

Psalm 124 – If the Lord Had Not Been on Our Side

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

This psalm is a victory song—a testimony of survival against overwhelming odds. As pilgrims ascend to Jerusalem, they sing not just to remember the past, but to declare the truth: *we are only here because the Lord was with us*. Without His help, we would have been overwhelmed, swallowed up, and swept away. But God intervened—and we lived to tell the story.

Verses 1–5 — What If God Hadn't Helped Us?

*If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
Let Israel now say—
If it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
When men rose up against us,
Then they would have swallowed us alive,
When their wrath was kindled against us;
Then the waters would have overwhelmed us,
The stream would have gone over our soul;
Then the swollen waters
Would have gone over our soul.*

This passage begins with a bold invitation to reflect: *Think about what would've happened if God hadn't stepped in*. The danger was real. Enemies raged. Troubles surged like a flood. And yet, God's people were not destroyed.

Spiritual Insight:

David doesn't glorify the danger—he glorifies the deliverer. The imagery of being swallowed or swept away reflects how close the enemy came. But "close" is not "victory" when God is our defender.

Personal Application:

Take a moment to reflect: *Where would I be if the Lord had not been on my side?*

Think about the moments when anxiety could have drowned you, when failure nearly crushed you, when others turned against you. Yet here you are—still standing, still seeking, still singing. That's not luck. That's grace.

When fear rises again, let the memory of God's past faithfulness fuel your present trust. His record is perfect. His presence is constant.

Verses 6–7 — We Escaped

*Blessed be the Lord,
Who has not given us as prey to their teeth.
Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers;
The snare is broken, and we have escaped.*

Now the tone shifts from reflection to rejoicing. We weren't just spared—we escaped. God broke the trap. We didn't muscle our way out; He made the way.

Spiritual Insight:

The psalmist pictures us like a bird caught in a snare—helpless, vulnerable, unable to free itself. But God intervened. He broke the trap, and we flew free.

Personal Application:

Have you ever felt trapped? Maybe in sin, fear, depression, or a situation you couldn't see a way out of? Don't forget: God still breaks snares. Freedom doesn't come from trying harder—it comes from looking up and trusting the One who rescues.

Today, if you're free, give thanks. If you still feel trapped, cry out—He's near, and He knows how to deliver.

Verse 8 — Our Help Is in the Name of the Lord

*Our help is in the name of the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.*

The psalm ends with a declaration: Our help doesn't come from ourselves, our allies, or our plans. It comes from the Lord—the Creator of everything.

This isn't vague religion. The "*name of the Lord*" refers to God's personal, covenant identity—Yahweh, the God who hears, sees, saves, and acts.

Spiritual Insight:

To call on the Lord's name is to trust His character. He is not just powerful—He is faithful. He is not just the Creator of the cosmos—He is the helper of your soul.

Personal Application:

When the world feels like too much—look up. Say it out loud if you need to:

"My help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

That truth puts everything in perspective.

Final Reflection: Where Would You Be Without God?

Psalm 124 isn't about escaping difficulty—it's about surviving because God was with you in the difficulty. It's a psalm of grateful memory and firm resolve.

If you've walked through fire and didn't burn, if you've faced floods and didn't drown, if you've stood against hostility and didn't fall—don't forget why.

"If it had not been the Lord who was on our side..."

Make that more than a song—make it your personal testimony.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What past situation in your life clearly shows God was on your side?
2. Are you currently facing a trial that feels like a flood? How does this psalm give you hope?
3. What does it mean in your daily life to trust that your help is in *“the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth”*?