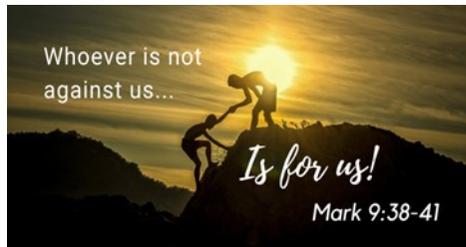


*Glory to You Lord Jesus Christ.*



38 John said to him,

‘Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.’

39 But Jesus said, ‘Do not stop him;

for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of me.

40 Whoever is not against us is for us.

41 For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

42 ‘If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.

43 If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire.

45 And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.’

47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,

48 where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

49 ‘For everyone will be salted with fire.

50 Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.’

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*

A reading from Esther [7.1-6,9-10;9.20-22]



7<sup>1</sup> So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther.

2 On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, ‘What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.’

3 Then Queen Esther answered, ‘If I have won your favour, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request.

4 For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated.

If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace;

but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.’

5 Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther,

‘Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?’

6 Esther said, ‘A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!’

Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

9 Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said,

‘Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman’s house, fifty cubits high.’ And the king said, ‘Hang him on that.’

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

20 Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

21 enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year,

22 as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor. Hear the word of the Lord.

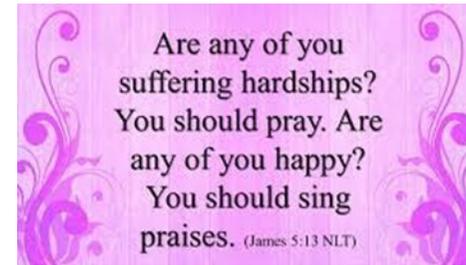
*Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 124



1. If the Lord had not been on our side,  
now may Israel say:  
    if the Lord had not been on our side,  
    when our enemies rose again,
2. **Then they would have swallowed us alive:  
    when their anger was kindled against us.**
3. Then the waters would have overwhelmed us,  
and the torrent gone over us:  
    the raging waters would have gone clean over us.
4. **But praised be the Lord:  
    who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.**
5. We have escaped like a bird  
from the snare of the fowler:  
    the snare is broken, and we have gone free.
6. **Our help is in the name of the Lord:  
    who has made heaven and earth.**

**Glory to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:  
as in the beginning, so now, and for ever. Amen**



**12 Above all, my beloved, do not swear,  
either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath,  
but let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no,  
so that you may not fall under condemnation.**  
**13 Are any among you suffering? They should pray.  
Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise.**  
**<sup>14</sup>Are any among you sick?  
They should call for the elders of the church  
and have them pray over them,  
anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.**  
**<sup>15</sup>The prayer of faith will save the sick,  
and the Lord will raise them up;  
and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.**  
**<sup>16</sup>Therefore confess your sins to one another,  
and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.  
The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.**  
**<sup>17</sup>Elijah was a human being like us,  
and he prayed fervently that it might not rain,  
and for three years and six months it did not rain on the  
earth.**  
**<sup>18</sup>Then he prayed again,  
and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.**  
**19 My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you  
wanders from the truth and is brought back by another,  
<sup>20</sup>you should know that  
whoever brings back a sinner from wandering  
will save the sinner's soul from death  
and will cover a multitude of sins.**  
**Hear the word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.***