

Sunday the 3rd of January 2021
We read from the Bible Psalm 20
Theme: 180 degrees turn

Introduction

Today is the first Sunday of a New Year. We do not know what this year will bring us. The Olympic Games in Tokyo? New elections in the Netherlands and a change of politics? Vaccines against corona and normal life back? A new job? Positive news from the IND? We don't know.

A German philosopher Stefan Klein wrote a book: The formulae for good luck. He says that every person can influence his circumstances. So this means you can arrange your own happiness. Is this true?

The Bible shows us another way. We read this in Psalm 20.

We read about a situation of war. Everything is uncertain. The Jewish rabbi's put the psalm in a bundle of psalms of King David. But verse 3 tells us about the temple. And the temple was built after his death. So this psalm must tell us about another king. Probably Hiskiah (Isaiah 37,14-20). The army of the Assyrian king Sennacherib was before the city of Jerusalem. All the inhabitants were afraid. What can be done? The Israelites pray and tell God about their fears. This turns their lives 180 degrees: the contents, the fulfilling and the attitude of prayer.

The contents of prayer

There is a lot of pressure among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Everything is uncertain. It may be the same for us. Months of corona crisis are behind us. What can we expect? New problems? Illness? New threats?

This psalm shows us that it is the best to pray. Then we focus on what God can do. In the verses 3-5 all is about the actions of God. In every verse 2 times. So totally 3 times 2 actions. It is full of actions from God!! He can send, think and give! So don't expect the solution from your own action or wishful thinking. This gives a lot of stress. We can not manage our own situation. But expect help from God. Trust Him! So don't focus on what you should do, but focus on the possibilities God has. It will change your life completely. It is a turn of 180 degrees!

The fulfilling of prayer

When your focus changes, your heart changes too. We read in verse 6 that the shields are hung out. If you pray to God and focus on His plans, then you know that He never gives up His plans. His Kingdom will come. And if we pray according to His plans and if we ask to be a part of His plans, then we have immense hope. He will answer us. He will not forget us. He loves us. He did not give up this sinful and bad world, but He gave His only Son to rescue us and to bring this world to a better and peaceful time. His plans are not ended. He has plans for you!

The attitude of prayer

This changes everything. King Hiskiah was afraid because his enemy was strong. But he wrote a letter and laid it down in the temple before the face of God. He expected help from God. It gave him rest and made him strong. God saved him and the people in a special way from the enemies. King Hiskiah did not trust in wagons and horses, but trusted in God. You read this in verse 8. So my question is: whom do you want to trust in this new year?

Conclusion

God can help us without any means, like the situation during the time of King Hiskiah. He can use means like the situation during the time of Gideon and Joshua. And God can work through means we use in the church: the alpha course, meetings, the internet. And sometimes He works straight away without any means.

But the question is: do you focus on what you do or do you focus on what God can do?

Someone said: it is like a bird; use your wings, but float on the wind. Focus on our God in this New Year!

God bless you!

Pastor/minister Jan Bosch.