

# Worship on the Journey

{the songs of ascent}

## Retrospect on the Journey

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Psalm 124

- <sup>1</sup> If it had not been the LORD who  
was on our side—  
let Israel now say—
- <sup>2</sup> if it had not been the LORD who  
was on our side  
when people rose up against  
us,  
<sup>3</sup> then they would have swallowed  
us up alive,  
when their anger was kindled  
against us;
- <sup>4</sup> then the flood would have swept  
us away,  
the torrent would have gone  
over us;
- <sup>5</sup> then over us would have gone  
the raging waters.
- <sup>6</sup> Blessed be the LORD,  
who has not given us  
as prey to their teeth!
- <sup>7</sup> We have escaped like a bird  
from the snare of the  
fowlers;  
the snare is broken,  
and we have escaped!
- <sup>8</sup> Our help is in the name of the  
LORD,  
who made heaven and  
earth.

Overview

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Reflecting on the past in light of the truth is a helpful exercise for spiritual growth in which God's people do well to engage. Psalm 124 is a Psalm commonly attributed to David. It teaches the people of God the value and wisdom of pausing for the purpose of review, reflection and response to the perils of life. This leads to a growing understanding of the mercy and faithfulness of God by seeing more clearly his care and protection.

## Introduction

The swirling circumstances of life can often be disorienting, especially if our point of reference is lost. Frequently we are unable to make sense of what we are experiencing. Retrospect, looking at past circumstances through the lens of truth, enables the people of God to examine past experiences of life in the light what is true, as opposed to how we feel. Responding to the truth of those past circumstances in a God-focused way produces a growing trust and a refreshed faith because the faithfulness of God's protection is magnified.

### 1. Review: The LORD is Israel's Protector (vv. 1-2)

The "if it had not been the LORD..." pattern of Psalm 124 encourages the singer to pause and consider the role the unseen hand of God plays in the daily circumstances of life. The psalmist begins by noting his distress and putting his confidence in God as his Deliverer. In his pain he remembers that when he cries out God always hears him.

## 2. Reflect: Israel reflects on the protection of the LORD, (vv. 2b-5)

The “then...” pattern seen in verses 2b-5 underscores the great calamity which would have been faced if the covenant-making, covenant-keeping God had been disinterested or absent from the affairs of his people.

## 3. Respond: Praise the Protector, (vv. 6-7)

The “if” - “then” pattern of the first two-thirds of Psalm 124 moves the pilgrim on the journey to the “therefore” of the God-ordained conclusion for his people: thankfulness and praise - worship of:

- the Giver of life,
- the Savior from sin,
- the Sustainer and Protector.

1. What did Psalm 124 teach you about who God is and how God works on behalf of his people?
2. Thinking back over the past six months, how is your current understanding of God reflected in your daily life?
3. As a result of meditating on Psalm 124, what areas of your understanding of God need to be stretched, shaped or strengthened?
4. How do you currently invite God's people to encourage/shape your understanding of God's greatness? What are specific ways you are seeing for further growth in this area? What commitments are you willing to make to seek growth in this area?
5. What past experiences of your life do you need to revisit through the lens of Psalm 124?
6. What specific attributes of God has Psalm 124 reinforced for you? Why? Are there other passages of Scripture that have been helpful to you as you pursue growth in this area?
7. As we the people of God at Kossuth, look forward to the exciting things the LORD has in store for us, how might you (we) benefit from reflecting upon the ways we have seen God's hand of provision and protection in the past in order to grow your (our) sense of trust and anticipation as a community for the future?