



SONGS for the SOJOURN

**A Guide to Help Children
Engage the Psalms of Ascents
Part II: Psalm 124 - Psalm 126**

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SONGS FOR THE SOJOURN

When was the last time you took a trip to someplace fun?

What was the best part of the trip? The time between your house and the place you were going or actually arriving at that fun place?

If during the trip you said or thought, “Are we there yet?” or “How much longer until we get there?” it probably means being at that fun place was much better than traveling to the fun place.

An Ancient Journey

Many, many years ago, God’s people would travel from their homes to the city of Jerusalem to worship God. As they traveled, they would often sing songs with others, to help make their journey more enjoyable.

Some of those songs are recorded for us in the Bible. They are in the book we call The Psalms. Those songs, clustered together in Psalms 120-134, are often called the Songs or Psalms of Ascents.

Your Journey

Though you might not travel to Jerusalem to worship God, The Psalms of Ascents are also songs you can sing throughout your life. In fact, God’s people continue to sing these Psalms or songs throughout their day—whether they are happy or sad, excited or disappointed—no matter what they are feeling.

God’s people often think of their lives as a long journey that will end when they see Jesus. Singing these songs helps remind God’s people they are on a journey

Singing on Your Journey

When they are happy, these songs remind them God loves them and they will even be happier when they are with Jesus. When they are sad, these songs remind them God loves them and when they see Jesus, they won’t be sad anymore. When they are excited, these songs remind them God loves them and when they see Jesus, they will be even more excited. When they are disappointed, these songs remind them God loves them and when they see Jesus, they won’t ever be disappointed again.

When they sing these songs, God’s people are reminded that Jesus also sang these songs when he lived on the earth. And one day, they will get to sing these songs with Jesus.

Singing these songs help you remember how wonderful it will be when you get to the most special place of all—heaven—and see Jesus. And singing these songs helps you remember that during the time before you see Jesus—though you may cry out “Am I there yet?” or “How much longer?”—you can find joy in the journey now.

Using this Book

Work through this book together with your mom or dad. Try to get through one Psalm a week. Read the Psalm out loud. Think about what the Psalm means as you read the explanation that follows. Answer the questions by drawing or writing your answers on the blank paper. Pray with your mom or dad after you are done.

PSALM 124

Our Help is in the Name of the LORD

A SONG OF ASCENTS. OF DAVID.

¹ If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—
let Israel now say—

² if it had not been the LORD who was on our side
when people rose up against us,

³ then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;

⁴ then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;

⁵ then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

⁶ Blessed be the LORD,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth!

⁷ We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped!

⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

PSALM 124

In Psalm 124, God's people thank God for rescuing them from a really bad situation. They don't tell us about the situation. So when God's people sang this song, they would have thought about times that God had rescued them in the past.

One story they may have remembered was the story of God's rescuing their ancestors from Egyptian armies.

Thinking About the Psalm

Read the story of that rescue in Exodus 14 or in The Jesus Storybook Bible ("God makes a way," p. 92-98).

After reading that story, read Psalm 124 again.

Write down or tell your mom or dad some of the things you think are the same between Psalm 124 and the story of God's rescuing his people from Pharaoh and the Egyptian armies?

Talk with your mom or dad about how these rescue stories are similar to how Jesus rescued his people from their situation.

Write a few sentences or draw a picture about how these rescue stories make you feel.

Praying the Psalm

God, thank you that you always rescue your children from their biggest problems and their greatest danger. Thank you for sending Jesus to rescue us from our sins. Amen.

PSALM 125

The LORD SURROUNDS HIS PEOPLE

A SONG OF ASCENTS.

¹ Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

² As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people,
from this time forth and forevermore.

³ For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest
on the land allotted to the righteous,
lest the righteous stretch out
their hands to do wrong.

⁴ Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,
and to those who are upright in their hearts!

⁵ But those who turn aside to their crooked ways
the LORD will lead away with evildoers!
Peace be upon Israel!

PSALM 125

When it starts to storm, do you try to get outside or stay inside? Why?

In Psalm 125, God's people remember the ways God promises to protect them. As they remember that protection, they are told to trust him because he promises to protect them. This is much like you remembering to go inside when it rains because you remember the ways your house protects you from the storm.

Thinking About the Psalm

Draw a picture of a city surrounded by mountains.

As you look at that picture, imagine people trying to attack that city without things like cars or helicopters or airplanes.

What would make it hard for them to attack the city? Do you think the mountains would make the people feel safe?

Praying the Psalm

Jesus, thank you for dying to protect us from all the things that could hurt us. I am glad you rose from the dead so that one day I can be with you, forever protected from anything that could hurt me. Amen.

PSALM 126

Restore Our Fortunes, O LORD

A SONG OF ASCENTS.

¹ When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
“The LORD has done great things for them.”

³ The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like streams in the Negeb!

⁵ Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!

⁶ He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.

PSALM 126

Draw a picture of a person crying. Tell your mom or dad what made them cry.

Now, draw a picture of that same person laughing and shouting with joy.

What changed? What made that person stop crying and start laughing?

In Psalm 126, God's people tell him how happy they are that he has made them stop crying and start laughing.

Thinking About the Psalm

Think about something in your life that makes you cry or want to cry. Talk to your mom or dad about what would make you stop crying and start laughing.

Praying the Psalm

Write out or speak a prayer to God, telling him about something that makes you sad and asking him to help you start laughing about that situation.