

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Twenty: Guidance For Facing Life's Landmark Events That Have Significant Risk (Psalm 20:1-9)

I. Introduction

- A. Most of life involves day-to-day, hum-drum choices that the Christian can rather easily handle. Deciding whether to purchase bananas at one grocery store for 59 cents a pound versus spending 29 cents a pound at the other store one knows he will visit the same day becomes a merely academic decision!
- B. However, **sometimes** the decisions we must make involve **landmark** decisions that have significant **risk**: "Should I accept the job offer from IBM with its good health insurance coverage or take the partnership offer from that self-employed party where I could **POSSIBLY** make **three TIMES** as much as at IBM?!" is one consideration. Another might be: "Having been accepted by **three** different colleges, and I need to let **two** of them know by **this weekend, where should I go?!**"
- C. Psalm twenty is God's calming guide for facing life's landmark events where significant risk is involved:

II. Guidance For Facing Life's Landmark Events That Have Significant Risk, Psalm 20:1-9.

- A. Psalm twenty is a royal psalm sung at the temple by the people of the land who interceded for their king just before he took the troops of the nation out to battle, Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 808. As such, the king faced enormous risk along with the nation, and with it the very landmark choices in the battle that would affect its outcome and the **comprehensive** welfare of the **entire nation**.
- B. In accord with this coming, critical event, David penned this psalm to invoke God's help as follows:
 - 1. Based upon God's acceptance of David's sacrifices and burnt offerings (v. 3) because David was **righteous** (cf. Ps. 66:18), the people invoked God to **hear** David's prayer for divine help, 20:1-2.
 - 2. Based upon God's **hearing** David, the people invoked God to give David his desire, the victory in the coming battle, Ps. 20:4a.
 - 3. Based upon God's giving David his **heart desires**, the people invoked God to fulfill all of David's **plans** in the course of the battle, Ps. 20:4b-5.
 - 4. Based upon God's faithfulness to His own selection of David as the **divinely anointed ruler**, David **himself** was confident that God would save him and preserve him during the coming battle, Ps. 20:6.
 - 5. Based upon trust of the nation in the greatness of their God and not their own military might, they were confident that they would enjoy victory in the battle ahead, Ps. 20:7-8.
- C. With all of these confidences in order, the nation with David closed the psalm with a final summary request for God's blessing on the king in his coming battle, Ps. 20:9.

Lesson: David found God's assured help in facing the crisis of battle by (1) being right with God (Ps. 66:18), and (2) part of that uprightness was being in the role that the will of God determined for David as the divinely anointed king, Ps. 20:6). (3) Thus, David could confidently request divine help in the coming crisis, Ps. 20:1-2. (4) In keeping with this confidence, David could expect God to fulfill his plans and give him his desired victory, 20:4b-5, 7-8.

Application: If we face a risky, landmark event in life that involves choices or plans we must make to meet our desired objectives, we can expect God's assistance **PROVIDING** (1) we are personally righteous before God (we really have accepted Christ as Savior (Jn. 3:16) and our sins are confessed (1 Jn. 1:9) and we are relying upon the Spirit for the power (Gal. 5:16-23) to obey Scripture (1 Jn. 2:3-6)). (2) Of necessity that includes being in the divinely assigned role that God has for us if we are facing a crisis! (Ps. 20:6). (3) Then, we must check Scripture to make sure that our plans and desires are **UPRIGHT** or we will miss God's blessing, 1 Jn. 5:14-15; 3:22. (4) Then we can pray, laying the matter out to the Lord, expecting God's help, Ps. 20:4b-5 with 20:1-2, 7-9.