

Psalm 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

Analysis

We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions. This verse shifts from petition to confident anticipation—the people declare their future celebration as if God has already granted victory. 'Thy salvation' (bishu'atekha, בֵּשׁוּעָתֶךָ) uses the Hebrew root yasha, the same root as 'Jesus' (Yeshua), meaning deliverance or rescue. The verse anticipates not just victory but salvation—deliverance that comes from God alone.

'Set up our banners' (nidgol, נִידָּגֵל) refers to raising military standards or flags in triumph. Ancient armies used banners to rally troops and signal victory. Here, the banners are raised 'in the name of our God'—the victory is attributed to YHWH, not to human military prowess. This echoes Moses lifting up the rod of God (Exodus 17:15, where Moses built an altar called 'Jehovah-nissi,' meaning 'The LORD is my banner').

The final clause, 'the LORD fulfil all thy petitions,' expresses confidence that God will answer the king's prayers. The Hebrew yemale (אַלְמָלֵ) means to fill completely, to bring to fullness. The verse teaches that true rejoicing comes not from circumstances but from faith in God's salvation. For Christians, our ultimate banner is the cross of Christ, where salvation was accomplished. We rejoice not in uncertain earthly victories but in the certain triumph of Christ over sin, death, and Satan.

Historical Context

Banner-raising was a common ancient military practice signifying victory, territorial claims, or tribal identity. Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonian reliefs depict armies carrying standards into battle and raising them after conquest. Israel adopted similar practices but reinterpreted them theologically—their banner was YHWH Himself, not a tribal emblem or royal insignia.

The Exodus generation learned this lesson when Moses raised his rod during the battle against Amalek (Exodus 17:8-16). Victory came not from military strategy but from Moses' uplifted hands—symbolic dependence on God. Subsequently, Moses named the altar 'Jehovah-nissi,' establishing a theological principle that Israel's banner, standard, and rallying point was YHWH Himself.

In the temple liturgy, this verse would have been sung antiphonally—the congregation responding to priestly intercession with confident declarations of faith. This pattern appears throughout the Psalms and reflects Israel's worship tradition where communal faith was expressed through responsive singing. The confidence expressed here ('we will rejoice') isn't presumption but covenantal faith—trusting God's promises even before seeing their fulfillment. This anticipatory faith became a hallmark of biblical religion and is commended throughout Scripture (Hebrews 11:1).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can you cultivate the faith to rejoice in God's salvation before seeing your circumstances change?
2. What 'banner' or identity do you rally around—is it truly Christ's victory or something else?
3. In what ways have you seen God fulfill your petitions completely, beyond what you asked?
4. How does understanding 'the LORD is my banner' transform your approach to spiritual battles?
5. What would it look like to publicly 'set up banners' in praise to God in your daily life?

Interlinear Text

אֱלֹהִים יְנֻנוּ וּבָשָׂם בַּיּוֹשֵׁב וְעַתָּה בְּנֵבֶת הַהֵּן
We will rejoice in thy salvation and in the name of our God
H7442 H3444 H8034 H430

מִשְׁאָלֹתֵינוּ כָּל אֵין הַיְמָלֵא נָדָג לְ
we will set up our banners fulfil the LORD all thy petitions
H1713 H4390 H3068 H3605 H4862

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 17:15 (Parallel theme): And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi:

Psalms 60:4 (Parallel theme): Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.

1 Samuel 1:17 (References God): Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.

Isaiah 61:10 (Salvation): I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered

me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

Isaiah 25:9 (Salvation): And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Psalms 9:14 (Salvation): That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

Psalms 118:15 (Salvation): The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

Psalms 35:9 (Salvation): And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

Psalms 13:5 (Salvation): But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.

Luke 1:47 (Salvation): And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.