



Lord, in your strength the king rejoices, and in your salvation how greatly he exults!

(PSALM 21:1)

STRUCTURE

- v.1** The king praises the Lord.
- v.2-7** The king is blessed by the Lord.
- v.8-12** The king's enemies will be destroyed.
- v.13** The people praise the Lord.

AT A GLANCE

IN A WORD We could consider the talk of "forever" in verses 4 and 6 to be hyperbole, except we *do* worship a King who reigns forever!

WHO'S TALKING? In verse 3 the Lord "meets" the king with blessings; the imagery is of a victory procession, met by One bearing great gifts.

MORE TO THE STORY Every faithful king in Israel's history (David, Asa, Hezekiah, Josiah), despite their sin and failings, foreshadowed the final King of David's line: Jesus.



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CHRIST IS HERE

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The king of God's people is to be a man of faith, an example for all who are under his rule. He is to lead them in praise of God's wondrous deeds. The Lord grants him tremendous blessings, primary among them life, even life "forever." The Lord destroys the king's enemies, devouring them in His wrath. David was such a king at times, as were a handful of others in the history of God's people. In Psalm 21, however, David is speaking of another, an ideal King: the Messiah, sent by God to save us from our enemies. The psalm therefore concludes by praising not simply the king, but the God who has set Him on His throne. Despite all this, in the next words of the psalter we hear that same King crying out, forsaken by the God in whom He put His trust: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (PSALM 22:2). This King is a suffering King! Only when paired with Psalm 22 can Psalm 21 be fully understood. The triumphant, ideal King enters His rule by trusting the Lord through abject suffering and death.



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USE IN THE CHURCH

Antiphon: v. 1a

In the Daily Office: Sundays at Matins; Matins for a Martyr or a Confessor

At the Divine Service: Historic Introit (ant: v. 5) and Gradual (v. 3–4) for Martyrdom of John the Baptist

One-Year:
Verse (v. 1) for Trinity 5 (historically Trinity 4)



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PSALM PRAYER

Destroy the work of Your enemies, O Lord, from the earth, and their deeds from among the children of men, because they will not confess You, the one Christ, Son of God and Son of Man. Let Your Cross, which is to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, direct those peoples to the rule of faith, and join them to You to be crowned by Your hand forever; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PSALM
21

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SPIRITUAL CARE

- When going to church.
- Before reading the Bible.
- For temporal peace.
- To bless the Church.
- In thanksgiving for faith.



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