



Summer in the Psalms

“Looking for Help”

Psalm 121:1-8

Context: Psalm 121 is the second of fifteen Psalms of Ascent. It is difficult to determine if this is a pilgrimage ‘Psalm of Ascent’ for one of the three major Jewish Feasts or a Psalm of exiles in Babylon where the people are longing for those pre-exilic days of worship in Jerusalem’s Temple. Some think Psalm 121 was sung by the Temple Levitical singers as they watched those

leading the Pilgrimage ascend to the second of 15 steps of the Temple. Whatever the case, there is a longing of the elect for God’s help and protection as they sojourn on their life journey. It is with an “eye” on God’s protection that we begin our journey through this Psalm.

The Pearl: The steps to our eternal home are kept by a Guardian who is certain (cf. Psalm 121:8).

Question of Protection – Psalm 121:1-2

The eternal destination of our journey is readily apparent by where we cast the eyes of our heart. A longing for a new heaven and earth often finds us in the company of like-minded souls on the same pilgrimage. The Creator of all that is visible and invisible is our ultimate companion and Guardian on our journey. He has hedged us in from before and behind. It only takes eyes opened like that of Gehazi’s to see.

Promises of Protection – Psalm 121:3-6

The Psalmist describes the Lord’s protection both in terms of accident and inattention. God is not like a human person who lacks the capacity to deliver from peril or to remain alert. The use of opposites of night and day, along with the sun and moon, symbolizes the totality of the Lord’s physical protection.

Extent of Protection – Psalm 121:7-8

Finally, the Psalmist addresses one last concern of the sojourner, the duration of protection. The writer assures his reader that the Lord’s security is one that shepherds the entire being of the wayfarer from the here and now of time into the forever of the New Jerusalem’s age of ages (Revelation 22:5).



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For Further Study:

As a **Bible study method**, look up the term hills or mountain ([hills of Jerusalem](#)). How many are there? What are some significant meanings that a Jewish wayfarer might associate with mountains (cf. Genesis 8:1-5; Exodus 19-20; Isaiah 40:12)?

As a **theological study method**, consider how your own eye is a lamp to the body (cf. Matthew 6:22-23; Ephesians 1:18-23). What is it that you are looking at now? How would you lift your eyes from that which you now see unto the hills that lie beyond your current life (cf. 2 Kings 6:14-17; Revelation 21:10; 23-27)?

Preservation of life even unto eternal life is promised in Psalm 121:8. We too eagerly anticipate life eternal following resurrection, as is professed in First Baptist's **Faith Statement** "On Last Things" at <http://fbccorvallis.org/wp/about-fbc/faith-statement/>. How does the sojourner who trusts in the Lord explain why evil happens to them in light of Psalm 121:7-8?

Transformation exercise:

Memorize Psalm 121:8. Reflect on two occasions where God's vigilant care delivered you from peril. Bring that message of encouragement to someone who is despondent this week, Selah.

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