

**Psalm 44: 1-26; “Command Victories for Jacob”, A Sermon to Strengthen and Cheer
God’s Dear People following the loss of the Presidential Election of 2020,
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall, on January 10th, 2021.**

The events which took place in our nation this past week have dismayed us. What should we do? How should we think about what has happened? In this message I want to show you how we should pray, in light of these dire political events which have come to us. Unfortunately, I believe that these great difficulties will continue coming to our nation, if we do not repent of our sins, and turn to God for help and salvation, in greater numbers. We all want to see God come and intervene on our behalf, but are we willing to pray in the way that these godly men did? I believe that it is essential to our spiritual well-being as a nation that we pray.

I believe that it is also essential to our spiritual well-being personally, as well. Looking more carefully at this text we see that, 1st of all – We should pray remembering the great things that God has done for our nation. (verses 1-3) 2nd – We should pray asking God to command victories for us His people. (verses 4-8) 3rd – We should pray recognizing what God has done to to humble us, and ask that He will awake and arise to help us. (verses 9-26)

1st – We should pray remembering what God has done for our great nation.

“We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days, in the days of old: You drove out the nations with Your hand, but them You planted; You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out.” “For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favored them.” So the sons of Korah begin their prayer with remembrance. This is what we have heard with our own ears, O God, what You have done. Our fathers have told us. And even so, we as fathers, ought to tell our children of the great things that God has done for our country, from its founding, for these things are true, no matter how much modern theological and political liberals want to revise them and change them.

We ought to let no man depreciate the value of them. This country was originally founded by men and women who were fleeing persecution for their faith, in Great Britain, in the early 1600s. The issue in those days, as it always has been for Christians, was doing what the Lord has commanded in the Bible, in respect to worship and life. The reformation from Popery and Roman Catholic doctrine, had been proceeding on, from the teaching and preaching of Calvin and Luther and Zwingle, in many countries of Europe. And the word of the Lord was running swiftly and being glorified in many people. The Reformers had also influenced many people in England in the time of Henry the 8th, in the early to middle 1500s, and so that there were a number of attempts to bring reformation to the Church in England in those years.

There were, in England, in the early 1600s four major classes or parties who professed a relationship to Christ: the Catholics, who adhered to the church of Rome; the members of the English Episcopal Church; the Puritans, and the Separatists or Independents. It was people who were Puritans who were the Founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It was people the Separatists who founded the Plymouth Colony. It was a great work of God to enable these Christian brethren to found the first colonies of this country. We know these people, also, as the Pilgrims. They would not compromise the truth. They were people who gave up everything that they had, in England, and first moved to Delft, Holland for a few years, due to persecution, and then afterwards to our land.

Their pastor John Robinson, a great and godly man, did not go to the New World himself, but as the day drew near for many in his congregation to leave, they held a day of public humiliation to see the Lord’s blessing on their endeavor. This was the last day of prayer and fasting that they had together with their pastor. And on this memorable occasion, he spoke to them from the words in Ezra – “And there, at the river, by Ahava, I proclaimed a fast, that we might humble ourselves before God, and seek of Him a right way for us, and for our children, and for all of our substance.”

Pastor Robinson said – “We are now, ere long, to part asunder; and the Lord only knoweth whether ever I shall live to see your faces again.” “But whether the Lord hath appointed this or not, I charge you, before God and His blessed angels, to follow me no farther than I have followed Christ; and if God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive an truth by my ministry; and I am confident that the Lord hath more light and truth yet to break forth out of His holy word.” At the conclusion of his discourse, those who were to leave were feasted at their pastor’s house, where, after “tears” warm and gushing from the fulness of their hearts, the song of praise and thanksgiving was raised; and “truly”, says one who listening: “It was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard.” “But the parting hour has come.”

Winslow, in his writing, says – “So they left that goodly and pleasant city, which had been their resting place near twelve years.” “But they knew they were Pilgrims, and looked not much on those those things and quieted their spirits.” I have read this to show you that even though beset with many difficulties and many trials, over many years, that God enabled this little band of brethren to finally reach the New World, and to establish a colony where they could worship God in a way they believed according to the word of God, and that, according to their consciences, was most glorifying to Him. It was God leading these faithful Christians to go to an entirely new land, by faith, and put down roots, and live their lives unto God. This was where the religious freedom which we prize so much today had its beginnings. Through many difficulties and trials, God granted them success.

God also knew and He had ordained that the Pilgrims would come to the New World to preach the gospel to the Native Americans that they found there, when they came to this land. This we should remember, and give thanks for what God for our great salvation being brought to those who were sitting in spiritual darkness. We should believe that if God made a way for them, both in worship and in their witness for Him, that He will also do the same for us. I want you to take notice of the way that verses 1-3 of our text are worded. It was God, verse 2, who drove out the nations with His hand, but planted Israel in the land of Canaan. It was God who afflicted the peoples, and cast them out of their land, so that Israel could settle there, and not be molested in their worship.

And it says in verse 3 – “For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was God’s right hand, His arm, and the light of His countenance, that brought all of these good things about for them. It was because He favored them. In the founding of our country, it was not the intention of the Pilgrims to drive out the inhabitants of the land; the native Americans. It was that they would come to know Christ and that they too, would be governed by His word. Men such as Roger Williams, John Eliot, and Thomas Mayhew of Nantucket, and his son, Thomas Jr., reached out to the Indians around them. They wanted to persuade them of the truth of God’s being the only true and living God. And they made every attempt to bring to the gospel, and through their being saved, to see them brought under God’s good spiritual government.

After he arrived in Massachusetts in 1650, Mayhew persuaded an Indian named Hiacoomes to trust in Christ, and he began to preach to his tribe the gospel of Christ. Through their joint efforts, other Indians were won to Christ, and in the short space of 5 years, 39 men, and many women, had joined his meetings. The next year the number was increased to 199, men, women, and children; and in the following year two hundred and eighty three persons, had renounced their false gods, and a school was established, which was attended by thirty children. A town was projected to carry on things in a civil and religious way, the better; and a covenant of faith had been drawn up and adopted.” God had commanded victory for Jacob, for His spiritual Israel.

This is what you and I should remember in the midst of the trouble that has come to us in this land, in our government, and with the Coronavirus, and with so many people promoting what is false in doctrine and practice in the churches in this land. We should remember God’s sovereignty over all people and all nations. We should continue to preach this truth to everyone around us, and

we should attempt to bring them under God's good government. Will you not remember the days of old; the days that followed the ones that I just described to you? That it was God who enabled this country to fight a revolutionary war against the tyrannical government of Great Britain, and to win that war? At many points, it seemed as if they would lose that fight, but the sacrifice was made by men like General George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and a host of other Christian men, and God commanded victory. Many men of great moral principle, were led, with God's help, to fight, and to win that war, so that this great country could come into being.

Many other wars were fought in the history of our nations which could be recounted; the Civil War, the 1st and 2nd World Wars, and indeed whatever victories were won in any war, was because God commanded it. Let us remember this; let us study history, and let us never forget it, but pass it on to our children, the great things that God has done through men devoted to Him.

2nd – We should pray asking God to command victories for us His people, even now.

(verses 4-8)

“You are my King, O God; command victories for Jacob.” “Through You we will push down (push back) our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us.” “For I will not trust in my bow, nor shall my sword save me.” Now, this is a truth which we must remember at this time, and we must learn to pray in just this way. Let us not believe in our hearts that we are defeated, in regard to our good cause of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us not give up our promotion of the truth of the Bible, and of the great and powerful truths and doctrines of the Christian faith. Look at what great things God did for Israel of Old. Listen to Exodus 10: 1 and 2 – “Now the Lord said to Moses, ‘Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine before him, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the Lord.’”

Sometimes, when the church sees initial victories, she also sees losses, and it may cause some to fear that all will be lost in terms of the forward progress of Christ's kingdom. It shall not be so, for our great God is a King over all the earth. He is not only a sovereign who rules over all people and all things in a general sense, He is also a sovereign in His ruling concerning all the victories that His people will experience, in regard to the Church's forward advance with truth and the gospel. Ultimately, Old Testament Israel did not gain possession of the land of Canaan by their own sword, we are told here, even though they most definitely used the sword to conquer the enemies. It was God who granted them success. Similarly, we as God's saints have not gained possession of this good land of Christ's spiritual kingdom by our fighting for it. Although Jesus says in Matthew 11: 12 – “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.” And Luke 16: 16 says – “Since that time everyone is pressing into it.” It does require great determination to get Christ, and to get into the kingdom of God. Even though that is so, it is only God who can give success to our entering His kingdom, and success to our fighting to advance Christ's kingdom. Using physical weapons will not avail anything in the final analysis. Our own determination to forward His kingdom is not enough. God must command victories for Jacob.

Christ says that His kingdom is not of this world, or my servants would be fighting. The apostle Paul says – The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high things that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.” This does not mean that Christians do not sometimes have to fight in wars to preserve their freedom, or defend their country. It means that when those weapons have to be used, that we do not trust in our own sword, nor we think that our own arm saved us, when we are victorious. But our victories are always from the Lord. It is on this basis that we fervently pray to God asking that He would bless us in our battles; both spiritual and national. We pray for God to command victory in our battles in righteous wars for our nation. We pray also for God to command victory in and our battles against sin. We ask God to establish righteousness in our own life, and in the life

of others around us. Command victories for Jacob. That is, we should understand that it is through God that we will push back our adversaries; both our enemies without, and our enemies within this country.

This was the problem with what happened the other day at our nation's Capital, when the large numbers of people came to support President Trump and to protest the election results. It was not a wrong thing to do, in and of itself, if it could have shown respect and regard for men already elected to government. But when President Trump told them at the rally to "Hit them hard" in their protests, some overly zealous followers took this literally, and they right away went and broke some of the windows of the Capital and then they took over the chambers of government, and 4 people ended up dying.

Some of the people who entered the Capital acted sinfully and badly. Others were actually praying to the Lord while they were in those chambers, and they were not acting badly. It may have been wrong for them to have entered the Capital building through the broken windows, but they simply wanted our Legislators to do something to investigate the election fraud. Sadly, all of this mistaken zeal did tremendous damage to the whole cause of those who are concerned to fight against the politically liberal take-over of our nation. Many good people do not want to see wicked men in government. They do not want to see wicked laws and policies enacted. But those who entered the Capital did not act in a God-glorifying way in this particular case.

I do not know President Trump's heart, but I wonder if some of the problems that have arisen for him as President is because he has not prayed, seeing Christ as his King, and asked the Father, that He would command victories for our country, for our dear nation; victories that would glorify God rather than him? I say this out of love and respect for him. He has done many good things for us during the time of his administration. I suspect that he was assuming that since he was right in his cause of putting America first, that he would be able continue to lead without really being saved from his own sins himself. If he was truly saved, he would truly be humbled for his own sins. He would put away his pride and his calling his political opponents bad names. He would speak and show forth the reality that he is a man of prayer; that he depends upon God for his victories in doing right things. But sadly, this has not been seen in him, in the way that God would have it to be seen in him.

If this is true, you can see then, how and why things unfolded in the way that they did this past Wednesday. The other thing that needs to be said, is a word of admonition to the conservative people in this country. Conservatism is a good political cause when it is Biblical. When it is not, it is often that the conservative man or woman wants to leave God out of the public discourse; out of politics, and out of government. They may leave God out, but God cannot bless them except in proportion to their adherence to His word. A political conservative who does not know God, does not really recognize God's authority over them, or the nation that they love. They will work to establish good things for people in this country; peace, prosperity, and sometimes even good-will among men. They will punish evil doers. But if they do not believe that God rules over men and nations, they will not recognize the fact that it is God who alone can give peace and quietness to a nation, when a good number of the people in government lead righteous and godly lives. Biblically, we can even go farther, and say that if the President is a godly man, even if many in the country are not righteous, yet the Lord can still use that man to turn the people back to Himself.

This is what He did with Josiah in 2nd Chronicles 34. He was successful in turning the people away from their idols because he prayed to the Lord, even while he was young, 8 years old. He then went on to reform the nation. So we see from this, that if the President, or any man or woman in prominent political office is willing to be guided by the truth of the Bible, and pray that God would command victories for the cause that they are undertaking to bring about, He will do great things for them and the country, according to His sovereign purpose and will. Only God can command victories for any person or any people. Through You, O God, we will push back our adversaries; through Your name we will trample down, those who rise up against us. But when we do so, we

will do it by New Covenant grace, and having the love of Christ working in our heart and seen in our actions.

There is a right way, in these New Testament times, to go about trampling down the cause of the wicked. And it is not by the violence of small groups of people taking matters into their own hands to try to threaten or override their government's legally constituted proceedings, as happened the other day. This using violent and destructive actions accomplished nothing good. Did Christ ever command such a thing? No, He said that we should love our enemies and pray for those who spitefully use us. He said that we should submit to the governing authorities. The only time that God has blessed revolutions in the history of the world is when righteous men took counsel together, and then jointly, in the fear of God, took actions against a King who was acting as a tyrant. This is what happened in the English Civil War in 1647 and this is what happened in our own American Revolution.

And all these righteous actions which opposed King Charles the 1st and King George were taken for the good of all of the citizens by people already in positions of authority in Britain and in what would become the United States. In both cases, the issue was unlimited submission to tyrants was seen as a false policy of Kings who ruled by tyranny. That is what brought about righteous revolution against such arbitrary government. In 1770, the Reverend Samuel Cooke preached an election sermon at Cambridge in the presence of the Lieutenant-Governor and Commander in Chief ; the Honorable His Majesty's Council, and the Honorable House of Representatives of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New England, a sermon from 2nd Samuel 23: 3 and 4 – "He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." "And he shall be like the light of morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain."

He says – "Rulers are appointed for this very end – to be ministers of God for good." "The people have a right to expect this from them, and to require it, not as an act of grace, but as their unquestionable due." "It is the express or implicit condition upon which they were chosen, and continued in public office, – that they attend upon this very thing." "Rulers of every degree, are in a measure above the fear of man; but are equally with others under the restraints of the Divine law." "The Almighty has not divested Himself of His own absolute authority, by permitting subordinate government among men – He allows none to rule, otherwise, than under Him, and in His fear." "And without a true fear of God, justice will be found to be but an empty name." (end of quote) It was because of continued unrecognized tyranny on the part of the king of England in the things imposed upon the people here in America, that eventually they came to believe as a body politic, having definite elected leaders among them, that they would not comply with what the king and the English government over them, were asking for, from them. It was unjust, and they would not comply.

This, my brethren is obeying God rather than men. Any refusal to submit to human government must done in the fear of God, rather than men. We must have God's laws and government over us, in greater consideration, than that which any king or other authority in government commands. Our submission to the government is in the sight of God, always realizing our accountability to Him, and the leader's accountability to Him, and to us, the people in a righteous sense as well. This is how we also need to see things in relation to the time period that we are now coming into, in this country, with so many wicked people taking the reins of government. We will be submissive and honor all good government. We will not submit to evil, unrighteous tyranny, and have our God-given rights taken away from us without protest; without holy resistance. Let us see to it that each of us understands these good principles of truth, and walks in holy love, and in the fear of the Lord in regard to government on all levels.

3rd – We should pray recognizing what God has done to to humble us, ask that He will awake and arise to help us.

I have felt for some weeks now that it would be good for me to preach from this particular Psalm if we lost this recent Presidential election. The reason that I was thinking about this Psalm, particularly, is because it gives us the prayer and contemplation of the sons of Korah in light of God's having cast them off, and His having put them to shame, as it says in verse 9. Verse 10 tells us that these men who were praying, said that they were made by God to turn back from the enemy, and those who hated them, had taken spoil for themselves from them. This appears to me as what has happened to our dear nation in light of the Democrats coming to power, during and following the recent election. I personally do not believe that the election was conducted fairly. I personally believe that there was considerable election fraud in the swing states on the night of the election.

I also personally believe that this fraud could have, and should have, been looked into; both by those in Congress, and those in the Supreme Court, so there could have been a real determination of who won the election. Instead there was a dismissing of the charges; a deliberate overlooking of the problem, and there has been a sweeping of it under the carpet. I believe that if these things are not come to terms with, righteously, in the future, that we will increasingly be given over to unrighteous men, who will lead our country down to great moral weakness, and eventually we could lose our Constitutional rights. Our enemies, both within and outside of this great nation, may attempt to hold us in a spiritual and physical captivity through unreasonable laws and mandates, until the Lord decides that we have learned what we should learn through these awful things; that is, to see that He must command our victories, for them to take place.

But there is something else that we need to take notice of here as well, and that is that all of these terrible things had come upon the faithful in Israel of that day, but they had not forgotten God, nor had they dealt falsely with His covenant, they say in verse 17. Their heart had not turned back nor had their steps departed from His way. They tell God in prayer that they had been severely broken in the place of jackals, and they had been covered with a feeling of the shadow of death. (verse 19) Yes, all of these things really happened to the true believers of that day. But you will notice, that in the midst of this, they recognized that God was the King, providentially ordering what they were going through, for their good. They had not become angry with God for having dealt with them in this way. They did, however, protest their innocence and they asserted their righteousness.

If they had forgotten the name of God, or stretched out their hands to a foreign god, would not God search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. And yet they were being killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter. This they did not understand. But they did not give up. They did not give over praying when they did not understand. Instead they cry out to Him all the more! Awake, O Lord! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! And do not cast us off forever. Do not hide Your face from us. Do not forget our affliction and our oppression. Our soul is bowed down to the dust and our body clings to the ground. Arise for our help. We may have to learn to pray this way ourselves, brethren. Let the events of recent days lead us to this kind of submission to God, and this kind of prayer for our nation, and for the furtherance of Christ's cause, and His Kingdom through us.