

## Approaching God

Begin your time with an opening prayer

Take a moment to quiet your heart and ask God to help you experience his presence today. Ask Him to free you from any distractions as you begin to read and meditate on today's passage.

### Psalm 124

**Passage Introduction:**

“The church is always threatened by spiritual attacks and difficulties, but with the name of the Lord on our side danger need never become defeat. This psalm is telling us that God is the one who rescues us from danger. Psalm 120 starts with a call for help. Psalm 121 takes the step of looking up to God. Psalm 122 moves toward God's people. Psalm 123 asks God for mercy. Here, Psalm 124 rejoices that such help was found. In the cockpit of every commercial airliner there is a flight data recorder that runs on a thirty-minute loop taping the words of the pilot and crew as they talk to each other and to the control tower. The so-called black box is a prime piece of evidence when the causes of plane crashes are investigated. What was the crew talking about when trouble hit? Psalm 124 is like a flight data recorder, but what we find is a song of praise because the church's faith proved real, more real even than danger from people around. It is saying to us, 'Sing this with me.' When danger comes, God is the one who rescues.”

Josh Moody - *Journey to Joy*

**Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Read the passage slowly 2 or 3x's.**

**Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.**

**Psalm 124 - A Song of Ascents (NLT) - 1** What if the LORD had not been on our side? Let all Israel repeat: **2** What if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us? **3** They would have swallowed us alive in their burning anger. **4** The waters would have engulfed us; a torrent would have overwhelmed us. **5** Yes, the raging waters of their fury would have overwhelmed our very lives. **6** Praise the LORD, who did not let their teeth tear us apart! **7** We escaped like a bird from a hunter's trap. The trap is broken, and we are free! **8** Our help is from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

### Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- What are 2 or 3 things you can observe or learn about God in this passage?
- What are 2 or 3 things you can learn about God's people in this passage?
- What one place in life do you most need to experience freedom and rescue right now?

## Psalm 124

### Passage Summary - (From The ESV Transformation Bible)

This psalm continues the theme of the previous psalm. In even more explicit terms, the psalmist declares the exclusivity of the God of Israel, the covenant God of his people. He alone can deliver them from those who oppress them.

If the Lord had not been on the side of his people—i.e., if the covenant God of Israel, the Lord who revealed himself in Exodus 3:14 as the eternal “I AM” who is forever committed to his people for their good and their salvation—if this eternal and exclusively true God had not been on his people’s side, they would have been destroyed (Ps. 124:1–5). But he is the true God, he is their God, and he did watch over them for their good (vv. 6–8). The psalmist likely reflects back on the exodus from Egypt, where God saved his people from the waters of the Red Sea (vv. 3–5), and he sees in this a basis for continued trust in this same saving and merciful God. As their past help has been from the Lord, so their present and future hope is in this true God—their God, who is the covenant God of Israel, who made heaven and earth (v. 8).

What amazing strength and hope there is in these words: the true and living God, the God who made heaven and earth, is none other than our God, the God of covenant faithfulness and mercy to his own people. This covenant faithfulness and mercy was clinched in the coming of Jesus Christ. There, in Christ, the demands of the covenant were kept on our behalf so that we can receive God’s promised blessings even though we have failed and do not deserve them.

### Key Takeaway:

As you read today’s passage, what are 1 or 2 main takeaways that you wrote down that you want to take with you? How would you briefly summarize your observations and meditations for today?

### Close in Prayer:

Close by turning today’s Psalm into your own prayer. Here are some prayer prompts to help you get started:

- **vs 1-2** - *What if the LORD had not been on our side? Let all Israel repeat: What if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us? What can you point to remind you that Lord is on your side? That you are one of his favored people? Praise him for that.*
- **vs 4-5** - *The waters would have engulfed us; a torrent would have overwhelmed us. 5 Yes, the raging waters of their fury would have overwhelmed our very lives. Where does life feel overwhelming right now? Talk to God about that.*
- **vs 6-7** - *Praise the LORD, who did not let their teeth tear us apart! We escaped like a bird from a hunter’s trap. The trap is broken, and we are free! Ask God for deliverance and rescue.*