



09 What do YOU trust in? Chariots, horses, your own strength? Trust in the NAME of the Lord your God! This study analyzes exactly what it means to "Trust in the Name of the Lord your God."

## PSALM 20

### *Prayer for Victory over Enemies.*

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 1 May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble!  
May the **name of the God of Jacob** set you *securely* on high!
- 2 May He send you help from the sanctuary  
And support you from Zion!
- 3 May He remember all your meal offerings  
And find your burnt offering acceptable! Selah.
- 4 May He grant you your heart's desire  
And fulfill all your counsel!
- 5 We will sing for joy over your victory,  
And in the **name of our God** we will set up our banners.  
May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.
- 6 Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed;  
He will answer him from His holy heaven  
With the <sup>c</sup>saving strength of His right hand.
- 7 Some *boast* in chariots and some in horses,  
But we will boast in the **name of the LORD**, our God.
- 8 They have bowed down and fallen,  
But we have risen and stood upright.
- 9 <sup>a</sup>Save, O LORD;  
May the King answer us in the day we call.<sup>1</sup>

It is sort of difficult to figure out who is speaking in this psalm. The psalm is used in many different liturgies in Judaism. Old manuscripts show that it was actually authored by David, but it could have been just written for David as well. It may have been some sort of national anthem. It is a Royal Psalm.

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<sup>1</sup> [\*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update\*](#). (1995). (Ps 20). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

This Royal psalm records the people of God praying and interceding for their king who is readying himself to go into battle. In verses 1-5 they are making their prayers known: May the Lord answer you! May the Name of the God of Jacob set you securely on high! May He help you! May He support you! May He remember all of your offerings! May He grant you your heart's desire! May He fulfill all of your counsel! They then pray with great expectation and confidence as they say, "We will sing for joy over your victory! It is in the **Name of the Lord** that we will set up banners. May the Lord fulfill all of your petitions!"

The psalm then switches to the interceders stating their confidence in Who God is, and what He is going to do. Three times in this psalm the **Name of the Lord** is mentioned. As I prepared this lesson and looked closely at it, I realized that there is something being said that is way more than just trusting in the name "Yahweh" as God. There is a confidence in praying when it is done in the "**Name of the Lord**". That is an odd phrase upon which I want to focus tonight. We sing about this and we quote this, but I don't think we've gotten a real understanding of what it means to put our faith in the "Name of the Lord". We all remember the old hymn that has the Refrain:

Blessed be the Name, blessed be the Name,  
Blessed be the Name of the Lord!  
Blessed be the Name, blessed be the Name,  
Blessed be the Name of the Lord!

And then we're now more familiar with the Matt Redmon song which we have just sung together,

Blessed Be Your Name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed Be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed Be Your name

What does it mean to 'Bless the Name of the Lord' or what does it really mean to trust "in the Name of the Lord your God"? You know, I think there is a great confidence that comes into our intercessory prayer lives (praying for others and their situations) when we remember the "Name of the Lord our God". Orthodox Jews will often refer to God only as **HaShem**....that literally means "the name".

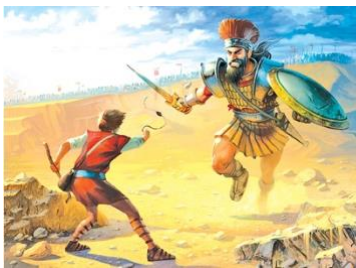
Hebrew scholar, Jeff Benner, gives an incredible analysis of the ancient hebrew meaning of the word "shem" which we have translated into English Bibles as "name". "The word *shem* means much more than just a name. A related word in Hebrew is the word *neshemah* meaning

"breath". In the Hebrew mind the breath is much more than the exchange of air in the lungs but was the seat of one's character."<sup>2</sup>

There are many references to the "Name of the Lord" in the Bible, but there is probably none more onpoint than Exodus 34:5–7, which is a passage in which Yahweh himself proclaimed "the name of Yahweh":

And Yahweh descended in the cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of Yahweh [וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה]. And Yahweh passed by before him and made proclamation: "Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in loyal love and truth, keeping loyal love for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will be no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and fourth generations."

The content of that proclamation is a list of some of the divine attributes of God. Similarly, the messianic prophecy in Isaiah 9:6 says: "His "Name" shall be called 'Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.' " Jesus is the FULL EXPRESSION OF THE NAME OF GOD. So perhaps trusting in "the Name" in Psalm 20 is to say you are trusting in all that God is and all that He has done. The "name of God" **represented to Israel all that God was known to be, his nature and his reputation, revealed in his former acts that are remembered.** Therefore, the congregation in this psalm is making their appeal to a God whose reputation of delivering his people from distress was a great part of their shared experience. They based their prayer on the "Name"; and this called to mind the nature of God and thereby encouraged even greater confidence.<sup>3</sup>



Do you remember when David faced Goliath in battle? We all remember the story. Goliath had on every armament that a soldier could put on. He was arrogant. He was confident in himself. But in reality his own resources were no match for the God of the Universe. Mere human resources are never a match for the God of the Universe. David, had tiny stones and a slingshot, but he boldly faced the Philistine Goliath, and said,

*"<sup>45</sup>... "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. **But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts**, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup> This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup> Then all this*

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ancient-hebrew.org/names/Shem.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Ross, A. P. (2011–2013). *A Commentary on the Psalms 1–89: Commentary* (Vol. 1, pp. 494–496). Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic.

*assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands." (1 Samuel 17)*

I want to again reintroduce you to the concept of the specific name of God being **יהוה** Yahweh. When we studied the Torah, we examined this. It has inadequately been translated as "I am that I am". This is how it is translated in the English Bible for example when Moses in his conversation with God asked, "Whom shall I tell the people sent me?" Yahweh (or sometimes artificially rendered as Jehovah), is an acronym of pieces of the verb "to be" put together. These verbal forms are God's unique description of Himself. I once heard a Rabbi say, "God is a verb". I suppose there is some real truth in that. In our Torah study, we learned that tetragramaton **יהוה** (actually means something like, "I was He who met your need in the past. I am He who meets your need in the present, and I am He who will meet whatever future need you might have." It is sort of like saying, "Your name Lord, states that You were, You are, and You will be my Provider in whatever need I find myself."

**A. The prayer of faith can anticipate the answer with confidence (6- 8)**

If we can reread now verses 6-8 in that deeper understanding, it might be something like this paraphrase that I've written:

- "6 Now I know that He who was all I ever needed and is all that I need, and will be there in the midst of my future need is the One that brings deliverance to the man or the woman that He has set apart.  
It is He my Provider that will answer me from His holy heaven with the delivering strength of His total power and might in my life.
- 7 Yes, some mistakenly look for confidence in the number or nature of their own resources. They look to their chariots and horses, or in other words they look to the things with which they can gain the victory over their enemies. There can be no confidence in such things. But in contrast to that, we will boast in the **name of the LORD**, our God. We will have total confidence in His character of being Wonderful, of being my only Counselor, of being my provider in all of my past, my present, and in my future. I remember and trust in His goodness and in His mercy. Bless His HOLY NAME.
- 8 They who have trusted in self have bowed down and fallen,  
But we who have trusted in His Name, in **HaShem- the Name**, in His Divine nature and total character have risen and stood upright. In Him we have been overcomers!
- 9 <sup>a</sup>Save, O LORD;  
May the King answer us in the day we call.<sup>4</sup>

In the psalm after all is said and done, the king declares the certainty of the answer. The Hebrew in verse 6 says, "I know" (יָדַעְתִּי) the Lord saves His "anointed". Did you know that you

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<sup>4</sup> [\*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update\*](#). (1995). (Ps 20). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

too can pray this prayer of confidence? You too are "anointed" and set apart to do the good works He has prepared for you. (Eph 2:10) You, like Paul, can have this kind of confidence in the Lord. He told the young pastor Timothy, "I know whom I have believed." (2 Tim. 1:12). We too can know Him in whom we have believed.

You see, David, like Paul, knew that by faith the battle we are in has already been won. He states that the Lord "saved" (הוֹשִׁיעַ), He delivered. Remember that in the Old Testament, the word saved means to be "delivered". Likewise, our own salvation is a deliverance from our sins and the eternal consequences of our sin. He is the deliverance that we all so desperately need. The Hebrew in this sentence for "saves" is **HaYeshua**. Does this look familiar? You could say that in English as "The Jesus".

When we look ahead to verse 8 we see this confidence magnified and amplified: true faith in God anxiously anticipates a holy outcome. The psalmist moves from praying right into the realm of praising, and from praising to a confident expectation that the battle is already won! He even describes the completed victory that is expected by saying, "They have bowed down and fallen, but we have arisen and stand firm". How can we gain such confidence in our prayer lives? I think we do so by gaining a clearer understanding of the nature of God. We do so by trusting in The Name.

Verse 7 is the key to understanding the confidence of the king and those that intercede. It demonstrates where their confidence lay. This is what I taught you several weeks ago when we talked about "antithetical parallelism". The verse contrasts between the armies of the enemies and Israel's armies: "Some [trust] in chariots, and some in horses, but as for us, we will keep our confidence (and our remembrance) in the name (the complete character) of Yahweh our God."

You dear believer plus God are a majority in whatever battle you find yourself! The success of our praying is not dependent on our human resources. The key to trusting is "remembering". The verb used here for trusting is a form of the verb "to remember" (נִזְכֵּר from זָכַר). When we as believers remember the attributes of God as they have been revealed to us in His divine acts, we remember and trust. We trust in the CHARACTER of God.

To pray without expectation is to misunderstand the whole concept of prayer and relationship with God.

— Aiden Wilson Tezer —

David went into battle trusting in God's power. He understood God's faithfulness, His loyal love, and His righteousness. He understood God's compassion and forgiveness. He knew that God had his back and his front! David knew from past dealings that he could face any and all obstacles or enemies that came into his path. David was a mature believer who spent much time pondering and meditating on the immeasurable attributes of God. He knew God was Perfect Love. He knew God was omniscient, omnipresent, all-powerful, and unchanging. That is why He would go into each fight of his life trusting in the "Name of the Lord".

Many Christians today, don't pray with any expectation or any understanding of the majesty and power of God. Many are unaware of God's magnificence in their lives. Many have never

understood or experienced God's power when they have been in a time of distress (battles of all kinds). They might pray when they're in that difficulty, but they do so with little confidence in the prayer. Confidence in praying is remembering with your soul and your spirit what God has done and is capable of doing. To pray to Him understanding the fullness of His might and power is trusting in the "Name of the LORD". In line with this, Jesus said, "If you ask anything **in my name**, that will I do" (John 14:14). This is not talking about a successful form of praying, rather it is and should be our prayers of total expectation in a God who has proved Himself faith in the past, in the present, and in the future to meet our needs.

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