



## ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH

APRIL 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### PRAYERS AND REFLECTION

#### BASED ON PSALM 20 – A Prayer for Victory



*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> The Lord answer you in the day of trouble!  
The name of the God of Jacob protect you!
- <sup>2</sup> May he send you help from the sanctuary  
and give you support from Zion.
- <sup>3</sup> May he remember all your offerings  
and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices. *Selah*
- <sup>4</sup> May he grant you your heart's desire  
and fulfill all your plans.
- <sup>5</sup> May we shout for joy over your victory  
and in the name of our God set up our banners.  
May the Lord fulfill all your petitions.
- <sup>6</sup> Now I know that the Lord will help his anointed;  
he will answer him from his holy heaven  
with mighty victories by his right hand.
- <sup>7</sup> Some take pride in chariots and some in horses,  
but our pride is in the name of the Lord our God.
- <sup>8</sup> They will collapse and fall,  
but we shall rise and stand upright.
- <sup>9</sup> Give victory to the king, O Lord;  
answer us when we call.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Lord of Lords, and Light of all Nations, I come before you today with a heart full of hope and faith, trusting in your mighty power. As I seek to know you more, I ask that you hear my prayer in the world's time of need, and grant what my heart desires according to the plans you have on my life. Lord, I pray that you look over and care for your creation, humanity and the environment, shielding us all from harm and guiding us through each challenge we face. Lift up those in authority and give them your wisdom to lead us with justice and righteousness.

As we struggle, remind us that our true strength comes from you. Help us to place our trust in you rather than ourselves. As we pray in the name of the risen Christ Jesus, may we rejoice in the victories we gain through your love, compassion and grace for us as we offer our thanks and praise for your unfailing support and the faithfulness that lights our footsteps along the path of victory. Amen

## **PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS AND PRAISE**

- For guiding the pathway of victory over death - I thank you.
- For mentors and Godly words from the wise – I thank you
- For a heart that desires a healed relationship with God and those around me whom I struggle with – I thank you
- For being able to see joy in sadness, ways to move beyond the boundaries, - I thank you
  
- I give you praise when I feel despondent – the light of Christ shines
- I give you praise when the sick are healed, and the earth ‘breathes’ – Yaweh’s breath of life is with us
- I give you praise for the people’s whose gift is encouragement and strength of faith when times are low – the gift of the Spirit is in them
- I give you praise for the sounds of music, poetry, colours to brighten a dull space and the light of the candle that reminds us of your continual presence.

## **PRAYER POINTS FOR PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

- For not trusting your victory over death in the resurrection of Christ
- For making rash decisions and not being patient to hear your leadership
- For not caring enough about the consequences of my actions or inactions
- For being too gloomy and not looking for the joy of celebrating the life and teachings of Jesus.
- When my pride is in myself and what I perceive I have done on my own and not because of God’s intervention in my life.

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

In the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom; for God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. Hear then Christ’s word of grace to us: ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ Amen

## **REFLECTION**

Psalms 20 is one of those psalms which inspires and encourages those who read it to pray with a heart ready to know that all isn’t lost there is hope and an understanding there is victory and an advocate ready to stand with you in your times of struggle. You are not alone. David isn’t writing this psalm from a perspective of anxiety or desperation, but confidently knowing that God’s victory will be decisive in the real world. This is the kind of humility that trusts in the assurance, ‘Ask and it will be given.’ It can be understood as a communal prayer, highlighting the importance of unity when we’re asking for God’s support.

It's beginning is a declaration of confidence that God hears our prayers. We're reassured that when we pray to God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, we are heard and in God's time answered. This is a great reminder that even though we may take leave of our faith in God, God doesn't take leave of God's faith in us. Community prayer like we experience in worship stresses the strength we find in one another when we gather together in faith, collectively praying in unison as one voice – God hears our prayers.

As we move through the psalm, we begin to feel the hope in God build in us that we all long for but often don't name out loud unless it's in a prayer, a song, poetry, or a reading such as this one. What are we praying for? We ask the Lord to send Spiritual help or to intervene – sometimes heavenly sacred help during a time of fellowship or as we celebrate the Eucharist. We do this because we believe in God's spiritual assistance, knowing that God's presence is tangible, especially in difficult situations; just think for a moment about the man who's blindness was healed after his encounter with Jesus.

An interesting point this about this psalm is in the way it contrasts worldly efforts versus God's divine aid given to us. Later verses remind us that some, trust in the strength of armies or the might of chariots; however our true strength doesn't come from us, our true strength comes from trusting our Lord. This is a powerful thing for us to remember in today's climate of misinformation and disinformation and trusting the word of the 'other' rather than what we know to be true from the Wisdom of God. The old adage of 'if it seems to good to be true, then it probably is too good to be true' seems to fit in well here. David wants to encourage us to place our trust in God's unfailing love and power instead.

Psalm 20s final verse affirms we can have confidence in God's deliverance. The voices of the community proclaim their faith that God will grant their requests and bring them the victory they ask for. Is this something which you're comfortable doing and experiencing? This idea may stir us along when we're facing our battles throughout our life at the personal level, but also at the level of our faith community – we are being urged not to give up on God, instead allow God to work within us, change us in word and deed.

So, at the end of the day we are all invited to embrace the commitment to a prayerful obedience to God. We are called to remember that, however bleak our circumstances may seem, our trust should not waver in God's promises. Through communal prayer, and fellowship, we grow stronger as a community, supporting one another while affirming that our ultimate help comes from the Lord God our Creator of heaven and earth.

I hope that this psalm remains a timeless expression of faith that God is always with you ready to intervene when asked to, and that you at all times are hosting the Presence who will bring you the victory you so longed for.

## **INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

Dearest Lord God, help me to hear your voice every day. To hear it in the words and stories of the scriptures. To hear your voice in the songs and prayers spoken in isolation and during worship. Oh, how I long to hear your voice through the advice shared by church

leaders, family and friends. Even more Lord, I long to hear your voice of wisdom through the leadership of world leaders and organisations. Bring your victory to the places of hostility and war. Help us all to hear your voice expressing victorious wisdom as part of your church in community today and every day. In the name of the Spirit of Christ Jesus amen.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_pgGgHVxPg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_pgGgHVxPg)



Source: [Musixmatch](#) Songwriters: Jeffrey Thomas Pardo / Jonathan Burton Lowry / Chad Michael Mattson  
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### **UNSPOKEN - GOD HELP ME**

**... When I'm at my end**

Tears pouring down  
And I can't see past  
What's in front of me now

**... When it's all too much**

For this heart to take  
There's one name I call  
One prayer that I pray

**... God, help me now**

Feels like there's no way out  
But Jesus, You're faithful and able  
And You've never once let me down  
God, help me now

**... No matter the pain**

My heart may feel  
No wound cuts too deep  
For Your love to heal

**... So when fear comes to find me**

And doubt starts to grow

I lift up my eyes

I know just where to go

**... God, help me now**

Feels like there's no way out  
But Jesus, You're faithful and able  
And You've never once let me down  
God, help me now (oh)

**... No one else (no one else)**

No one else (no one else)  
Has the power that's in Your name  
Nowhere else (nowhere else)  
Nowhere else (nowhere else)  
Can I run to, and be saved

**... God, help me now**

Feels like there's no way out  
But Jesus, You're faithful and able  
You've never once let me down (ooh)  
God, help me now  
God, help me now