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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

25200 Sorrento Avenue, Sorrento, FL 32776; 352.383.5052

Web Site: [www.RefugeSorrento.com](http://www.RefugeSorrento.com)

**Elder Alfonzo Baptiste, Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**“BLESSED ASSURANCE”**

**Psalms 124**

***A Song of degrees of David***

***Psalms 124:1 (KJV) "If [it had not been] the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say;"***

The theme of God’s deliverance of Israel is a focal point of this psalm as it was Psalms 123. This psalm is to the community of Israel to encourage them to always trust God’s faithfulness in preserving the Jewish people. To encourage the people of God to trust in his faithfulness in their present circumstances, David recalls God’s deliverance in the past. This is certainly not a complete statement but means so much. Out of all the peoples of the world, God chose Israel to be His. On the journey from Egypt to the promised land, God went with them and helped them. He subdued their enemies, who in many instances were mightier in battle. The countries around them realized right off that God was on Israel's side in battle. They were aware of the Red Sea parting for Israel and then drowning the Egyptians. They were not afraid of Israel, but they were afraid of Israel's God. Israel had not been trained for war. They had been slaves in Egypt. Only the mighty hand of God brought them out, and then preserved them in the wilderness and against their enemies. Had it not been for the LORD, they would have died. This is not unhealthy but a positive reminder: Let Israel now say, that is, recall what might have happened if it were not for the Lord’s loving care when men (their enemies) rose up against them. They are to consider what might have happened if the LORD had not been on their side (v. 1, 2 repeated for emphasis). You must remember, the land they went into had belonged to someone else. The countries around Israel hated her. The battle they did attempt, without God's instruction to fight, left Israel the loser.

***Romans 8:29-31 (KJV)***

***29  For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.***

***30  Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.***

***31  What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?***

***John 15:16 (KJV)***

***16  Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.***

***Psalm 124:2 (KJV) "If [it had not been] the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us:"***

The illustration of the Lord’s protection is the escape from the Egyptians at the Red Sea. The phrase “when men rose up against us” in verse 2 is similar to the phrases in the Song of Moses after the escape from Pharaoh’s army in Exodus 15:1-18. If the Lord had not been on Israel’s side their enemy (the Egyptians at the exodus and other enemies throughout the ages, such as Assyria in Isaiah 8:6-8, or Babylon or modern enemies up to the present time) would have swallowed us alive…the waters would have engulfed us… the stream would have swept over our soul…raging waters (repeated for emphasis) would have swept over our soul (Psalms 18:16-18; 32:6; 69:1-2). In fact, these more powerful enemies served as proof of God’s past faithfulness to His unconditional promise to Israel through Abraham. This in turn was a historical precedent enabling Israel to expect the same continued faithfulness, especially preservation from destruction, both then and in the future.

***Genesis 12:2-3 (KJV)***

***2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:***

***3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.***

***Jeremiah 31:35-37 (KJV)***

***35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name:***

***36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.***

***37 Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.***

***Psalms 124:3 (KJV) "Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us:"***

This one little group of people would have been no match for the evil countries around them, if God had not stepped in and fought their battles for them. This is like the church today, if God were not standing between the world and His church, the church would not be able to stand. God will even protect and individual who is doing His will in the midst of all the trouble. If it were not for God, we would not have a chance.

***Psalms 124:4 (KJV) Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:***

The flood of opposition to the church would be such an overwhelming flood that it would overcome the church if it were not for God. The strangest thing, to me, is that the church seems to grow the most under the greatest opposition. Always the underground church, in countries where it was forbidden to have churches, has been very strong. There were so many enemies of Israel, that if the Lord had removed His protection, they would have fallen as they did to Babylon.

***Psalms 124:5 (KJV) "Then the proud waters had gone over our soul."***

In the opposition to the church, the oppressors have not only classed us as religious fanatics, but they arrogantly proclaim their contempt for the believers and the church body. It seems to come like waves on the sea, but then the Lord speaks to the sea, and it calms down. The devil and his crowd can roar and try to threaten and scare us, but if we stand against the wiles of the devil, He will flee.

***Psalms 124:6 (KJV) "Blessed [be] the LORD, who hath not given us [as] a prey to their teeth."***

David commenced his review of what God had done by declaring praise and thanksgiving. He said, Blessed be the LORD who has not given Israel to be torn by the enemy’s teeth. Rather He enabled them to escape intact as a bird out of the snare of the trapper. David applied this bird imagery to himself in 1 Samuel, suggesting that he was here extrapolating his personal experience of God’s faithfulness to that of the nation as a whole.

***1 Samuel 26:20 (KJV) “Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord: for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.”***

The Lord will protect us from such heavy onslaught. They may rattle their weapons at us, but the Lord has built a hedge of defense around us. In Psalms 58 the psalmist asked the Lord to break out their teeth and render them harmless. That is just what He does.

***Psalm 58:6 (KJV) “Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.”***

The devil is defeated. Jesus defeated him at Calvary. Blessed be the name of the Lord. We cannot praise the Lord enough for the things He has done on our behalf and is still doing.

***Romans 5:6-11 (KJV)   
6  For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.   
7  For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.   
8  But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.   
9  Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.   
10  For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.   
11  And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.***

***Psalms 124:7 (KJV) "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped."***

The snare was the curse. Jesus took the curse, that we might be set free. We have escaped from that curse like the bird who gets out of a trap and flies away. Our soul is free like the bird that escaped. The psalmist is speaking of being free from the wicked people who had set a trap to get them. The Lord is our help and our strength.

***Galatians 3:13 (KJV) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree:"***

***Psalms 124:8 (KJV) "Our help [is] in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth."***

Reflecting on God’s help in the past gave David confidence to declare that God would help his people again. As the Maker of heaven and earth, he ruled over them. This is a powerful lesson for God’s people today. Keep track of the goodness of God in your life. Take note of times when God delivers you from adversity. You’ll need to recall these times of blessing to give you confidence in God’s faithfulness and power for future troubles. The name of the Lord for the Christian is Jesus. All believers in Christ have been given the authority to use that name. Reviewing what God had done reinforced David’s confidence in what God will do.

***John 14:13-14 (KJV)***

***13 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."***

***14 "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]." How much power does the name have and where?***

***Luke 10:17 (KJV) “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.”***

***Mark 16:17 (KJV) “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;”***

***Romans 14:11 (KJV) “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”***

***Philippians 2:10 (KJV) "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"***

**QUESTIONS**

1. What small nation did God choose out of all the nations to be His?
2. What miracles, that God did for Israel, influenced the people around them?
3. What were they joining nations afraid of?
4. What happened in the battle the Israelites fought that God had not sent them to?
5. What keeps the waters of opposition from overwhelming the church?
6. When does the church seem to grow the most?
7. Who did Israel fall to?
8. What are the proud waters?
9. What must we do to cause the devil to flee?
10. What did the psalmist, in chapter 58, ask the Lord to do?
11. Our soul is escaped as a \_\_\_\_\_\_ out of the snare.
12. What was the snare symbolic of?
13. Our help is in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_.