

The Psalms of David

*Franklin Christian Church
Fall 2017 Life Group Study*



Psalm 124 (Week of Sept. 17; 1 Sam. 17)

Introduction: Psalm 124 is part of a collection in the psalter called “The Songs of Ascent.” These songs were likely sung during the pilgrimages to Jerusalem prescribed in Ex. 23:14-17. Traveling pilgrims would sing these songs as they ascended the hill toward Jerusalem and then up the steps of the temple. They may also point toward a figurative ascent, as singing these songs on pilgrimage brought the community closer to God. David’s penning of this psalm reflects his experiences against overwhelming odds, as in the case of Goliath and the Philistines.

Have a group member read the psalm aloud. Group members with Bibles can follow along and note anything that stands out.

1. As a Song of Ascent, you might think of Psalm 124 as a “road trip” song. The singers would have looked forward to a coming festival in peace-filled Jerusalem. What are some things in our lives that we are looking forward to in the future and how is God involved in them?
2. Take some time to reflect on the imagery of the psalm, especially in vv. 3-7. How are Israel’s enemies depicted? How is Israel imagined? Where is God in the picture?
3. Part of the imagery of vv. 4-5 is the threat of tumultuous waters. The sea was a symbol of chaos for Israel – something untamable and overwhelming. Goliath and the Philistines surely fell into this category for David. What are some overwhelming things in our world that we feel too small to do anything about? Brainstorm together about what we can do about them with God on our side. Are there some things out of our control that just need to be trusted to God?

4. In verse 7, Israel is depicted as escaping their enemies. As a Song of Ascent (or “road trip” song), we might imagine their tone as leaving enemies like Goliath “in the dust,” like a bird escaping its trap. What problems have you left “in the dust” throughout your life that you can sing about now? How can you see God involved in your own or each other’s freedom from those problems?

5. The psalm begins and ends with the name of the LORD. We have spent some time looking forward and backward in our lives, and have noticed the Maker of heaven and earth’s presence in both. What does David’s decision to fight Goliath say about how he notices God’s activity in his life and the world? How does Saul fail to notice God?

6. What does this psalm reveal about David’s heart? What about God’s heart? What has this revealed in your hearts?