern equivalent to **"God save the King."**
- 2.33. We **can't avoid** battles, but we **can be ready** for them!
- 2.33.1. **And with God's help be victorious!**

³ R.C.Sproul; Essential, Truths of the Christian Faith; pg.183.

- 2.34. When we as a **church** are confronted with a battle, we should run to this Battle Hymn in Ps.20. You should pray for your leaders; pray for victory; raise the banner of *His Salvation, His Provision, & His knowledge*, together in unity; & trust not in things in the process...but **in the Lord!**
- 2.35. **Pray** for Fish family: Larry & Veronica; *Jesse, Josh, Bianca.*

Battle Hymn of the Republic:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps; they have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps; I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat; O be swift, my soul, to answer Him; be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, with a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me; as He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free!
While God is marching on.