

One thing that becomes more and more obvious every day is that we are in a major spiritual war. We are in a war for truth. We are in a war against the vain philosophies of the world. We are in war with our own flesh. We are in war against the unseen forces of evil. We are in war.

What this means is that we need prayer. One of the critical keys to winning this warfare is prayer. When we go through these psalms of David, it is very clear that David was a man of prayer. He prayed and he wanted people praying for him.

In fact, there is nothing that will make a leader more powerful as when God's people are praying for him. It is a wonderful thing when God's people gather to pray that God will give success, prosperity and blessing in the warfare.

King David was a man who won victory after victory in some of the most heated, hostile and intimidating warfare skirmishes in all of Scripture. Where did David get his power? Where did David get his strength? Where did David get his notoriety? In part it came through prayer. David himself prayed and also the prayers God's people prayed were for David. They realized he was God's man and they backed him in prayer.

It is clear from this psalm that before David went into battle, he found great encouragement and hope in knowing that God's people were interceding for him. So often when you are a leader, many people criticize. David had his share of critics, but he also had a great number of people who backed him in prayer, and that meant a great deal to him. This is what this psalm is about.

What we see is this:

IN ORDER FOR ANY OF GOD'S LEADERS TO HAVE VICTORY AND ASSURANCE AND BLESSING IN WARFARE, THERE MUST BE THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Psalm 20 presents the idea of prayer as a prelude to going to war and Psalm 21 presents the idea of prayer as a postscript to winning the war.

It would appear in this psalm that God's people collectively met in the place of worship to specifically pray for David. It would appear that their prayers were a critical part of the victory David had and also played a part in the great faith that he demonstrated.

Now this psalm breaks down nicely into three main parts:

PART #1 – The intercession of the people. **20:1-5**

The people gathered together to intercede in David's behalf. There are six requests they make:

Request #1 - They asked God to answer David. **20:1a**

Now the specific prayer is that Jehovah would answer David in the day of trouble. These people were smart enough to know that a leader for God would face many days of terrible trouble and trials. They made the assumption that in those moments David would pray, so they prayed and asked God that when David would pray in troubled moments that He would answer.

Notice they don't pray "I hope he will know thy will"; but they do pray "I hope you will answer his prayers." Times of trouble and times of crisis are great times to pray.

Request #2 - They asked God to exalt David. **20:1b**

Now we may notice that God is identified as the "God of Jacob." This title clearly connects this prayer to Israel. Now often times you will hear people pray for someone and the prayer will be—"Lord, keep him humble." Have you ever heard anyone pray "God, highly exalt him"?

These children of Israel want the best for David. They asked God to exalt him.

Request #3 - They asked God to help David. **20:2a**

God does send help in time of need (I Sam. 4:3-9). Now notice that help comes from the sanctuary. Now the sanctuary was the place of worship. It is the place where the Ark of the Covenant was located. So at this sanctuary there was the written Word of God and there was the presence of God.

God's people are praying and asking God to send help from His sacred place in accordance with His inspired Word. The power of God and the presence of God and the Word of God are located at the sanctuary and God's people are asking God to support them from this place.

Now most people of the world do not think they need sanctuary help. They trust in their armory or their treasury. However, the most powerful ally is God. Stay away from the sanctuary and one is destined for weakness and defeat.

Request #4 - They asked God to support David. **20:2b**

Zion is a key spot to God. This Zion is not Illinois or Utah. Zion is a specific place in Jerusalem that is set apart for the worship of God. God's presence and power were located in Zion.

Now one point is critical here and that is if we are to expect God to support us, we must have a proper perspective of God's places.

Request #5 - They asked God to remember David. **20:3**

David was a man who exemplified being a man of worship. He saw to it that offerings were made to the Lord. He pointed people in the ways of being in a right relationship with God (II Chron. 6:13, 15, 17-18). Now prayers often accompanied the meal offerings and burnt offerings. These people regularly went to the tabernacle and prayed in behalf of David. They wanted God to remember all of the offerings and sacrifices that David had made and that he had taught the people to make.

By inserting the word “selah” at the end of **verse 3**, God wants people to stop and think about this point. Offerings are important to God. Our labor in the Lord is not in vain (I Cor. 15:58). God remembers it.

Request #6 - They asked God to fulfill David’s heart’s desire. **20:4**

God’s people wanted all of David’s desires to be fulfilled by God and they are praying about it. This is a very interesting prayer because it is not a prayer that says “if it be thy will grant it for David,” but “if it is a desire of David, grant it to him.”

What a tremendous thing to pray for David. If it is David’s heart’s desire, please grant him his desire. How many people would pray that for a leader?

One thing is for certain, success and prosperity in ministry are totally dependent on God. God can make a leader’s plans succeed, but God’s people need to pray for him, not criticize him.

Now carefully notice **verse 5**. If God would grant these requests, the people would rejoice. They would worship, they would sing and they would publicly testify that God had answered their prayers and given their leader victory.

This congregation was not jealous of David; they wanted to rejoice in his victories. Notice they would give the glory and credit to God. Not to a man, not to a commander, but to God.

What an amazing congregation. What prayer warriors. It is no wonder David accomplished so much for God.

PART #2 – The assurance of the King. **20:6-8**

What an uplift for King David. He had the assurance that because his people were praying these things for him that victory would come. He knew he would be delivered. He knew God would answer and he knew God would use his strength to save him (**20:6**). It is interesting to see from **verse 6** that David realized he was God’s anointed and so did the people who were praying for him. This was fact and this was reality.

David's confidence was not in numbers, it was not in chariots of war, which were the most feared military weapon on earth at the time, but his confidence was in God **(20:7)**.

The enemies would fall, but David and the people of God would rise and stand upright **(20:8)**. David believed he was clean and upright and because of that he had confidence that God would answer this prayer and give him victory.

God does not give victories to people who are dirty and filthy. He does not give victory to people living corrupt lives.

PART #3 – The petition of the people. **20:9**

The people cried out for God to save and answer when they call. Notice first they were praying for their leader and then themselves.

Those who are right with God always have the right to pray in threatening moments.

If we are to have victory there must be the realization that we are in war. We need leaders who stand for what is right and live what is right and we need people who pray for their leaders and for themselves.

That is a great lesson from Psalm 20.