

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XX. Psalm 20: Preparing For Big Battles
(Psalm 20:1-9)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face some big battles ahead of us:

(1) We face financial, social, international and national security battles in the secular realm: A letter to the Republican-American (April 14, 2022, p. 10A) by Jack Lupkas of Wolcott, Connecticut claimed, ". . . (W)e see an accelerating increase in inflation, a projected recession and/or stagflation, uncertainty over taxation, supply-line problems, gasoline supplies, and now a threat of an unprecedented surge of illegal immigrants in May (another reversal of the preceding Donald Trump administration's control efforts) . . . China, North Korea, Iran and of course Russia are more emboldened – in their actions, rhetoric, expansionism and subtle retaliatory insults – while more of our so-called allies curry more favor with Russia and China to open more trade agreements . . ."

(2) We face significant battles over compromise with error in the religious realm: (a) Amber Pike, editor of KidzMatter Magazine, in her article, "Sunday School – Safe and Sound?" in the January-March 2022 issue of Answers magazine, p. 35-37 reported that even in churches, "many children's ministries undermine the authority of God's Word or fail to teach the full extent of its truth – usually unknowingly . . . Leaders often purchase and teach from curricula that present lessons more as stories with a moralistic point than as true events." She added, "Many children's and youth ministries have already launched their move away from the authority of the Bible to appear 'woke' and make everyone feel welcome . . . Hot topics, such as homosexuality and transgenderism, are dealt with in many churches based on what the world says rather than what God's Word says . . . (N)ot all churches teach that God made marriage to be between one man and one woman for life, or that children are made in the image of God." (Ibid.)

(b) Also, many Christians tend to be misled into compromising Biblical truth with evolution: "Dr. Jordan Peterson, a clinical psychologist and professor," speaks "boldly about the dangers of leftist ideology . . . He directs people to seriously consider the value of a Judeo-Christian worldview . . . and encourages individuals to be responsible for their own actions. He confronts people and ideas that stand as enemies of Christianity and corrupters of Western culture." As a result of Dr. Peterson's assertions, "many" professing "Christians" try to "align themselves with his views." (Roger Patterson, "A Closer Look at a Culture Warrior, Ibid., Answers, July-August, 2020, p. 44-45)

However, Dr. Peterson "doesn't believe in the historical reality of Genesis. He reminds his readers that they are still 'chimps in a troupe . . .' playing out the 'predictable routines and patterns of behavior' that have 'evolved over great expanses of time.' . . . The Bible, he claims, arose as the best 'myth' we can use to structure society," Ibid., p. 45.

Need: So, we ask, "How should we prepare for the battles we face in both the secular and religious realms?!"

- I. Psalm 20 is a royal psalm where David as king who was about to go into battle was joined by the people of Israel as they sought victory in battle from the Lord. (Bible Knowledge Commentary, O. T., p. 808)**
- II. This psalm aligns with God's teaching to Israel in Deuteronomy 20:1-8 on how to prepare for battle:**
- A. Back in Deuteronomy 20:1-4, God had directed that when Israel's army faced war, they were not to fear their foes even if the enemy was numerous and had horses and chariots, for God would give Israel the victory.
- B. Also, in Deuteronomy 20:5-8, men in the army who had built new homes but had not yet dedicated them or who had planted vineyards but not yet eaten of them or who had betrothed wives but not yet married them were exempt from fighting, what would assure that God had given them the victory even without these exempt warriors. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Deuteronomy 20:5-9)
- C. Psalm 20:1-9 then **applied** God's Deuteronomy 20:1-8 instructions on preparing for battle (as follows):
1. In the people's supportive petition, they sought God's help while encouraging their king, Psalm 20:1-5:
 - a. Israel's people expressed their hope that God would answer their king's petition for His help in the day of the distress of battle, that Israel's God might protect their king as he went into combat, Psalm 20:1.
 - b. The people expressed hope that God might help their king from the temple and accept all his sacrifices that were required for the Lord to answer the king's petition for victory, Psalm 20:2-3 with Psalm 66:18.
 - c. Israel's people then hoped that God might give David his heart's desires and fulfill all his plans, Psa. 20:4.
 - d. In the end, the people expressed hope that they would shout for joy over the coming victory and lift up their banners of loyalty to the Lord in God's name, honoring Him for the victory, Psalm 20:5.
 2. David then expressed assurance that God would give him victory, explaining **why** this was so, Psa. 20:6-8:

- a. David was confident that the Lord would deliver him in battle as the anointed of the Lord, Psalm 20:6.
- b. This confidence was further bolstered by a confidence regarding his foes and Israel's army, Psalm 20:7-8:
 - (i) Israel's enemies relied on chariots and horses where Israel remembered to rely on the Lord, Psalm 20:7.
 - (ii) Thus, Israel's foes would be defeated where Israel's warriors would be victorious, Psalm 20:8.
3. Israel's people closed the psalm by interceding to God on behalf of David their king, Psalm 20:9: They asked that God might save their king in battle, and that the Lord might answer this request as they made it.

Lesson: *In obedience to Scripture's directive in Deuteronomy 20:1-8 that Israel rely on the Lord for victory in battle, David and Israel encouraged each other to rely on the Lord and they sought victory from God in prayer.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) In facing future battles, may we (a) heed God's Word on WHAT we are to do (b) and prayerfully RELY on HIM and not human might for the victory we desire.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply this message to the battles we face as noted in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) First, we note Scripture's directives on our responsibilities in the "battles" we face (as follows): (a) On inflation, a projected recession and/or stagflation, uncertainty over taxation, supply-line issues and gasoline price hikes, much of which has been caused by bad decisions by leaders, God guides us in 2 Kings 8:1-6. Due to Israel's idolatry led by evil king Joram, God chose to punish Israel with a seven-year famine. The famine produced supply shortages, inflation, stagflation, etc., much like what we face today. To protect the godly Shunnamite woman from suffering from this famine, God's prophet Elisha told her and her family to move another nation during the famine, so they moved to Philistine territory (2 Kings 8:1-2). When the famine ended, the woman returned to Israel and went to king Joram to beg for her property to be returned to her since it was now farmed by others, 2 Kings 8:3. Just then, king Joram had asked Elisha's servant Gehazi to report to him on Elisha's miracles (2 Kings 8:4) and while Gehazi was recounting Elisha's former miracle of raising the Shunnamite woman's son from the dead, she arrived to ask king Joram for her land (2 Kings 8:5a). Moved by the coincidence of the woman's arrival just as Gehazi was telling of the raising of her son, Joram restored her land to her and ruled that all the produce of her land during her seven-year absence from Israel was to be restored to her, 2 Kings 8:5b-6. So, regardless of the depth or complexity of livelihood problems created by the sins of a nation's leaders or people and/or by God's punishment of those sins, God will meet the material needs of the upright! (b) On the "unprecedented surge of illegal immigrants in May" under the Biden administration and the threats this brings to one's welfare, Deuteronomy 2:1-12 tells how God had given Israel's relative nation of Edom land that once belonged to the Horites (Deut. 2:12, 5b) and how God had given Israel's relative nation Moab land that once belonged to the Emim giants (Deut. 2:9-11), so Israel was not to fight Edom or Moab for their land (Deut. 2:4-5, 9). God Who had miraculously met Israel's livelihood needs for 40 years in the wilderness would meet her livelihood needs now without Israel's having to fight to dispossess Edom or Moab. (Deut. 2:7) (c) On national and international security issues involving troubling actions by China, North Korea, Iran and Russia, God at times in Scripture is called Lord of "hosts," *seba'ot*, that is, "armies." (B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 838-839) God is Sovereign over all the world's armies, so we should trust in Him and obey His Word for security just as Deuteronomy 20:1-8 that we noted in our sermon reveals! (d) As for battles in churches over compromising with errant "woke" ideology or evolution, (i) 2 Timothy 3:13-17 indicates that Scripture is divinely inspired, authoritative and sufficient for every good work, so 2 Timothy 4:1-5 directs that we proclaim God's Word with great patience and careful teaching in combating error. In practice, then, (a) we must keep giving our worship and communion service doctrinal introductions to influence the teachers in our Church to avoid compromising with error. (b) Also, the **pastor must keep preparing messages from Scripture that teach Scripture ITSELF! There is a HUGE need in EVERY church today for the teaching the BIBLE'S CONTENT as God's authoritative, inerrant Word – especially in the PULPIT!** (ii) As for "woke" ideology, it is the view that whites are blind and in need of sensitivity to their innate racism, a lie pushed by Marxists. (Brannon S. Howse, *Marxianity*, 2018, p. 42-44) Relying on the Holy Spirit keeps all believers of any race from racism, cf. Gal. 5:16; 3:26-29. (iii) As for evolution, the literal interpretation of Genesis 1-2 counters it, which interpretation Jesus used in Matthew 19:4-6.

(2) Upon obeying God's Word, we pray for His help and rely on Him for victory in each battle we face!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. In facing future battles, may we heed what God's Word directs that we must do for each battle and rely by faith in prayer on the Lord for the victory we desire in our conflicts.