

Travelling Songs

Through Lent with the Psalms of Ascent

Week 2 Psalm 124 Deliverance

'Then would the waters have overwhelmed us'

The two sessions for Week 2 of the Lent Course will be held on:

- (1). **Tuesday afternoon March 15th**, at St Luke's Church, Stoke Hammond, 1.00pm for Soup Lunch, 1.30pm for the course.
- (2). An evening course held on **Wednesday 16th March, 8pm** at:- Driveside, 74a Station Road, Bow Brickhill

All will be welcome to join in any of the sessions at any of the venues. The sessions are independent, so it doesn't matter if you miss one.



Psalm 124

- 1 If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say;
- 2 If the Lord had not been on our side,
 when enemies rose up against us;
- 3 Then would they have swallowed us alive
 when their anger burned against us;
- 4 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us
 and the torrent gone over our soul;
 over our soul would have swept the raging waters.
- 5 But blessed be the Lord
 who has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
- 6 Our soul has escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler;
 the snare is broken and we are delivered.
- 7 Our help is in the name of the Lord,
 who has made heaven and earth.

Quotation

Life isn't a vicarious experience. You get it figured out and then one day life happens to you. You prepare yourself for grief and loss, arrange your ballast and then the wave sweeps over the boat. (Garrison Keillor)

Some reflections

The Hebrew people of Old Testament times were not great seafarers, so, in the Bible, images of water, storms and floods are often used to symbolise danger, chaos, and things being out of order and control (see some of the Bible passages listed below).

Like the psalm we looked at last week, this one also speaks of 'enemies' who, in their anger, oppose those who are faithful, and seek to ensnare them.

This psalm uses the image of threat and danger to acknowledge all the difficult and challenging parts of our experience in life, and sets that in the context of faith and hope. It says that we would have been overwhelmed, if the Lord had not been with us, and celebrates the experience of escape or deliverance from danger through God's help.

Other Bible passages

The creation story in Genesis 1, the Spirit of God hovers over 'the waters', before God acts to bring form and order. In the story of Noah, the ark delivers him and his family from the chaos of the flood. As God's people escape from their slavery in Egypt, God opens a way for them through the sea.

The gospels include stories of Jesus stilling a storm, and walking on water.

Can you think of some other passages that use this image, or that tell stories of escape and deliverance?

Some questions

1. Have we had any times in our lives that felt as if 'the waters have overwhelmed us'?
2. Have we ever felt abandoned by God, or as if God was not there?
3. What experiences do we have of being 'delivered' or rescued?

Prayer

God our rescuer,
without you we would not be able to stand:
be at our side,
and deliver us from all that would overwhelm us
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Next Week: **Week 3** **Psalm 126** **Sorrow and Joy**
'Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy'

Full details of the Lent Course can be found on the website:-

See the "Lent Courses" section:- <https://brickhillchurches.org.uk/lent-course/>