

The God Who Is My Help

Psalm 121

Psalms 120-134 are called “Psalms of Ascent” or degrees coming from a word that means “to go up.” They are also called the “Pilgrim Songs.”

- Ten are anonymous; four are attributed to David (122, 124, 131, 133) and one to Solomon (127).
- They formed something of a “travelers” or “pilgrims hymnal” as the Hebrew people would “go up” to Jerusalem to celebrate their three major annual feast:
 - Passover in the spring
 - Pentecost in early summer
 - Tabernacles in the fall
- A form of the word first translated “keep” in v. 3 appears 6 times in the psalm (3b, 4b, 5a, 7a, 7b, 8a). It appears as “preserve” in vs. 7 and 8 in the *NKJV*.
- “Yahweh” or Jehovah is also mentioned five times. The only one we can truly count on any day and any time is the Lord who:
 - 1) Is Creator of heaven and earth (vs. 1-2)
 - 2) Never sleeps or slumbers (vs. 3-4)
 - 3) Is there day and night (vs. 5-6)
 - 4) Protects us from all evil now and forever (vs. 7-8)
- Therefore, like a traveling family reunion God’s people would sing these songs together helping them focus on the Lord and all that He had done for them.

I. My Lord’s power is before me. 121:1-2

- “The hills:” a safe haven for robbers and petty terrorists.
“The hills:” that which pointed to and led to Jerusalem.
An occasion for anxiety on the one hand and anticipation on the other.
- The psalmist is asking where/who is the one who will keep me from stumbling along life’s journey (v.3), who will overshadow me (v.5) and be by my side (v.5), who will keep me from evil (v.7) and never leave me or forsake me (v.8)?
- Verse 2 answers his question and takes a giant leap from the hills to the one who made them, from the one who made the hills to the one who made the universe. *Yahweh* made heaven and earth. He made me and He cares for me. He is omnipotent in power, omnipresent in presence and omniscient in knowledge. He is great and powerful, powerful and personal.
- John 1, Colossians 1 and Hebrews 1 reveal this great and awesome Creator is also our great and awesome Redeemer, King Jesus.
- There indeed is a higher throne! This indeed is my Father’s world.

II. My Lord’s providence is with me. 121:3-4

- There is a change from the first to the third person as the psalmist dialogues within his soul.
- The four negatives that appear are crucial to the argument of these two verses.
- He will not allow your foot to be moved (slip, slide, stagger, be shaken) tells us there is a moment by moment watchcare over us by Jehovah. Providentially He is guarding us and guiding us. He keeps (2X). Jude 24-25 picks up on this aspect of God’s character applying it to security of the believer in salvation.

- Pagan gods sleep and need rest. Not Jehovah! He does not slumber (2X) or doze off, nor does He sleep (cf. Psalm 34:15).

III. **My Lord's presence is beside me.** **121:5-6**

- These two verses begin with two potent poetic promises that unfold like a set of stairs with each additional step providing a further word of promise and assurance.
- Wiersbe says, "Our keeper is on the throne looking down on us, but He is at our side to shield us from all harm" (336).
- "Shade" speaks of His protective presence. "At your right hand" speaks of His personal presence.
- The sun and the moon stand for dangers that come in the day and in the night.
- Right there beside me, promising never to leave me or forsake me (Hebrews 13:5), I am promised His presence day to day, month to month, year to year. No, it is minute by minute! No, it is second by second! (cf. Psalm 91:1-2).

IV. **My Lord's protection is around me.** **121:7-8**

- To be kept from all evil does not imply a trouble free life, but a well protected life (cf Ps 23:4ff). It embraces the truth of Genesis 50:20.
- It claims Romans 8:35-39.
- Going out and coming in means every aspect of life and living. It draws attention to the details of life. God is in the big things and the little things. (ex. The book of Ruth).

Conclusion:

Evidently God likes high places!

- Think of high Mt. Moriah where God provides a ram for Abraham, sparing his only son Isaac (Genesis 22), a preview of our God not sparing His Son as He paid in full the penalty of all our sins.
- Think of Moses coming down from the mountain, the hills, with God's law, the very expression of His character (Exodus 20), a law now written on our hearts.
- Think of Jesus on the Mount, the hillside, delivering the greatest sermon ever preached (Matthew 5-7).
- Think of our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17), transfigured with the Father declaring from heaven, "this is My beloved Son, hear Him."
- Think of Jesus on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24, painting the prophetic portrait of the end times.
- Think of our Savior on Calvary's hill, bearing the full measure of God's wrath for sinners (Matthew 27).
- Think of our Lord's Great Commission delivered to his church, on what Matthew calls, "the mountain which Jesus had appointed them" (Matthew 28:16).
- Think of our Lord on the Mount of Olives, ascending back to heaven but leaving us a promise, "this same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11-12).
- Finally, join the apostle John on Patmos for the glorious Revelation vision. Join him at the end of the book where in 21:10-11 we read, "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

This is the God who is our help! Why would you look anywhere else?!