

Psalm 124 is a Psalm of David. It is a tremendous Psalm that will be sung as Israel one day marches to her Temple to worship God. **It is a Psalm that answers the question, what would life be like if God were not on our side?**

The greatest deliverance that has occurred in any of our lives is our deliverance from sin and condemnation the moment we came to faith in Jesus Christ. Yet if you listen to most people talk about this, many take responsibility for the choice they made. Very few people give all of the credit and glory to God and He was the actual One who chose us and saved us. Had not God chosen to save us, we would be as lost as most of the rest of the world. Our problem is we want to take credit for it and not give credit to the God to whom it is really due. But this Psalm of David really puts the emphasis where it should really be put, on the LORD.

Now think for a moment what things would have happened to us if the Lord had abandoned us. If God were to abandon us for one day, we would be totally and completely destroyed. If God took His protective grace off of us, the enemy would demolish us.

Not only do we need to think about this, but this Psalm is designed to get Israel to think about this. As verse 1 says it is about time that Israel start thinking in these terms.

David had faced many deadly and dangerous situations and so had Israel. When we think about this from the history of Israel, Israel was the most hated nation ever to exist. The most powerful nations and powers in the world hated Israel. Even to this day, there are many nations who hate Israel. One question to ask is how is it that Israel has survived?

When all is said and done she will have survived history, she will have survived the Antichrist and the Tribulation and she will be praising God in her land and Temple and one day she will be honored as the great nation of God. How is all of this possible? **The answer is because God is on Israel's side.**

What this Psalm teaches is this:

GOD'S PEOPLE NEED TO CONTINUALLY PRAISE GOD FOR HIS SOVEREIGN SALVATION AND PROTECTION FOR IF GOD WERE NOT ON OUR SIDE, WE WOULD BE TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY DESTROYED.

When all is said and done, whether it be us or Israel, the reason we survive is because God is on our side. Our very existence is proof of the presence, power and protection of God.

In **verses 1-2** the main point is repeated for emphasis. The repetition of "Had it not been the LORD who was on our side" God's people would have been demolished.

Verses 2-3 put this in a time context, specifically "**when** men rose up against us" and "**when** their anger was burning against us." So had not God been on Israel's side when these powers rose up against Israel, she would not even have been in existence and neither would we.

Now the implication is there will be times in the life of a believer when various people will be against us and angry with us, simply because we are in a right relationship with God. This anger will blaze in a hatred that is out to destroy the property of God.

Charles Spurgeon said anger is never more fiery than when God's people are its object. In Israel's case, there were powers that literally tried to physically destroy her. Major powers of the world have tried to exterminate her. There are still powers of the world who would like to destroy Israel. Many Arab nations and Iran have made it very clear that they would love to destroy Israel.

When it comes to us, it is not so much that powers want to physically destroy us or exterminate us, but spiritually speaking they do want to destroy us.

The question this Psalm answers is what it would have been like if God for one minute would have lifted His protection. What would it be like if God were not on our side?

Now in analyzing the Psalm, there are two parts to it:

PART #1 – The hypothetical deductions if God were not on our side. **124:1-5**

Now having thought things through, David came to two hypothetical deductions:

Hypothetical Deduction #1 - If God were not on our side, our enemies would destroy us. **124:3**

The phrase “swallowed us alive” is a metaphorical picture used in Scripture to describe sudden and complete destruction and instant death (Prov. 1:12; Lam. 2:2, 5, 8) The language here describes a wild animal devouring its prey. Had not God been looking out for Israel, this would have been what would have happened to her; she would have been totally torn apart and destroyed. The same is true for us.

We need to clearly understand this point. If the enemies of God's people had a chance, they would kill us. It is God who prevents them from doing that. If Satan would have had his way, he would have killed you before God saved you.

Charles Spurgeon said make no mistake about it; our salvation cannot be attributed to any secondary cause, God did it all and we need to praise Him for it.

Hypothetical Deduction #2 - If God were not on our side, our enemies would drown us. **124:4-5**

The description here is of violent water totally engulfing and surrounding the people of God with the goal of destroying them.

It is interesting in **verse 4** that the image is of a stream. **Verse 5** says the enemies were raging. You do not expect a stream to become a violent flood that destroys you.

We believe there is a clear reference here to what the Antichrist will try to do to Israel in the Tribulation. In fact, this very imagery is used in Revelation 12:15-17.

Now notice the emphasis on the “soul.” The fact is Satan and his forces cannot touch a believer’s soul. If they could they would. But the soul of a believer is protected by God.

PART #2 – The actual realities since God has been on our side. **124:6-8**

Notice how **verse 6** begins, “blessed be the LORD.” God is to be praised and worshipped because He is the One who has protected His people.

There are two actual realities since God has been on our side:

Actual Reality #1 - Since God has been on our side, our enemies have been prevented from tearing us. **124:6**

You may be certain that if God were not protecting us, our enemies would have used their teeth to devour us and rip us to shreds. We cannot help but think of Daniel in that lion’s den (Dan. 6:16-22). On our job, in the church and in our relationships you have an enemy who would end it all if he could. But he cannot. God will not let him.

Actual Reality #2 - Since God has been on our side, our enemies have been prevented from trapping us. **124:7**

Make no mistake about this, our enemies are out to catch us and trap us with something we do or say. Our enemies are the world, the flesh and the Devil. It is God who prevents them from succeeding.

This is the point that most believers miss. They do not escape traps relying upon themselves, but God.

There are all kinds of traps trying to ensnare a believer. There are many different baits trying to ensnare us: 1) Worldliness; 2) Greed; 3) Lust; 4) Unbelief; 5) Doubt; 6) Idolatry; 7) Immorality.

These are not imaginary dangers, these are very real dangers. Who is it that has kept us from plunging headlong into these traps? It is God.

I read a story of a man who got out of prison. He had some money and he was walking down a street and he saw a man selling various birds. There were Thrushes, Larks, and Pigeons. He asked the man what do you want for all of the birds and the man told him. He pulled out his wallet and gave him the money and bought all of the birds.

Then he opened the door to the cages and let them all fly away. The seller said, “Why did you do that?” He said because I have been in prison and I cannot stand to see anything in a cage so I bought them and set them free.

Truth is we are all sinners and our enemies, if given an opportunity, would trap us and ensnare us, but God does not give them an opportunity. Jesus Christ bought us to set us free. He opened the doors to the cage in which we were trapped. We need to get out of there and go free.

Now look carefully at **verse 8, our help has been “the name of the LORD.”** Do you see this? Do you understand this? Our salvation is in His name. Our help is in Him, not in ourselves. We have been helped by the God who made the heaven and the earth. We have been protected by the Sovereign God of all creation.

God who made the heaven and the earth is the Sovereign God who is looking out for His people. This God who is the great Creator is our helper.

John Calvin used Psalm 124:8 to begin many of his services because he said the truth of this verse declared to a congregation the truth “as well as any one sentence could.”

KEY THOUGHTS:

- 1. We will have enemies get angry with us and hate us simply because we are right with God.**
- 2. If God were not protecting us, we would have been totally and completely destroyed.**
- 3. We need to praise God for His salvation and our protection.**