

A pattern discovered (Psalms of Ascent:120-134)¹

- Difficulty – a situation of difficulty
- Deliverance – focuses on God's power to keep
- Delight – the security in Zion and its God

Psalm 120-122 –

- 120 – Difficulty: alienation through destructive speech (2-3), isolation (5), talk of war (6)
- 121 – Deliverance from the Lord
- 122 – Security in Zion (1-3)

Psalm 123-125 –

- 123 – Difficulty: the ill and unjust treatment of people (contempt through scorn and pride) (3-4)
- 124 – Deliverance from the Lord
- 125 – Security in Zion (1)

God alone deserves the glory for... (Psalm 124)

- His selection (1-5)
- His protection (6)
- His provision (7-8)

READ PSALM 124

I. God alone deserves glory for His selection. (1-5)

A. God picks His own team. (John 15:16)

¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

- If it had not been the Lord who was on OUR SIDE (vs. 1a and 2a) – remember the context of Israelites traveling to Jerusalem 3x a year (Passover, Pentecost, and Booths)... this was a type of motivational speech to fellow travelers.
 - Let Israel now say
- When people rose up against us...

¹ Psalms by the Day: A New Devotional Translation by Alec Motyer

- B. Many attempt to rival God's team.
 - o Korah (3)
 - o Pharaoh (4-5)
 - Pharaoh hardened his heart (Exodus)

The Ten Plagues and Pharaoh's Heart

1. Blood: Pharaoh's heart "became hard" (7:22)
2. Frogs: Pharaoh "hardened his own heart" (8:15)
3. Gnats: Pharaoh's heart "was hard" (8:19)
4. Flies: "Pharaoh hardened his own heart" (8:32)
5. Livestock die: Pharaoh's heart "was hard" (9:7)
6. Boils: "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart" (9:12)
7. Hail: Pharaoh "hardened his own heart" (9:34)
8. Locusts: God announces that he has "hardened Pharaoh's heart" (10:1,10:20)
9. Darkness: God "hardened Pharaoh's heart" (10:27)
10. Death of the firstborn: God "hardened Pharaoh's heart" (11:10)

Here we are able to draw several conclusions. First of all, in plagues 6-10, we hear four times that God has hardened Pharaoh's heart. Can you see how this is a distinct change from plagues 1-5? In those stories, Pharaoh explicitly hardened his own heart (plagues 2 and 4), or the source of the hardening was ambiguous (plagues 1, 3, and 5). Interestingly, in the 7th plague of hail, we first see Pharaoh harden his own heart (Ex. 9:34)

Romans 9:14-18

¹⁴ What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! ¹⁵ For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶ So then it depends not on human will or exertion,¹⁷ but on God, who has mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸ So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

Illustration: Choose your own adventure books

- *Choose Your Own Adventure*, as published by [Bantam Books](#), was one of the most popular children's series during the 1980s and 1990s, selling more than 250 million copies between 1979 and 1998.

What would it have been if God had not been on their side? – Korah (3)

- Korah would have killed Moses and usurped his position of leadership over the Children of Israel.

What did happen?

- The Earth Swallowed them up alive

Numbers 16:30, 32, 34; 26:10

What would it have been if God had not been on their side? – Pharaoh (4-5)

- Pharaoh would have killed Moses and returned the Children of Israel back under the bondage of slavery in Egypt.

What did happen?

- The Waters Swallowed them up alive

Exodus 14

Note: The Creator of heaven and earth (Vs. 8) also controls the heaven and the earth (vs. 3-5).

Remember... God alone deserves glory for His selection!

I Corinthians 1:26-31

²⁶For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards,^[a] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being^[b] might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of him^[c] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

I. God alone deserves glory for His selection. (1-5)

II. God alone deserves glory for His protection. (6)

- A. Praise Him with full strength (Blessed) for who He is (LORD).
- B. Praise Him with full strength for what He can do.

- **The prey continues to escape the predator.**

- Adam and Eve in the Garden; The Sons of God and Daughters of Men
- The Tower of Babel; The Birth of Isaac
- The Enslavement in Egypt; The Siege by Sennacherib

- I. God alone deserves glory for His selection. (1-5)
- II. God alone deserves glory for His protection. (6)

III. God alone deserves glory for His provision. (7-8)

A. He has provided and will continue to provide Israel escape from her enemies. (7a)

- The use of a participle here points to this danger as constant whereas all the others were occasional. Looking back, the contrasts teach us that from whatever source a danger arises, and with whatever certainty it exists – whether occasional or permanent – Yahweh is sufficient. (Motyer, page 372)
- **Hunter's Trap** (*not a post-exilic psalm or you could include Haman, Satraps, Sanballat...etc*)

Goliath

Saul

Sennacherib

Satan

B. He will provide Israel ultimate escape from the enemy. (7b-8)

1. Praise Him with full strength (Blessed) for who He is (LORD).
2. Praise Him with full strength for what He can do. (vs. 8 same as Ps. 121:2)

Application:

- **God is not done with Israel.**
 - He has protected her in the past.
 - He is protecting her in the present.
 - He will protect her in the future.
 - Find confidence in God's ability to protect Israel. (Jer. 29:11)
- **God is not done with you.**
 - He chose you.
 - He called you.
 - He has delivered you.
 - Live like one who has been set free! (Rom. 6:18)
- **Praise God for His deliverance.**
 - What could have been?
 - What He did for you?
 - What He has called you to?
 - Reflect on the transforming power of the Gospel! (Eph. 2:1-10)

Baptismal Testimonies:

Rebecca Benson

When I was about four years old my Awana teacher talked to us about salvation and asked us who was saved. I didn't really understand but raised my hand. She told my parents and then talked me through the basic gospel. I prayed that night, but I didn't think I really got saved. Then about 9 years later, I really started doubting everything I had been taught and didn't really even believe there was a God for several months. I was in a really bad place where I was just angry at everyone. In October of that year, I heard a message about how if what Jesus said was untrue, than he was the biggest fraud to ever live and that really just stuck with me. In October of 2017, I came to a place where I knew that on my own I was helpless. I was saved on October 16, 2017.

David Poore

I was at camp and during one of the services I realized I was not saved so I found my way outside with my counselor. I prayed to the Lord that he would save me and I believe that he did.

Grace Mansfield

Ashlynn's testimony

Well one night me and Emaline were in bed and I was scared so I went down to Emaline's bunk and she was scared too. And I was just telling her that God is protecting us and God is with us and I thought about how I wanted to get saved and I told Emaline that I wanted to get saved and so me and Emaline went into mom and dad's room and we told dad that we wanted to get saved and then mom came in the room. We told them that we were sinners and we wanted to be a believer of Christ and only Jesus could take away our sins so I could go to heaven and not go to the pit of fire. So we prayed and I asked Jesus to forgive me of all my sins and that I knew I was a sinner and that I needed him. I believe Jesus died on the cross and rose again three days later so that we could be saved and go to heaven with him. I want to be baptized to show everyone that I am a believer of Christ and so that other people can get saved.

Emaline's Testimony

About a year ago one night, Ashlynn and me were scared. So Ashlynn started saying, "God is with us." So we decided we wanted to get saved and we went into mom and dad's room, and dad told us a couple of verses and we prayed and believed that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and we asked him to forgive us of all our sins and I asked him to come into my heart. I want to be baptized to show everyone I'm a believer of Christ and to tell everyone you can go to heaven too by getting saved.