

It Is Better to Trust in the Lord

(Psalm 118:8)

Introduction:

1. An important lesson is taught in Psalm 118:8 about the value of trusting in the Lord [this is further emphasized in vs.9].
2. The Bible also provides many reasons why "it is better to trust in the Lord."
3. For one thing, Jewish history shows why it is better to trust in the Lord.
 - a. Rather than trust in the Lord to deliver them, on several occasions the Israelites hired their pagan neighbors to fight their enemies.
 - b. God was highly displeased and punished His people.
4. In our lessons today we are considering 2 additional matters.
 - a. This morning we will show from Psalm 124 that God has blessed and protected His people who trusted in Him.
 - b. This evening we will show from Psalm 121 that God will continue to bless and protect His people who trust in Him.
5. Let us turn our attention to Psalm 124.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1-5) IF GOD HAD NOT BEEN ON THE SIDE OF HIS PEOPLE, THEY WOULD HAVE PERISHED
 - A. The writer is reflecting upon an occasion when the enemies of the Israelites were harassing them.
 1. The enemies of the Israelites:
 - a. had risen up against them (vs.2b)
 - b. had kindled their wrath against them (vs.3b).
 2. If God had not been on the side of His people,:
 - a. their enemies would have swallowed them up quickly [as a wild animal devours its prey] (vs.3a)
 - b. the waters would have overwhelmed the Israelites (vs.4a).
 3. It is difficult to determine which occasion is being considered because God delivered the Israelites from their enemies so many times.
 - B. It could be that the writer was referring to the time when God delivered His people from the Egyptians.
 1. Years after Joseph moved his family to Egypt, the Egyptians mistreated the Israelites (Exodus 1:13-14).

2. The Israelites asked God for a deliverer (Exodus 2:23-25), and He sent Moses (Exodus 3:9-10).
3. Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt, so God brought the ten plagues upon the Egyptians.
4. Pharaoh finally sent the Israelites out of Egypt (Exodus 12:31-33).
5. Pharaoh changed his mind, and he pursued God's people (Exodus 14:8-9).
6. This caused the Israelites to be alarmed (Exodus 14:10), but Moses assured his people that God would fight for them (Exodus 14:13-14).
7. God delivered His people from the Egyptians (Exodus 14:26-31).
8. If God had not been on the side of His people, their enemies would have swallowed them up quickly, and the waters would have overwhelmed them.
9. This is just one occasion when God delivered His people from their enemies.

II. (vs.6-8) GOD IS PRAISED FOR DELIVERING HIS PEOPLE

- A. (vs.6) God is praised for not allowing His people to be a prey to their enemies.
- B. (vs.7) The Israelites escaped from their enemies much like a bird might escape from a snare.
- C. (vs.8) Reflecting upon God's deliverance led the writer to declare: *"our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."*

Conclusion:

1. Psalm 124 shows why it is better to trust in the Lord -- He has blessed those who trusted Him in the past.
2. This gives us confidence that He will continue to bless His people (vs.8).
3. Let us close by allowing the writer of Psalm 118 to explain why he made his statement in vs.8 [see vs.1-7].