Psalm 20

“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 Amy/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!

2.13. 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. The 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…and 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!

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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.