

DSC Community Group
Sermon Summary, 12/04/2011

Title: "Getting Real Help"
Series: "Pour Out Your Heart to Him: A Study in the Psalms" (Ps. 62:8)

Text: Psalm 20
Preacher: Ryan Kelly

This is a psalm of blessing ("may you...") or "benediction," like Psalm 72, and Numbers 6:23-36.

Five Themes: (a survey across the surface of the text)

1. May you get help (1-2)

- "Name"=the whole person; "God of Jacob" is shorthand for "The God of Abraham, Isaac, etc..."

2. May you find acceptance (3)

3. May you have fulfillment (4)

4. May we joyfully praise Him (5)

- Banners were used by armies of the time. Other nations had banners with the names of various gods.

5. May we completely trust Him (6-8)

- No "may we" to start verses 6, as this is a confession of confidence. Verse 7-8 give a concrete test case. Horses and chariots were, humanly speaking, determinative in battle (Israel enemies had them). But the God of Israel showed Himself strong by leading His people in victory and winning for them (Jericho, for example). This issue of trust and horses is repeated through the psalms: Ps 33:17; 44:3; 44:6; 147:10-11.

Five Layers: (cutting a cross section to see the layers of meaning)

1. God's people (in every age) should pray like this

- This is legitimate. We should pray general prayers for the fulfillment of our hopes, for help, for acceptance from God, etc. But there are more layers of meaning here...

2. This is a prayer specifically for the king's victory in battle

- This psalm would have been used ahead of battle. 2 Chronicles 20 is a good example of this context. This help and trust is specific. We can pray for specific help for specific things.
- Psalm 21 is an after-battle prayer, thanking God for answering a Psalm 20 kind of prayer. But notice how Psalm 21 promises more than could have been possibly fulfilled in David. Things aren't perfect under his rule, and they go downhill. This looks forward to a greater David to come (Zech. 9:9; Matt. 2:2).

3. Jesus, the true warrior king, embodies and fulfills this

- Jesus prayed throughout his life and got help: fasting in the wilderness, Gethsemane, resurrection, etc.
- Victory came in an ironic way, through his death: Col 2:15; Gen 3:15). It was better than David's.
- So, Psalm 20 was fulfilled in a sense in Christ: we don't pray for a king to keep living, to have victory.

4. All those "in Jesus" Have the fruits of His victory

- The church is giving lofty promises: Rom. 8:11; 8:37-39; 1 Cor. 15:54-57; 1 Jn. 5:4

5. Our wants and prayers are shaped by this victory

- Israel prayed for God to fulfill all the kinds plans. We pray, "not our will but yours be done." That's how Jesus taught us to pray, and Paul models it (Eph. 1, 3; Phil. 1; Col. 1; 1 Thes. 1; 2 Thes. 1).
- The NT benedictions express well the things that we want as those who know the victorious king: Rom. 15:5; Col. 1:11-12; 1 Thes. 3:11-13; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Thes. 2:16-17; 2 Thes. 3:5; 2 Thes. 3:16; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet 1:2b; Jude 2.

Sample Questions

- David looks to chariots as a sign of man's strength. What horses and chariots are we trusting?
- Ryan divided his sermon into two parts. In the second part he explored the various layers of meaning. How is this Psalm fulfilled in Christ and how, then, does that effect our prayers specifically?
- What kind of things do we really want from God? What things must we want and ask from God?