

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

PSALM 15-21

The Old Testament records the plight of God's people, Israel.

Genesis to Esther, the historical books, record the **steps of Israel's feet** – while the Psalms record the **beat of Israel's heart**.

All the psalms we'll study tonight were written by King David. Of the 150 psalms, 73 are ascribed to David. He was "*the sweet psalmist of Israel.*"

Fifty of the psalms are anonymous. We call them "**the orphan psalms.**"

And the other 27 psalms were written by various other authors.

We begin tonight in **PSALM FIFTEEN**. One of David's deep longings was to bring the Ark of the Covenant up to the city of Jerusalem. At least five Psalms are tied to this event – Psalm 15, 24, 68, 87, and 105.

Once David became king one of his first projects was to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. He loaded it on a cart and started the trek to the holy city.

Of course this was not God's plan for transporting the Ark. Moses made the Ark with rings attached to its corners so it could be carried on poles.

On the cart, the Ark started to slide. A man named Uzzah stuck out his hand to offer support. God struck him dead for

touching what was holy.

David realized his negligence and disobedience – and it frightened him. He was afraid to move the Ark so He placed it in the house of Obed-Edom.

David learned a lesson - *God's work should always be done God's way.*

After the aborted mission, David left the Ark with Obed-Edom for three months, before he eventually transported it to Jerusalem the biblical way. And it was probably during those 3 months that David wrote Psalm 15.

“LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?” Who among men is worthy to live in God's presence?

Here's the answer. **“He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart...”** God spends time with folks who do the right thing in their *walk, works, and words*. Is there integrity and honesty?

Verse 3 continues to describe the person who abides with God...

“He who does not backbite with his tongue...” Notice, God refuses to fellowship with a gossip. And there's two ways to gossip...*invent it* or *entertain it*. The listener is as guilty as the one who talks.

Beware! **“Those who gossip with you - will gossip about you.”**

I've heard it put, **“The difference between a gossip and a concerned friend is like the difference between a butcher and a surgeon.”**

Both cut meat, but for different reasons.

David continues to describe the righteous, “nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend...”

He refuses to fuel a feud. He seeks peace with his neighbor.

“In whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the LORD; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change...” He keeps his word even if it costs him materially or financially to do so.

You promised to babysit for your friends. It doesn't matter now that the boss handed you free tickets for the same night. You keep you promise.

God likes to hang out with folks who put *conviction* above *convenience*.

Verse 5 “He who does not put out his money at usury (usury was excessive interest), nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things shall never be moved.” You could loan money in Israel, but there were rules, and never at exorbitant rates.

David had a heart for God. He loved God's presence. But he had learned the hard way, *at Uzzah's expense*, to walk uprightly.

PSALM SIXTEEN is said to be “A Michtam of David. It was one of six that carried this name. Psalms 56-60 are the other Michtams.

Of course here's the question, "*What is a Michtam?*"

There're three possibilities... The word could mean "jewel or golden." In other words, these were psalms that were especially precious to David.

It also could mean "engraved." These psalms were not to be forgotten. They were carved in stone – written in indelible ink – saved to a hard drive.

The third possibility is that they were to be "hidden or secret" psalms. It could be that they had a secret – below the surface - meaning.

All three are true of Psalm 16. It's actually a song prophetic of Jesus.

Verse 1 "Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. O my soul, you have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, my goodness is nothing apart from You." God's Spirit is responsible for anything good within David.

Verse 2 "As for the saints who are on the earth, "They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight." God delights and takes joy in His saints.

As we'll see, Psalm 16 is prophetic of Jesus, and it may be Him speaking here in verse 2. Jesus' delight is in His saints.

"Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips."

The sacrifice of Jesus cannot be applied to the man who's chasing after false gods. This is what got the early Christians

in trouble with Rome. The Romans didn't care who else you worshipped as long as you bowed to the Caesar. This was no problem for the polytheistic religions.

But the Christians served only one God... You can't serve Christ and other gods. "Either Jesus is Lord of all or He's not Lord at all."

Verse 5 "O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good inheritance." In ancient times an inheritance consisted primarily of land. The lines of an inheritance were property lines.

David had inherited his father's fields near Bethlehem, but as long as Saul reigned they were denied to David. He couldn't go near Bethlehem.

But David had found a better inheritance. The Lord was His portion. God's presence made wherever He happened to be a "pleasant place."

"I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons." At night he meditates on God.

"I have set the LORD always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

The "Holy One" here cannot be David. David's body did see corruption.

Here is a prophecy concerning the Messiah's resurrection.

In fact, Peter quotes this verse, and applies it to Jesus. In Acts 2 Peter quotes verses 8-11, then he tells them, *“David is dead. The psalm doesn’t speak of David, but of the Messiah – of whom Jesus fits the description perfectly...”*

Verse 11 *“You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”* Like the psalmist before him, Jesus endured hardship for the pleasures of heaven.

Never forget whatever we’re called on to undergo in his life is nothing compared to the joys and pleasures we’ll know in the world to come.

In his science fiction novel, *Perelandra*, CS Lewis tries to provide us a glimpse at the pleasures awaiting us in heaven. He has an earthling fly to an un-fallen planet – a perfect world unsoiled by sin. He grows hungry.

He finds a globe of yellow fruit, punctures it, and puts it to his lips.

Lewis writes, *“He had to extract the smallest, experimental sip, but the first taste put his caution to flight... It was so different from every other taste... It was like the discovery of a totally new genus of pleasures, something unheard of among men, out of all reckoning... For one drink of this on earth wars would be fought and nations betrayed.”*

Our human imagination can’t begin to comprehend the heavenly highs that await us. The joy and pleasures will be more than we can handle – that’s why God promises us new bodies – resurrection bodies.

There'll be no hang-overs in heaven. The party will never cease. David promises us, at God's right hand there are "pleasures forevermore."

PSALM SEVENTEEN is not a *psalm of David*, but "A prayer of David."

David wrote Psalm 17 after being falsely accused. Rather than get bitter he treats it as a test. He asks God to handle his case, and vindicate him.

Verse 1 "Hear a just cause, O LORD, attend to my cry; give ear to my prayer which is not from deceitful lips." David is in the right. He's been treated unfairly, unjustly. He makes it clear that his is "a just cause."

"Let my vindication come from Your presence; let Your eyes look on the things that are upright. You have tested my heart; You have visited me in the night; You have tried me and have found nothing... God had been through David's heart with a white-glove. He'd dusted for *sin-prints*.

David did nothing to deserve what had come upon him.

In contrast, David says, "I have purposed that my mouth shall not transgress." David had done his best not to sin in his reaction.

Remember Job also did nothing to bring on his calamity. His sin didn't cause his trial, but his response to his trial did cause him to sin.

David knows this can happen, and guards against sin.

Some people believe Psalm 17 was prophetic of Jesus'

agony in the Garden of Gethsemane – when He was betrayed by His disciples.

Verse 4 “Concerning the works of men, by the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.” How did David avoid the destroyer? He triumphed over Satan by the “word of God’s lips.”

This is how Jesus defeated Satan... in 1John 2 this is how the young men overcame Satan. This is how you’ll be victorious... by God’s Word.

“Uphold my steps in Your paths, that my footsteps may not slip.”

The Hebrew meaning of the words illuminate this verse...

“Steps” mean “a straight ahead walk.” “Paths” refer to a “track or rut.” “Footsteps” are defined as “a tapping, a rhythmic beating, a march.”

Put it all together and David is asking God to help him *live straight on – to stay in the groove of God’s will – to keep the beat and not slip out of the cadence God sets for his life.* He wants to stay in rhythm with God.

This was Jesus’ desire in the Garden of Gethsemane. He wanted to finish His mission. He wanted stay in step with His Father. Jesus didn’t want to slip out of the predetermined path that was ordained for Him.

“I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God; incline Your ear to me, and hear my speech. Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand, O You who save those

who trust in You from those who rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of Your eye...” The *apple of your eye* is its “pupil.” Here’s the message - the Lord comes to protect His people as surely and as quickly as your eyelid moves to protect your eyeball.

Did you know it takes 1/50th of a second for your eyelid to blink?

Here’s a scary thought... Let’s say you blink 25 times per minute. *It varies person to person.* But you’re driving 10 hours at 55 mph. Did you know that you will have actually driven 33 miles with your eyes closed?

The point is you’re eyelids are hard at work. They blink a lot. Anytime, anything gets close to your eye the eyelid comes to its defense. This is how David hopes God will treat him - “as the apple of Your eye.”

He also prays, “Hide me under the shadow of Your wings, from the wicked who oppress me, from my deadly enemies who surround me.”

Like a mother hen covering her chicks with her wings, David prays for God to surround him, and hover over him, and cover him from danger.

He speaks of the wicked in verse 10 “They have closed up their fat hearts; with their mouths they speak proudly. They have now surrounded us in our steps; they have set their eyes, crouching down to the earth, as a lion is eager to tear his prey, and like a young lion lurking in secret places.

Arise, O LORD, confront him, cast him down; deliver my life

from the wicked with Your sword, with Your hand from men, O LORD, from men of the world who have their portion in this life, and whose belly You fill with Your hidden treasure. They are satisfied with children, and leave the rest of their possession for their babes.” In other words, the superficial pleasures that satisfy a child satisfy a wicked man.

He’s content to suck on candy. He has no taste for healthy food.

In contrast David hunger for God, verse 15, “As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”

To David – a good job, a nice home, couple of cars, wife and two kids, a 401K – everything that constitutes the American dream is not enough.

He won’t be satisfied without God’s face and God’s reflection.

He wants to know God and share in His glory.

Notice David’s threefold desire - *righteousness, vision, likeness*. He wants to be **right with God** – to **know God** - and **be like God**.

The cross of Jesus makes us right with God. The Spirit enables us to know God. And as we get to know Jesus through His Spirit we become like Him. He rubs off on us. It’s a process - little by little – glory by glory.

2 Corinthians 3:18 puts it this way, “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

The preface to **PSALM EIGHTEEN** reads, “To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And he said...”

Psalm 18 is also 2 Samuel 22. It was written after Saul's death in the Battle of Gilboa. After two long decades David's exile is now over.

As with many psalms, portions of Psalm 18 speak of Jesus. In one sense it's a review of David's life, and it's a revelation of Jesus' life.

Verse 1 “I will love You, O LORD, my strength.” The Hebrew word translated “love” means “hug.” Like a little boy bear hugging his dad, David is so excited over his deliverance he wants to bear-hug God.

When I get to heaven I'll bow to God first – then I'll bear hug Him.

“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” God had proven faithful to David. He was all David needed.

“I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.” Notice why we worship God...

Because we feel like it, we're in the mood? *No way!* We worship God because He is worthy to be worshipped whether we feel like it or not.

Our praise should never hinge on anything as fickle as our mood.

Verse 4 “The pangs of death surrounded me, and the floods of ungodliness made me afraid.” David reviews his previous life.

These may also have been some of Jesus’ words on the cross.

“The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry came before Him, even to His ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, because He was angry.” Apparently it wasn’t just the Philistines that defeated Saul. This was a supernatural conflict.

God was angry at Saul’s rebellion. It was judgment time.

“Smoke went up from His nostrils, and devouring fire from His mouth; coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down with darkness under His feet. And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind.” God had become enraged at Saul.

Here, like a warhorse, God snorts smoke and spits fire. He rides on a dark storm. The heavens are a bow aimed at Saul’s demise.

“He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.”

Sometimes we go through dark and lonely places, and we think God has abandoned us. Don't forget verse 11, darkness is God's secret place – His hideout. Darkness is His canopy.

“From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire. The LORD also thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice, hailstones and coals of fire.

He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them. Then the channels of the sea were seen, the foundations of the world were uncovered at Your rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of Your nostrils. He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters.” Some folks read Psalm 18 metaphorically, but I take it literally. The Battle of Gilboa involved divine intervention.

God sent from heaven hail, lightning, brimstone, and an earthquake – along with the Philistines – to defeat Israel and bring down Saul.

And as I mentioned there is also a prophetic meaning to Psalm 18.

Bible teachers see in this Psalm the storm and darkness that occurred 1000 years after it was written while Jesus hung on the cross.

In verse 17 David cries out, “He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me.

They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the

LORD was my support. He also brought me out into a broad place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.” For years David skirted across narrow desert ledges with no room for error. Now, he’s in a safe place.

God brings us out of tight spots into broad, safe, peace places.

“The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all His judgments were before me, and I did not put away His statutes from me. I was also blameless before Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity. Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.”

At first glance, David seems to be saying he deserves God’s blessing. His righteousness was conceived by “the cleanness of his hands.”

But David isn’t talking about his righteousness with God. Before God David’s goodness was as filthy rags. David is referring to the way he’s treated Saul - his righteousness with people. David acted God’s way.

David respected Saul, even though he hadn’t been respectable. David honored God’s Anointed One, and trusted God to deal directly with Saul.

David was blameless. His hands were clean. And God rewarded him. Even when he could’ve struck Saul himself, David chose to trust God to fulfill His promises His way.

David's actions testified to his great faith.

Verse 25 “With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless...”

David had been both merciful and blameless toward Saul.

“With the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd. For You will save the humble people, but will bring down haughty looks.” The chief example being King Saul...

Verse 28 “For You will light my lamp; the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop, by my God I can leap over a wall.” David was probably on the battlefield when he wrote this Psalm. He knew with God's power and strength He was invincible.

If it's **a wall to go through** – in God's strength you can run against a troop. If it's **a wall to go over** – God can give you a lift... and a leap!

I have a sign in my office: **God greater than any problem I have!**

“As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him. His way is perfect, and His Word is proven!

“For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God? It is God who arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect.

He makes my feet like the feet of deer, and sets me on my high places.” Deer climb steep cliffs. They travel narrow

ledges and rocky terrains. They live in hard-to-get places. It protects them from predators.

I've got a couple of deer that live in my yard, but I stumble across them only on rare occasions. They're elusive. They're hard to track down.

Likewise, God made David hard-to-get. Saul couldn't track him. He was as nimble and sure-footed. God made David as elusive as a deer.

Verse 34 **“He teaches my hands to make war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.”** God blessed David in both worship and war.

“You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.

Verse 36 is one of my favorite passages. **“You enlarged my path under me; so my feet did not slip.”** In other words, God cut me some slack.

Rather than expect perfection, His will allows for a little leeway. He gives me some latitude. He doesn't fire me for a single mistake.

I love my Tom-Tom. It's a GPS navigational device. But here's what I like, when I take a wrong turn it doesn't give up on me. It recalibrates.

Rather than write me off because I'm not where I'm suppose to be – it finds where I'm at, and puts together a new set of directions. The psalmist thanks God for being his Tom-Tom. And I do too, when I make a mistake God doesn't give up on me, He enlarges the map and recalibrates.

Verse 37 “I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed. I have wounded them, so that they could not rise; they have fallen under my feet.

For You have armed me with strength for the battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. You have also given me the necks of my enemies, so that I destroyed those who hated me.

They cried out, but there was none to save; even to the LORD, but He did not answer them. Then I beat them as fine as the dust before the wind; I cast them out like dirt in the streets. You have delivered me from the strivings of the people; You have made me the head of the nations; a people I have not known shall serve me.” **David will be a mighty king.**

“As soon as they hear of me they obey me; the foreigners submit to me. The foreigners fade away, and come frightened from their hideouts.

The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted. It is God who avenges me, and subdues the peoples under me; He delivers me from my enemies. You also lift me up above those who rise against me; You have delivered me from the violent man.

Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, and sing praises to Your name. Great deliverance He gives to His king, and shows mercy to His anointed, to David and his descendants forevermore.”

This last phrase refers to 2 Samuel 7 and the Davidic Covenant. God promised David an heir who would reign

forever over Israel and establish an eternal kingdom. Matthew 1 and Luke 3 identify that heir as Jesus.

There are two books in which God reveals Himself. The first book is the Bible. The second is the book plastered across the heavens. You can go outside on a clear night, and read it – “Nature reveals God’s nature.”

Both books are discussed in **PSALM NINETEEN**. God reveals Himself in *sky and Scripture - in infinite worlds and in infallible words - in what was wrought and in what was written - in creation and in revelation.*

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” “Firmament” means “expanse.” It refers to the sky.

“Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge.” The *blazing daytime sun and brilliant nighttime stars* reveal God’s glory.

“There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” The stars speak a language everyone understands.

Ever been out in the country - away from the city lights - and gazed into the heavens on a clear night? You can see an ocean of stars – thousands.

They testify to the grandeur and glory of God. Their *elegance declares His artistry - their number His majesty – and their brilliance His beauty.*

Certainly the stars speak of God's attributes, but they may have spoken more specifically in time past. They may've proclaimed God's salvation.

The word "Zodiac" means "tent for the sun." The Hebrews called it the "Mazzaroth." The word occurs once in the Bible, Job 38:32. The zodiac is the path the Earth travels in its orbit around the sun. There're 12 stations.

I believe these stations and their accompanying constellations were originally named by God as a way of revealing His plan of salvation.

Genesis 1:14 tells us God created "signs and seasons."

Psalms 147:4 tell us God names each star. Look at the constellations and nothing about them resembles their title. I can look at Orion for months and never see a hunter? The designations are arbitrary.

Yet the names of the constellations are universal. They're known around the world. I believe these names originated with God.

The ancient zodiac began with Virgo, the virgin - and ended with Leo, the lion. Jesus was born of a virgin, but He returns as a Lion.

This may've been the origin of the sphinx. It had the head of a woman and the body of a lion. It starts out as a virgin and ends up a lion.

The second sign of the zodiac was Libra – or scales. It was symbolic of a price unpaid – our debt of sin. This necessitated Jesus coming to earth.

Three decans - or accompanying constellations surround the scales... the Southern Cross - the Victima (or slain victim) – the Northern Crown. They all speak of the cross - God's answer to the unbalanced scales.

It's been said, "[The Stars are God's Oldest Testament.](#)"

When God promised salvation to Abraham He pointed to the heavens, and said "[count the stars.](#)" "[Count](#)" means "[to place in proper sequence.](#)"

In Galatians 3:8 Paul tells us that God preached the Gospel to Abraham. Perhaps He did so by pointing to the stars.

Of course, let me add to my speculation a warning. Before you delve into this, remember not all the constellations are as easily deciphered.

And there's a reason. Through the centuries Satan has distorted the zodiac, and devised an occult interpretation. We call it "*astrology.*"

And the Bible strictly forbids any dabbling in the lies of astrology.

Verse 4, "[In \(the heavens\) He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race...](#)" The sun moves across the horizon with the energy and enthusiasm of a husband after his honeymoon.

["Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple..."](#) Here's the

contrast. The Gospel in the stars has been blurred and distorted, but God's Word is perfect. There's only so much you can learn of God through nature. Ultimate revelation is His inerrant Word.

Verse 8 **“The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes...”**

When you read God's Word with open eyes the light comes on! Everything is clearer and brighter. The resolution gets sharper.

Become a Christian and suddenly you view life in high definition. Here's a description. **“Heaven above was deeper blue, Earth around was brighter green, something lived in every hue, Christ-less eyes had never seen.”**

“The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.”

Here're six reasons why David desires God's Word...

Its **effect** – it cleanses. Its **reliability** – it's true and right. Its **worth** - more than gold. Its **sweetness** – sweeter than honey. Its **warning** – His Word warns. Its **reward** – even in recession it still pays great dividends.

Verse 12, **“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant also from**

presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression.” There are two kinds sin: **secret sins** we cover up, conceal. **Presumptuous sins** we boast about. They’re a source of pride.

Some sins we know are sins so we hide them. Other sins we’re oblivious to how evil they are and we wear them on our sleeve.

David asks God to cleanse him from both types of sin.

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”

Here’s the key to a holy life. If you get control of your **tongue** or *what you say* - and your **mind** or *what you think* - you’ll be pleasing God.

It’s all about the “**words of my mouth**” and “**meditation of my heart.**”

PSALM TWENTY was sung by the priests as the army marched out into battle! Psalm 20 also needs to be sung by the church. We too are at war. We’re in a spiritual battle. This psalm has lessons applicable to us.

“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you; may He send you help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you out of Zion; may He remember all your offerings, and accept your burnt sacrifice. **Selah.**” Nothing was as terrifying as going to battle with sin hanging over your head. There was no assurance of God’s

blessing. This is why the priest reminded the army of God's forgiveness. *He remembers your offerings and your sacrifice.*

In fact, one of Satan's tricks is to tempt us – then condemn us in the heat of battle. And if he can condemn us, he can defeat us. Before we do battle we need to be reminded that we're forgiven in Christ Jesus.

“May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose.” If God gives us His nature – our desires will be His desires.

“We will rejoice in your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners! May the LORD fulfill all your petitions. Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.”

The Law of Moses prohibited Israel's kings from accumulating horses. In some eyes this put Israel at a disadvantage. Chariots were cutting edge weaponry. This was like an army of muskets against machine guns. But Israel had a secret weapon! *God* made up for any lack of weaponry.

The church today seems equally disadvantaged. It looks like we have no chance. The devil controls the media, the lawmakers, and the school boards. His resources make ours look meager, but like Israel of old, we also have a secret weapon. If we trust in the Lord we'll win the battle!

Verse 8 “They have bowed down and fallen; but we have risen and stand upright. Save, LORD! May the King answer

us when we call.”

PSALM TWENTY-ONE complements the previous psalm. Psalm 20 is *the prayer before Israel fights*. Psalm 21 is *the praise after Israel wins*.

Psalm 20 is Israel's preparation. Psalm 21 is Israel's celebration.

Verse 1 “The king shall have joy in Your strength, O LORD; and in Your salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! You have given him his heart's desire, and have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah.

“For You meet him with the blessings of goodness; You set a crown of pure gold upon his head. He asked life from You, and You gave it to him - length of days forever and ever. His glory is great in Your salvation; honor and majesty You have placed upon him. For You have made him most blessed forever; You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence.

For the king trusts in the LORD, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved.” God never fails the man who trusts Him.

“Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. You shall make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger; the LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them.” The battle is won. The king is rounding up his fleeing enemies. It's time for them to be judge and punish for their crimes.

Here's a picture of what happens when Jesus returns to

earth.

“Their offspring You shall destroy from the earth, and their descendants from among the sons of men. For they intended evil against You; they devised a plot which they are not able to perform.” When will evil men learn any plot against God and God’s people is destined to fail?

“Therefore You will make them turn their back; You will make ready Your arrows on Your string toward their faces. Be exalted, O LORD, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power.”