

God Is For Us

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Date: 30 April 2023

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[0 : 00] So what I'd like to do this evening is to turn back to that psalm we read, Psalm 124, and to consider what David is saying to us, and then to move into the New Testament to see how this same theme is repeated in a different context, in a different setting, by a different author.

Because I think what God wants us to hear tonight, and when God repeats something, he repeats it for a reason. Remember the Lord Jesus would often say, verily, verily, I say to you, or amen, or amen, I say to you.

Whenever the Bible repeats something, it does so for emphasis. And we begin this psalm with repetition. You see, well, first of all, let me just identify something here.

So this is a song that is best sung together, and we'll be able to sing that shortly. But we have, almost as it were, a presenter at the very beginning of the psalm who says, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, and then this phrase, let Israel now say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side.

So it's as if the presenter is putting out the first line and says, folks, join with me. Sing it back. And this repetition underlines this point.

[1 : 24] And if you forget everything else tonight, remember this. The Lord is on our side. He says it, and he means it. Whatever God says, he means.

And whatever he says, he wants us to receive and to believe and to accept. If it had not been the Lord who was on our side.

And this psalm is meant to be sung by the people of God in their journey together. And sometimes we are very much aware that we need each other.

We need one another. You see, life is a tough journey. And this journey is best taken in the company of God's people. Because you see, this is an uphill journey that these people are on. You see, they're moving up to the city of David, up to the city of Jerusalem. And it's a tough journey. And as they are journeying, they're also singing.

[2 : 26] The presenter is putting out the first line. And the congregation, the people of Israel, are responding in chorus, in unison. So we begin with this theme.

That God is on our side. He says it. He means it. And he shows it. So in this psalm, we have several hazards.

Several dangers. You know, if you're on a building site. Or if you're getting work done. You know, so you need to be made aware if there's a trip hazard.

You need to be made aware if somebody is up on a scaffolding or is working at height. There are certain health and safety procedures that are absolutely essential.

Otherwise, you get injured. Otherwise, you get hurt. And the psalmist, David, is saying to us that God says that he is on our side.

[3 : 25] And God shows that he is on our side. So David isn't so much trying to prove the point. He's simply going to illustrate the point for each of us.

Now, I mentioned a moment ago that I teach. So systematic theology is a big, two big words. It's a big subject. But I'll give you an insight. And I've kind of developed this since Murdo left ETS. I've tried to simplify the subject. And I think I've simplified the subject into nine words. The first three words are God with us. That's the message of the incarnation.

God has come down to our level. God with us. The second set of three words is what we have here. God for us. We see this fact demonstrated most clearly in the death of Jesus on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

God with us. God for us. And the third set of three words, God in us. The Holy Spirit now comes to dwell in God's people.

[4 : 35] We are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are gathered, yes, in a building. But actually the temple is the human heart, the human life. Because the Holy Spirit now takes up residence in your heart and in my heart.

So God with us, God for us, and God in us. And the theme here is God for us. But I want to notice a few of the problems or a few of the dangers.

The first danger we see in verse 3. That there is this creature. We don't really know what this creature looks like. But this creature is a very dangerous animal.

Verse 3. Then they would have swallowed us up alive when their anger was kindled against us. I come from New Jersey, which is on the east coast of the United States.

And a couple years ago there was an internet sensation. Her name was Mary Lee. Now Mary Lee had 125,000 Twitter followers.

[5 : 38] I don't know if you know what Twitter is. I'm not really sure. But I've got an idea. And wherever Mary Lee was seen along the east coast, people were quite excited.

Now you see, Mary Lee was not a person. But Mary Lee was a great white shark. She was 16 feet long. She weighed 3,500 pounds. And she was tagged.

And whenever she came to the surface, there was a website where you could track where Mary Lee was going. But the idea was this. If you wanted to go swimming in a certain part of the Atlantic Ocean, you would be well advised to check to see where Mary Lee might be.

I'm 6'3". I weigh more than I should. A 16-foot great white shark could swallow me in one go. Now that's a big fish.

And that's a dangerous fish. So if you're a small person, I mean, if a fish could swallow me, I think it could probably swallow you. And David is telling us that some of the situations that we find ourselves in, it's as if we were swimming in the sea, and we encounter a huge fish that's about to put us into its mouth, into its stomach.

[6 : 57] But we're told that that fish did not swallow us alive. So the first threat, this large animal that might swallow us. The second, verse 4, the flood would have swept us away.

The torrent would have gone over us. I've not yet been to the Middle East, but I'm told that often the Middle East is quite dry. But when it rains, the rain comes quickly, and before long, this parched ground can be a raging river, a torrent, that you can go from having parched dry ground to being in the midst of a flood in the matter of a, it seems like a few moments.

And this flood could be so big and so powerful that it could sweep you off your feet. And if you're swept off your feet by a rushing wave of water that you're not expecting, again, chances of survival are not high.

So the large fish that wants you to be lunch, the raging torrent that will sweep over you, in verse 6, there's a third image here, blessed be the Lord who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.

So this is not so much a large creature that could swallow you, but this is a vicious creature whose teeth are sharp, and their teeth could crush you to death.

[8 : 23] Not a particularly nice picture. So that's the third. And the fourth scene is a bird. And the bird is captured in a net, a snare.

Now the sad news is that a bird that's captured in a snare will soon be a bird that's in a pot. That's why the snare has been set. Somebody wants dinner.

The bird wanders into this snare, captured, and, well, the rest, as you can tell, would be history. So David is painting us a very vivid picture of life.

There are many dangers. There are many hazards. There are many threats that we can encounter and do encounter. Now David is a songwriter.

He's a poet. So he's using poetic language. But I think the point is quite obvious. This is a dangerous world that we live in. This is an unpredictable world that we live in.

[9 : 23] And there are hazards that can surround us on all sides. But I don't want you to be scared. I don't want you to be frightened. Because David uses these examples to illustrate the big point, namely that God is on our side.

Now this psalm is quite short. It's only eight verses. And what I'm told is that in the poem, a typical poem, a typical psalm, that the beginning and the middle and the end are the places where the poet wants to emphasize a truth.

And what do we see at the beginning? And what do we see in the middle? And what do we see at the end? Remember, interspersed between the dangerous animal so big it can swallow you, the

rushing water that will overflow or the sharp teeth that might just grind you to pieces or the snare that can capture you without any warning.

At the very beginning, what do we read? If it had not been the Lord who was on our side. In the middle, verse 6, blessed be the Lord who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.

And finally, at the end of Psalm 124, verse 8, we're told, our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

[10:48] So there we see the Lord. He's there in the beginning. He's there in the middle. He's there at the end. So no matter what the dangers are, no matter what the hazards are, He's there at every step of the way.

And you see, this is the evidence. This is the evidence that backs up the claim that David begins with. God is on our side. He's not indifferent.

He's not removed. He's not hostile. But He's right there. And David uses throughout the Lord as personal name of God.

Each one of us has a personal name. My personal name is Robert John Ackroyd. Ackroyd is my family name. Robert, my given name. And John was my grandfather's name.

So put those together. That's my personal name. It's on all of my documents. My driving license. My passport. And that personal name tells you quite a bit about an individual.

[11:50] The personal name of God tells us quite a bit about God Himself. Quite a bit about His character. Quite a bit about His nature. Quite a bit about His commitment.

Quite a bit about His integrity. And His honesty. So, the problems are many. But the Lord is there at every step of the way.

Verse 8 is quite significant as well. There was a man called John Calvin. And John Calvin would preach every Sunday in Geneva, Switzerland. And he had a call to worship.

And the call to worship was Psalm 124, verse 8. Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. So you see, there's a group of people who collectively can tell you that God is on our side.

And there's a group of people who can say that God, the Lord, is our help. What kind of people are these? Are these particularly strong people?

[13:00] Well, no. We've just been told that they're quite vulnerable. They're at risk. They're in danger. Are these people that are quite wise and quite knowledgeable? Well, not necessarily.

We're told that the wisdom that they have is that they are with the God who alone can help them. One of my favorite themes is history.

And I'm reminded during the American Civil War, President Lincoln was often asked, is God on our side? Is God on our side, Mr. President?

And he one time responded, he said, my concern is not whether God is on our side. My greatest concern is to be on God's side. For God is always right.

And at this point, I want to ask you, are you on his side? Are you with him? Because he's declaring that he is for us. He is with us.

[13:59] He wants to help us. How do you respond to these statements? Do you nod in agreement and affection to say, yes, that is my God.

That is our God. And I know him. And I experience his goodness. And I can understand exactly exactly what David is saying. Or do you find it difficult to say that?

You might say, well, Mr. Preacher, he might be your God and he might be the God of other people, but he's not mine. Well, I'd like you to consider both what David is saying here and in a moment, I want to look at what Paul has to say in the New Testament.

We need help. If I've learned one thing in recent years is that I need help. I'm not strong. I'm weak. I'm not wise.

I'm foolish. I'm not able to shape the events of my own life. I need someone who is greater than me. I need someone who is wiser than me.

[15:02] I need someone who is stronger than me. And this is the God that we worship. One who is greater by far, stronger by far, wiser by far, and one who looks upon us with affection, with mercy, with love, with care, with compassion.

We're told that he is on our side and we're told that our help is in the name of the Lord. And notice the measure of the power of our God.

God. You see, our Lord is the one who can make nothing into something. Now, many of you might be practical. Maybe you are a joiner by trade.

Maybe you're good at DIY. Maybe you just have a natural knack for doing things with your hands. You see, the best we can do, though, is that we can take existing materials and we can make something new.

I mean, this pulpit would have been constructed out of wood and a joiner would have fashioned the wood together to make sure all the angles were at right angles and if we had a competent electrician, the electrician could make sure that all the lights were on.

[16:18] Now, that's working with existing material. It's working with a power source. Our God does not need to work with existing material. He can call something into being that previously was nothing.

And I think John Calvin chose this verse and I think David captured this truth to show us the measure of the power of our God.

He can make something out of nothing. And if he can make the heaven and the earth, then by comparison, whatever your problem is, whatever our challenge is, whatever we are going through, by comparison, is smaller.

So if God can do the big thing, God can easily do the smaller thing. And I think David wants us to know that our God made the heavens and earth and that's a testimony of his power, of his grace, of his care, of his craftsmanship.

John Calvin commented on this verse and he said this. He said, David here extends to the church in all ages that which the faithful have already experienced.

[17:34] As I interpret this verse, he not only gives thanks to God for one benefit, but affirms that the church cannot continue safe insofar as she is protected by the hand of God.

His object is to animate the children of God with the assured hope that their life is in perfect safety under divine guardianship.

So you see, tonight, we are secure, we are safe, we are protected. The threats and the hazards may be many, but the help of our God who is on our side is greater by far.

So this idea that God is on our side is not a theme that is restricted to one part of the Bible. It's not a theme that's restricted to the Old Testament. It's not something that David experienced in isolation or the people of God of old experienced in that pilgrimage journey to Jerusalem.

But if you'll turn with me for a moment to the words at the very end of Romans chapter 8. You see, the same theme brings us right into the New Testament.

[18:50] And the Apostle Paul picks up on this language in verse 31 of chapter 8. What then, says Paul, shall we say to these things?

If God is for us, who can be against us? It's almost as if Paul is commenting on David's text. Paul is commenting upon the truth that David captures a thousand years earlier.

that if God is not on our side, we would be absolutely lost. If God is not on our side, we'd be absolutely helpless, absolutely hopeless.

But what can we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? So God is for his people.

God is for us. Not because of who we are, but because of who he is. Not because of what we have done, but because of what he has done.

[19:54] And you see, David made the statement and gave an ample list of evidence. The Apostle Paul gives the statement and gives an ample list of evidence.

Basically, we have a question here. And the question is, if God is for us, who can be against us? And the answer that we'll see is that if God is for us, no one and nothing can ever be against us. Notice in verse 32, he who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he also, not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Recently, I taught an elective in communication. And one of the themes that we looked at was rhetoric, the art of public speaking.

And one element of rhetoric is identifying logical fallacies, the mistakes that people make when they speak, the mistakes that people make when they write.

[21:07] So, for example, if somebody says there's really two options here, and they give you two options, but actually there are many other options. So that's what we call a false dichotomy. You either have to do this or you have to do that.

Well, actually you don't. There's other options. But another fallacy that people often make is they argue from something small, and then they presume they can do something big.

That's arguing from small to big. So, for example, I can swim. And if I had to, I could swim several lengths in a pool. If you wanted to, I could prove it.

I don't want to do it now, but I could prove that to you. I could swim several lengths in a pool. I haven't done it in a while, but I think I could do it. But if I were to say to you, I can swim several lengths in a pool, therefore, I can swim the channel.

That is a very, well, first of all, that's inaccurate, it's not true, but secondly, that's a bad use of logic. You can do something small, well, then I'm sure I could do something big.

[22 : 10] But the opposite, however, is not a logical fallacy, but good rhetoric, good logic. Because if I told you, I can swim the channel, therefore, I could go to the local pool and swim a few lengths.

Well, you would say, well, if you can swim the channel, of course, you can swim a few lengths in a pool. If you can swim those several miles between England and France, then surely you could swim in a local pool. Paul is arguing from greater to lesser.

He says, what did God do? God did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all. That means he's given us Jesus. And if he's given us Jesus, he's given us the biggest and the best and the greatest of any gift.

And Paul goes on to say, how will he not also, with him, graciously give us all things? So how do we know if God is for us? We know that God is for us because he's given us his son, that one who is most precious, that one who is most gracious, that one who is most powerful.

And what we have in the rest of chapter eight is what I describe as the three steps to a criminal prosecution. I work in a prison in Edinburgh.

[23 : 30] I mean, that's not my characterization of ETS, but I do work in ETS, and I also work in a prison. I'm a prison chaplain. And over the years, you get an idea of how the criminal justice system works.

Well, the criminal justice system begins with some form of accusation. Somebody is charged with a crime. There then is a judicial process where guilt or innocence is determined.

If somebody is guilty, they will be condemned. If somebody is found to be innocent, they will be acquitted. And if there's a charge, and if there's a conviction, there will be some form of punishment.

Look what Paul says here. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? That's the accusation.

That's the first step in the process. So you might say, well, if we're honest, there are many accusations that could be brought against us, and many of those accusations are absolutely true.

Things that we've done, things that we've said, things that we've thought, things that we have no justification for, things that we have no explanation for. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?

[24 : 42] It is God who justifies. God takes the guilty and declares them to be right. God takes the sinner and declares them to be perfect in his sight.

And you see, that's what we mean when we say that we trust Jesus. We trust Jesus, and in trusting Jesus, God justifies us. So the first stage of the process of any prosecution is a charge.

And Paul says, no charge can stand. Verse 34 is the second stage. Who is to condemn? So if the charge can't stand, what about condemnation?

Christ Jesus is the one who died. more than that who was raised. So young people, remember, I was asking you, what has Jesus done for us?

Who is to condemn? The answer to every Sunday school question you know is Jesus. The answer to every theological question is Jesus.

[25 : 52] The answer to every life question is Jesus. So there's no charge, no charge, and now the condemnation, well there's no condemnation because Jesus died.

There's no condemnation because Jesus is raised, and there's no condemnation because Jesus is at the right hand of God, and he is interceding for us.

This plural, not just me, not just you, but Jesus is interceding for us. This number of his people that come from all different places, that have all different backgrounds, that are so diverse, and yet he is praying for us.

Isn't that remarkable? Because if we're honest, our prayers are inconsistent. We often want to pray, we often plan to pray, but very often we leave prayer undone, unsaid, not Jesus.

So there's no charge that can stand, there's no condemnation that is possible. And then the third and final stage of any prosecution is verse 35.

[27 : 08] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? So if you're caught speeding, and you admit to your guilt, you will be separated from a certain portion of your money.

If you are convicted of a more serious crime, you could be separated from your liberty. You're no longer able to live at home, you have to live in a prison. Ultimately, the greatest separation is that if it's a capital crime, you can be separated from life.

So you see, when there's a charge, and when there's guilt, inevitably there's punishment. But at each of the three stages, no charge can stand, God justifies, no condemnation is possible because Jesus died and was raised.

And finally, separation. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? And Paul goes on to say, he said, what about maybe tribulation? What about distress?

What about things that are outside of ourselves, dangers that are outside of ourselves? What about dangers that are inside of ourselves? Fears, anxieties, uncertainties?

[28 : 19] Well, Paul gives us a whole list. Tribulation, and distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword. And then he quotes from Psalm 44. As it is written, for your sake we are being killed all the day long.

We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. So the situation seems to be very precarious. Seems to be quite dangerous, quite unsettled.

The evidence that surrounds us might lead us to conclude that we are in a vulnerable situation. But Paul says, no, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

He's for us, he's with us, he's on our side, and he loves us. This is what Paul is saying to this group of Christian believers in Rome.

they are very vulnerable, they are very weak, they are very much under threat, and yet Paul tells them these remarkable truths.

[29 : 30] In ancient Rome, whenever there was a great victory, there would be a parade that would go through the streets of the big city. Rome was the greatest European city of its age, and it could be a parade that would last two or three days.

This parade would go through all the streets. It was called a triumph. At the beginning of the parade would be the prisoners of war, those who were captured from an enemy army.

There would be the spoils, the treasure that was won in victory. Then you would have the foot soldiers, they would come next.

Then you would have the officers, they would come next. Then you would have the political leaders, the senators, and they would come next. But as this long procession snaked its way through the streets of Rome, the last in the procession was the conqueror, the conquering general, the emperor himself, the man of greatest honor.

And Paul says that image of that parade which the Roman Christians would have known, they would have put themselves in that parade, but they would have put themselves at the front of the parade, the prisoners of war, the slaves, the poor, the vanquished.

[30 : 51] Paul says actually the conqueror that you're familiar with, that image of a conqueror, Paul says is inadequate to describe the Christian.

The Christian is much greater. The Christian is much more powerful. Now Paul finds that the language, it's Greek, that he's using, he finds that the Greek language does not have a word to capture this truth.

Conqueror is the highest achievement. Conqueror is the highest word that the Greek language could afford and Paul says, I'm going to have to make a new word here.

And he makes a new word which in English we would say would be the conquering conqueror or the overcoming overcomer. It's kind of a repeated theme here.

Paul says whatever you know about a conqueror you are greater. You are more powerful. You have greater honor. Now the challenge of course is we hear what God says, we look at our own circumstances.

[31 : 57] We hear what God says, we look at our own circumstances and the two observations seem to be so different. God says, I am for you.

I am with you. God says, I love you. I care about you. God says, you are more than a conqueror through him who loved us. And we look at our circumstances and we think, I don't feel like a

conqueror.

I don't look like a conqueror. I don't seem to be victorious. So therefore, God must not be talking about me.

God must not be speaking to me because my circumstances seem so far removed. Now, the audience 2,000 years ago could have easily thought the same thing.

But let me put it to you this way. If God says something and you think something, and these two things are different, God says you are more than conquerors, and you say, I feel more than vanquished, somebody must be wrong.

[33 : 02] God says you think. God says you feel. Now, if someone is wrong, who do you think it is? Who could be wrong here?

The God who knows all things? The God who sees all things perfectly? The God who is altogether wise? So maybe your own feelings might be wrong.

Maybe your own perception might be wrong. Maybe you don't understand what God is actually saying to you, or maybe you're so concerned about the circumstances that you're in, that you find it difficult to accept.

But what I've come to believe is that when God says something, he means it, and he means us to believe it. He means us to accept it. He means us to respond to it.

And Paul goes on to say, he says, I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[34 : 11] I can't get away from this. God loves us. He says it. I can't get away from this. God loves us. He shows it. God says that he's for us.

God says that he's on our side. And he wants us to hear these truths. He wants us to believe these truths, and he wants us to respond to these truths. Now, I think it's true that if you persistently refuse to accept, if you deliberately choose to ignore, then you can place yourself outside of this group.

That it could be true that God is not speaking to you, that he is not on your side, that he is not with you, that he is not for you. I guess my question is, why on earth would you do that?

Why would you place yourself outside of God's help, outside of God's care? Why on earth would you want to find some way of excluding yourself from these great promises?

Because God isn't excluding you. God is using very inclusive language. He wants to draw us in. He doesn't want to push us out.

[35 : 26] I'm reminded of when I grew up, we had two different front door mats. One of the front door mats, my mother who would put it out, simply read welcome.

So somebody who came to our front door, they would see, you're welcome at this home. If my dad put out the welcome mat, he had a welcome mat that had two words on it.

The first word was go, and the second word was away. Now, sometimes I think we hear God say welcome but yet somehow in our head, we think, no, he's actually saying go away.

I'm actually saying to you, no, he's saying welcome, you can come, exactly who you are, exactly as you are. He's not speaking to people who are strong and wise and competent and able.

These people don't need help. These people don't need strength. These people don't need wisdom. He's speaking to people just like us, people who do get it wrong, people who could easily be accused, people who are accused would be easily condemned and people that are accused and condemned would easily find themselves separated.

[36 : 38] But God says that doesn't need to be the case because I've sent my son, I've sent my son on a rescue mission and I've given him the task to live the life that you haven't lived and I've given him the responsibility that he would die as a ransom for many to pay the price of people like us who have missed the mark and fallen short.

So God says that he is for us. God shows that he is for us in the sending of his son, in the life and in the death and the resurrection of Jesus.

And God wants us to receive all that he has done. He's done it all. We respond by saying thank you. We respond by saying amen.

We respond by saying I can't express in words how much I appreciate what you God have done for me and how you have now brought me into this number of those who are in the category that God is on our side and that God is with us and that God is for us and that God loves us.

So tonight we've had two clear testimonies. We've had a testimony of the servant of the shepherd king called David. We've had a testimony of the violent persecutor turned preacher evangelist Saul of Tarsus the apostle Paul and they seem to be sounding the same note.

[38 : 11] A thousand years separates them from each other. Two thousand years separates us from the apostle Paul and yet the theme seems to be as one. God is on our side.

He wants us to know it. He wants us to believe it and he wants us to live as a people for whom God is their help. God is their strength. God has given himself for us that we can now be safe, that we can now be secure, that we can now stand on these great and precious promises.

nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. God is presenting himself to you in the person of his son, in the work of his son, and saying this is what you mean. This is how important you and me are to God. He sends that which is the most precious thing, that he would redeem a people for himself, that are safe and secure.

He wants us to know that he loves us. He wants us to know that he's with us. He wants us to know that he's on our side and that he is pursuing a people personally and relentlessly and he will achieve his purpose.

[39 : 34] We cannot thwart him. He can rescue, he can redeem, he can renew, he can restore. Amen. Okay, young people, there were some dangerous things that David was telling us about.

Can you tell me one of them? Floods, excellent.

Floods, very dangerous, especially in the Middle East. A flood could, you know, you could come into church and it was dry out and all of a sudden, 30 minutes later and you've got a rushing river running through the town.

floods are dangerous. What's that? Shark, yeah, a big creature that's so big it could swallow you whole. Birds, that's right, the birds, the birds not so much of a threat, but where is the bird?

It's in a snare, it's in a trap, that's right. So all of these pictures are pictures of danger, pictures of threat, those sharp teeth that would crush you.

[40 : 40] So the second question is, how do we know that God is on our side? He's always with us, excellent, that's right.

The Bible, good answer. The Bible tells us. The Bible's always true. If God says it, it's true. God is on our side and he wants us to know it.

And the final question was the Apostle Paul, Paul tells us things that Jesus has done for us, so that we know that he is for us.

What has Jesus done? He died on the cross, that's right. He died, but what happened on Easter Sunday morning?

He rose from the dead, he ascended to heaven, and he sat down at the right hand of God. So all of these things he has done to show us that he is for us and with us.

[41 : 43] And fourth question, where do you think I'm from? America. How do you know I'm from America? I still have that accent, I think.

Well, folks, thank you so much for listening. I really appreciate that. You guys, full marks. We have a 22-point grading scale at Edinburgh Theological Seminary. I would give you all an A1, 22 out of 22.

I don't know if I've ever given that to your minister, but anyway, that's another story. Psalm 124 is our final singing. We're going to sing the traditional version, the second version of that psalm, the one we're all familiar with.

Now Israel may say in that truly, if that the Lord had not our cause maintained. Psalm 124, the second version, let's stand to sing to God's praise. Now Israel may say I'm not to thee, if that the Lord hath not our cause maintained.

If that the Lord hath not our rights sustained, when cruel men against us furiously rose up in wrath to make of us their prey, then certainly they had devoured us all, and swallowed quick for all that we could dim.

[43 : 49] Such was their rage as we might well esteem, and as fierce floods before them all things drown, so had they brought our soul to death wide down.

The raging streams with their proud swelling waves, and then our soul o'er well met in the deep. But blessed be God, who doth us safely keep, and hath not given us for a living prey, unto their teeth and bloody group held thee, feet.

He not a bird out of the fowler's snare, he escapes away, so is our soul set free.

broke are their nets, and the seas caped we.

[45 : 54] Therefore our help is in the Lord's great name, who have nondered by his great power did frame.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest upon, abide with us all now and forevermore.

Amen.