

From Where Does My Help Come?

What is the message of the Book of Psalms?

Psalm 121

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • July 23, In the year of our Lord, 2017

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Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – God as our helper

Persuasion:

I. Psalm 121.0 | The Journey to Jerusalem

0 A Song of Ascents.

- A. Some translations have, “A Song of Degrees.”
- B. As ancient Israelites traveled to Jerusalem for a feast day,
 - 1. they would sing or repeat Psalms once they got in view of Jerusalem.
 - 2. Psalm 121 is one of those Psalms.

II. Psalm 121.1–2 | From Where Comes My Help?

- 1 I will lift up my eyes to the hills—
From whence comes my help?**
- 2 My help comes from the LORD,
Who made heaven and earth.**

- A. Why would he lift his eyes to the hills?
- B. The children of Israel often used the hills for idol worship.

1. Second Kings 16.4

**4 And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills,
and under every green tree (2Ki 16.4).**

2. Jeremiah 13.27

**27 “I have seen your adulteries
And your lustful neighings,
The lewdness of your harlotry,
Your abominations on the hills in the fields.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!**

**Will you still not be made clean?"
(Jer 13.27)**

3. Jeremiah 17.2

**2 While their children remember
Their altars and their wooden images
By the green trees on the high hills.
(Jer 17.2)**

4. Hosea 4.12–13

**12 My people ask counsel from their wooden idols,
And their staff informs them.
For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray,
And they have played the harlot against their God.
13 They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops,
And burn incense on the hills,
Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths,
Because their shade is good.
Therefore your daughters commit harlotry,
And your brides commit adultery.
(Hos 4.12–13)**

C. Jerusalem was located in the hills or mountains, but

1. Jerusalem was not the help of the Israelites.
2. Daniel prayed with his windows open to Jerusalem (Dan 6.10).
3. Solomon spoke of future generations turning back to the Lord and turning toward Jerusalem (1Ki 8.30–52).
 - a) They would do so because the temple was in Jerusalem.
 - b) However, it was that God dwelt in the temple.
 - (1) All this looking to the hills of Jerusalem,
 - (2) meant that ultimately the Israelite looked to God.

D. However, the psalmist discovered with the eyes of faith

1. that the hills or mountains in any form,

2. did not give him help.

E. He declared that his help comes from the Lord, because

1. He made heaven and earth,
2. which would include the hills.

F. Listen to Psalm 24,

**1a The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness...
(Psa 24.1a)**

1. That would mean that He owns the hills and the mountains.
2. Paul quoted Psalm 24 twice in First Corinthians 10 to say it included food.
 - a) If Psalm 24 includes food,
 - b) it certainly includes hills and mountains.

G. Surely then Moses in Psalm 90 spoke the truth,

**2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.
(Psa 90.2)**

H. I think the psalmist would agree with Jeremiah,

**23 Truly, in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills,
And from the multitude of mountains;
Truly, in the LORD our God
Is the salvation of Israel.
(Jer 3.23)**

I. In what ways does the Lord become our help?

III. Psalm 121.3-4 | **The Lord Secures Your Foot**

- 3 He will not allow your foot to be moved;
He who keeps you will not slumber.**
- 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel**

Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

A. With Him as your help, you can stand your ground.

1. He makes us like Shammah, the son of Agee, one of David's mighty men,

11 And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines. 12 But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory (2Sa 23.11–12).

2. Temptations to compromise your faith come at you constantly.

a) Remember your help the Lord God,

(1) who is greater than the hills,

(2) who created the mountains, the earth, and the heavens, and

b) you shall not be moved.

B. He will never fail to secure your foot, because

1. He does not slumber.

2. The One who keeps Israel, and

a) now keeps the church,

b) does not slumber or sleep.

C. Remember how Elijah mocked the prophets of Baal?

1. After they agreed for each to have their god answer by fire, and

2. the prophets of Baal went first, but Baal would not help them,

27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened" (1Ki 18.27).

D. What I am telling you is this,

26 For the LORD will be your confidence,

**And will keep your foot from being caught.
(Pro 3.26)**

**24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the LORD upholds him with His hand.
(Psa 37.24)**

**24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
25 To God our Savior,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen.
(Jude 24–25)**

IV. Psalm 121.5–6 | The Lord Shades You

**5 The LORD is your keeper;
The LORD is your shade at your right hand.
6 The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.**

A. The Lord is your keeper.

1. Therefore, He will protect and care for you at the right times.
2. Since He does not sleep, He knows what is going on.

B. He shields you from the sun.

1. Although the sun averages 93 million miles from earth,
2. during the summer in Grants Pass,
 - a) it feels like the sun is inches away.
 - b) Remember Jonah feeling the intensity of the sun.

C. In His Parable of the Sower, Jesus used the sun to represent persecution.

1. When the Lord is at your right hand,

2. He offers protection from the intensity of persecution.

D. The psalmist also declared that having the Lord as your keeper and shade,

1. He not only shields you from the sun during the day, but

2. also keeps the moon from striking you during the night.

a) Moonlight does not harm us, nor make us uncomfortable, but

b) moonlight striking us means

(1) that the night is cloudless.

(2) Living in Colorado and in Klamath Falls I learned

(a) that clear skies in winter means it is going to be very cold.

(b) We have a little bit of experience of that here.

E. What ever strikes us, and

1. whenever it strikes us,

2. the Lord helps us endure it.

V. [Psalm 121.7-8](#) | [The Lord Preserves You](#)

**7 The LORD shall preserve you from all evil;
He shall preserve your soul.**

**8 The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in
From this time forth, and even forevermore.**

A. He preserves our going out and our coming in, because

1. He does not sleep, but

2. secures our foot.

a) He works to make sure that when we go out and when we come in,

b) that we can do both.

B. At home, or away from home,

1. He is there.

2. He preserves our souls.

- a) I can see that the body does not last forever, but
- b) I know that the soul can and does last forever.
 - (1) That is the part I want Him to preserve.
 - (2) That is the part He looks upon.

Exhortation:

I. Regardless of your troubles,

- A. regardless of what ails you,
- B. regardless of your anxieties,
 - 1. He can handle it.
 - 2. He can help you get through it.

II. If the Lord made heaven and earth,

- A. do you think He can help you?
- B. What problem, what issue do you have that He cannot handle?
 - 1. Some people really believe that God cannot handle their troubles.
 - 2. He has handled our greatest problem, sin!
 - a) To show us how far He would go to help us,
 - b) He came down here,
 - (1) lived as we do,
 - (2) experienced life as we do,
 - (a) then suffered for our number one problem, sin.
 - (b) Don't tell me He cannot handle your problem.