

Psalm 124 - Review

In chapter 124 we learned that this was the *fifth* Psalm in a series of fifteen (120-134), which are the “Song of Degrees”, and refers to the “degrees” on the sundial of Ahaz, by which the shadow of the sun went *backward* in the days of his son, Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:8-11; Isa 38:7-8, 20). And the subject/title of this Psalm (song) was “***Trust in Yehovah***”, because it taught us *why* we should trust in the one-and-only *true* God, Yehovah (i.e. YHVH). That’s why the Psalmist (David) called upon Israel to acknowledge *where* their *only* true help came from. For, of a truth, had not the Lord (YHVH) been ‘for’ Israel (on their side), they would have been destroyed as a nation, because there were many other nations who were greater in number and strength. And David used several analogies to express the overwhelming power of Israel’s enemies. The first of which is how, just as a flood can completely surround, and overpower, and entire area – and just as the strength of strong streams can be catastrophic – so too would have Israel’s enemies *completely overwhelmed* Israel and caused *catastrophic* damage to them, even annihilation of their nation! So, David’s reason for using this analogy was that: when Israel’s enemies were coming against them so strongly - *as a flood* - there was *no possible way* for them to withstand the assault *without* God’s (YHVH’s) help! So, the fact that Israel survived was *proof* that God was acting *on their behalf*. And, because there is ‘nothing new’ under the sun (Ecc 1:9), this analogy also perfectly describes the soon coming ‘flood’ that will truly ‘overwhelm’ the whole world! And, the old seducer (serpent) himself (i.e. Satan, the Devil, the dragon) will *specifically* target an overwhelming ‘flood of lies’ to try and get faithful Christians to apostatize (Rev 12:13-17). But, when we remain faithful to the true God (YHVH), *and* the true Jesus Christ (not the fake one, i.e. Satan)... then so too will the Lord (YHVH) deliver us from this soon to come ‘flood’, just as He did for Israel in many times past!

And the second analogy David used, to express the overwhelming power of Israel’s enemies, was the aggressiveness of predatory animals. For, just as Israel would have been overwhelmed by a flood (or strong stream) so too would they have been ‘prey’ to the vicious ‘teeth’ (armies) of their enemies... had the Lord (YHVH) not be ‘for them’! And, our Heavenly Father Himself has used this analogy to refer to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 4:7, 50:43-44, 51:37-38), the Egyptians (Ezek 32:2) and the Assyrians as well (Amos 3:11-12; Nah 2:11-13). Further, David also used this analogy (elsewhere) to speak of his own enemies (Ps 57:4; Ps 58:6), as did Paul (2 Tim 4:17). And Peter used this analogy too, when warning Christians about the Devil’s attempts to overwhelm believers with lies and deception (1 Peter 5:8). And this is why, in the great books of Daniel and Revelations, the Lord (YHVH) also likened Satan’s wicked governing system, to a ‘beast’ (Dan 7:7,11; rev 11:7, 13, 17, etc.), which will be *totally* destroyed when Jesus Christ returns (Rev 17:11, 19:19-20), as will Satan, at the end of the Millennium (Rev 20:10). And so, just as the Lord (YHVH) didn’t give Israel over to the ‘teeth’ of the enemy, neither will He allow His faithful servants (Christians who *refuse* worship Satan and his wicked ‘beast’ governing system) to be given to the ‘teeth’ of Satan’s ‘beast’ system (Dan 7:7,9; Joel 1:6; Rev 9:8) - which

simply refers to their powerful lies *and* attempts at stopping the ‘elect’ (faithful servants of God) from sharing the truth (the Gospel of Jesus Christ) with others (Rev 12:14,16, etc.). But our protection from the strong ‘teeth’ of the enemy *always* relies upon our faith in Jesus Christ *and* our dedication to *serve Him* (and speak the truth) *no matter what* happens! Therefore, just as ancient Israel had to rely on the Lord for survival, so too must Christians use God's power against Satan, which is found *only* through our *faith in Jesus Christ* (John 14:13-14, John 15:17, John 16:23-26). Of course, this means resisting evil *through our faith in Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 5:9) and using the tools God has provided for our protection (Ephesians 6:11-18). The strength of the Lord (YHVH) is *much greater* than that of the Devil (1 John 4:4). And that’s why Jesus gave us “*power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you*” (Luke 10:19).

And then David used the analogy of how a little (and fragile) bird is *helpless* when it’s ensnared by a net (trap), to explain the *many* times our Heavenly Father has freed Israel from *powerful* enemies, which they could not have been freed from *were it not for His help*. And this is why Moses wrote that “*I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler*” (Ps 91:2-4). So, when we trust in the Lord (YHVH) – i.e. His written Word, which *is the truth* (John 17:17) – then He *always* protect us from all the ‘snares of the fowler’, just as a mother hen (or eagle) protects her chicks by covering them with her wings! Therefore, this analogy is also incredibly applicable to us today too. For the Word of God also uses this analogy (of a helpless bird trapped in a snare) to explain how sin *entices* but, ultimately *traps and kills* (Proverbs 6:5; 7:23). Satan's strategy against Eve was *luring her* towards sin (Genesis 3:1-6) and he uses the *same* basic tactics today (1 John 2:16). So, the Devil (Satan) also uses many methods to ‘ensnare’ us into sinning (1 Tim 3:7, 6:9, 2 Tim 2:26). However, just as Israel was helpless *alone*, but protected by God's power, Christians are *not without hope*. For (as Ps 91:4 points out) the Word of God, and His Holy Spirit *within us*, gives us the *spiritual* armor (Eph 6) we need to *avoid* being ensured by Satan’s lies and deception.

So, all of these analogies help to explain how we, like Israel of old, are truly *helpless* when it comes to fighting our enemy, who is Satan (the Devil, dragon, serpent) – *without* the help of our Heavenly Father and His Son (our Savior) Jesus Christ! Therefore, these analogies are also incredibly applicable to us today too. For the Word of God warns us that the Devil (Satan) also uses many methods to ‘ensnare’ us into sinning (1 Tim 3:7, 6:9, 2 Tim 2:26). So (to reiterate), just as Israel was helpless *alone*, but protected by God's power, Christians are *not without hope*. For (as Ps 91:4 points out) the Word of God, and His Holy Spirit *within us*, gives us the *spiritual* armor we need to *avoid* being ensured by Satan’s lies and deception. We must simply study God’s Word (wholeheartedly), and *earnestly* strive to obey Him, in order to have access to the spiritual armor, i.e. to learn what it is, how to put it on *and use it*! And again, Jesus Christ also

gave us power over ‘all the enemy’ (Lk 10:19) when we earnestly believe in, and serve, Him. And, as Paul points out (in 1 Cor 10:13), when we are earnestly serving the Lord (YHVH), He *won’t ever* let us be tested, or tempted, *above* what we can handle! He’ll *always* give us the strength to endure them or, give us an ‘escape’ from it, i.e. He’ll break the spiritual snares, overwhelming floods, and ‘teeth of iron’ that come our way... so long as we do ‘our part’ to *resist* (fight against, oppose) them (Jaems 4:7; 1 Pt 5:9)! But, we must always remember the point of this Psalm, i.e. without help from our Heavenly Father (His Word, and Holy Spirit, *within us*), we have *no chance* of avoiding the wiles of the devil (1 Tim 3:7, 6:9, 2 Tim 2:26), let alone getting out of them! But, as it is written, “*The things which are impossible with men **are possible with God***” (Luke 18:27). That’s why our Heavenly Father will always help us out of all the tricks of the Devil (Satan) **if** we keep our heart (desires, emotions, intentions) and mind (thoughts) firmly upon Him **and trust in Him** for help (Isa 26:4, Ps 91, etc.). As Paul reminds us, “*the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil*” (2 Thess 3:3).

And then David ended this great Psalm (song) by reminding Israel (and us today too) how our ‘help’ (aid and protection) truly comes from the *only* One who has created heaven and earth, which is God (YHVH) Almighty! So again, David reminded Israel (and us today too) how, without help from our Creator (YHVH/Jesus Christ), we truly would be ‘overwhelmed’ like a flood, ‘torn apart’ like prey, or snared like a little bird in a net. But, **by relying on the power of our Creator, we access the greatest possible ‘help’ to be had!** For, because He is the Creator of *all* things in existence, God’s power *cannot* be matched by *anything* in existence. So, **when God (YHVH) is on someone’s side, there is *nothing* an enemy can do to override Him.** And (to reiterate) Israel’s history *proved* that reliance on God *was their only hope* against powerful enemies (ex: Exodus 12:41; 14:28-29; Deut 4:37-38, etc.). This fact should give us great comfort for the soon coming ‘great tribulation’ we face today (Mth 24:21). For, even Satan himself is part of God’s creation, as Ezekiel 28 explains. Therefore, while he is a powerful (and very evil) ‘angel’, even he is *no match* for our Heavenly Father (Deut 32:39)! And, even though Satan knows our weaknesses (as the book of Job reveals), our Heavenly Father knows our weaknesses even better, because He created us. And that’s why, when we believe in Jesus Christ, earnestly strive to learn His Word *and obey Him*, He ***always*** protects us and helps our weaknesses (Rom 8:26-31; Heb 4:15-16, etc.). And so, He not only offers us the guidance of His Holy Spirit (John 15:8-11), and His Spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:11, 14-18), but is very forgiving when we fall short and sin (1 John 1:8-10). And, as such, He won’t ever let us be tested, or tempted, with more than we can handle (1 Cor 10:13)! He’ll always help us out of the overwhelming floods, ‘snares’, and sharp ‘teeth’ of the enemy. Truly, we can always rely on our Heavenly Father (YHVH) *because of Who He is*, i.e. He is always faithful to His Word! Therefore, so long as we *don’t* forsake Him, the Lord (YHVH) will *never* forsake us...

6 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*
7 *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

8 **Be sober, be vigilant;** because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom **resist steadfast in the faith,** knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, **make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.**

11 To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 5:6-11

AMEN.