



**Studies in Psalms** by [John T Polk II](#)  
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalm 20

10/11/12

Vs. 1-5 give "best wishes;"

Vs. 6-9 give the only resolutions.

Verses 1-4 seem to be a pattern for prayer, and verse 5 could indicate that it is designed to be prayed publicly. This would be like Jesus teaching His disciples to pray by giving a prayer outline (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4). *Reciting these verses is not prayer, but letting these thoughts guide one's own expression is prayer.* Psalm 20:1-4 express the desire that God would accept the others praying in this same worship time, and respond by: answering, defending, sending help, strengthening, remembering their offerings, accepting their sacrifices, granting according to their heart, and fulfilling their purposes. God is not pictured as a "genii in a bottle," but that worshipers must properly approach God, as He has directed (John 4:24; Psalm 88:2; 95:2; 100:2). Job understood that "a hypocrite could not come before Him" (Job 13:16). Even under Moses' Law, God required more than the sacrifices of worship (which He had specified), but also a life of obedience consistent with His principles (Micah 6:6-8). The prayer's final request of God is in Psalm 20:5. Jesus taught that requesting forgiveness without giving forgiveness is vain (Matthew 6:14-15).

God's salvation is from Heaven, not in the devices or strengths of humans (Psalm 20:6). Military might is represented by horses and chariots (Psalm 20:7), and Israelite kings were forbidden to trust in such, but should have depended upon God and His Word (Deuteronomy 17:14-18). Judah left the LORD by trusting in an assortment of soothsayers, foreigners, silver and gold, horses, chariots, and idols (Isaiah 2:1, 6-9). One may choose to associate with those who bow before human might and power, or stand upright by the mightier power of the name of the LORD. The former is defeated before the battle, the latter is victorious without a fight! David knew this truth when he conquered Goliath with "the battle *is* the LORD'S, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:45-50).

It does no good to pray for God's help when we will not trust Him for the answer! "For according to the number of your cities were your gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to that shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal. So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble. What has My beloved to do in My house, Having done lewd deeds with many? And the holy flesh has passed from you. When you do evil, then you rejoice" (Jeremiah 11:13-15). Many ignore what God says about proper worship, but want God to hear their prayers of need. Listen carefully: "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

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***All Scriptures and comments, unless otherwise noted, are based on the New King James Version.***