

“THE JOURNEY OF LIFE”

Psalm 121:1-8

Open your Bible to Psalm 121. Today I want to share with you a message that I’ve entitled—*“The Journey of Life.”* Have you considered that your life is simply a journey from a definite starting point to a definite ending point? This psalm certainly captures this idea; however, it is also found throughout the Bible.

Philippians 3:14... I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 12:22–24... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

Psalms 121 is one of the *Ascent Psalms* (Psalms 120-134). The Jewish people would sing these psalms as they journeyed towards Jerusalem for the major feasts—*Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles*. **[READ IT]**

Do you get the picture? We're all on a journey toward an eternal destination. This particular psalm makes an important point for everyone who embarks on the journey of life...

YOU NEED GOD!

Some of you might be thinking...

Hey, I don't need God. I'm doing great on my own. I've got a great job. I'm having fun. People love to be around me. My dreams for this life are amazing. Why do I need God?

This psalm points out two reasons why you need God for the journey of life...

1. GOD IS YOUR HELPER.

Let's focus our attention on verses 1-2...

Psalm 121:1... I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come?

What's the key word in these verses? It's the word, "Help". In verse 1, the psalmist lifts his eyes to the mountains. His journey to Jerusalem would take him through mountains, valleys, rivers, and difficult terrain. Thieves used the mountains as hide-outs. Wild animals lurked in the shadows. The roads were rough, and the climb was difficult.

His question speaks volumes—"***From where shall my help come?***" He recognized that he needed help! Have you come to the place in your journey where you realize that you need help?

Psalm 121:2... My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

I love how the Holy Spirit inspired this man of God to supply the source of the help he desperately needed. His words are personal, not simply pragmatic. "***My help comes from the Lord.***"

I know you've heard this statement—*God helps those who help themselves*. Is that biblical?

No, it's not. Benjamin Franklin made that statement. Here's the point. God helps those who can't help themselves!

God is a present help.

Psalm 46:1... God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

On this journey of life, you need to accept the fact that you need help. You also need to know that God is present with you when you face difficulties on your journey.

God is a powerful help.

Don't miss the second part of verse 2. **God made heaven and earth.** The mountains are a reminder that we must look up, but we must look beyond them to the Creator God who fashioned them. He has unlimited wisdom and power that is totally sufficient to meet all your needs for the journey of life. Stay connected to the one reliable source of help. Remember this...

An attitude of self-sufficiency will disqualify you from receiving God’s supernatural help as you face the difficulties of life’s journey!

YOU NEED GOD!

He is your helper. Secondly...

2. GOD IS YOUR KEEPER.

I want you to notice a couple of changes as we move into the rest of the psalm...

- **In verses 1-2, the psalmist speaks in first person—“I” and “My”. In verses 3-8, he speaks in second person—“You” and “Yours”.**
- **In verses 3-8, the key word is “Keep”. He uses this same Hebrew word 6 times. In the original, it means *“to watch over, to protect, or to guard.”***

God Provides Stability

Psalm 121:3–4... He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. 4

Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.

Slipping and falling on the rugged, rocky terrain that led to Jerusalem was always a possibility. Here's a wonderful promise for our own journey of life.

We can slip up morally, financially, relationally, doctrinally, and spiritually. If you turn to Jesus in saving faith and walk with Him and live for Him, He will give you stability.

Psalm 37:23–24... The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. 24 When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.

Psalm 55:22... Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

Have you ever thought that the reason you haven't made an unmitigated mess of your life is because God is keeping you from slipping? He is constantly providing stability for you!

Look at the word, "behold" in verse 4. It literally means to wake up to glorious reality. God will constantly keep you, protect you, make you stable!

"He who keeps you will not slumber...He will neither slumber nor sleep."

I love what H.B. Charles said about this...

God never gets drowsy. He never goes to sleep on the job. Our God works the night shift. He has eternal insomnia. Why are you awake? Why are you worrying?

Trust God to give you the stability you desperately need as you journey through life.

God Provides Security

Psalm 121:5–6... The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade on your right hand. 6 The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night.

As the Jewish people travelled toward Jerusalem for a celebration of worship during

the feasts, they had to face the elements. The heat of the Middle Eastern sun would have been almost unbearable at times. Some sort of shade would have been a welcome relief.

The psalmist made the point that the Lord is ***“your shade on your right hand.”*** The right hand in Jewish thought is the place of favor and strength.

Keep this in mind. Shade does not remove the sun. It does block its harmful effects. The Lord is your keeper. He may not remove your problems and challenges. He will protect you from their harmful effects!

Psalm 16:8... I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Psalm 27:5... For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent He will hide me; He will lift me up on a rock.

Glory to God! He will provide security for you day and night...

Psalm 121:6... The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night.

The Hebrew language often uses extreme opposites to signify totality. God is present 24/7 to help you and to keep you when you face the dangers and difficulties of life!

Psalm 121:7... The LORD will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul.

God will protect you from “*all evil.*” That includes physical, moral, and spiritual evil. Jesus taught us to pray...

Matthew 6:13... ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.’

Oh, you will have problems. Bad things do happen to God’s children. However, evil will never win out in your life. “**He will keep your soul.**” H.B. Charles said...

Sometimes God has to close a window so He can open a door. Sometimes He

**has to let you be sick in your body so it
will be well with your soul.**

Let's look at the final verse...

**Psalm 121:8... The LORD will guard your going
out and your coming in From this time forth
and forever.**

This is one of the verses devout Jews recite when they leave or enter their homes. Here is another one of the extreme opposites that reflect totality in the Hebrew language.

God protects and guards you at home or abroad. He provides security when you travel, when you change jobs, when your marriage is on the rocks, when you receive bad news from the doctor, and even when your journey comes to an end through death. The Lord will give you perpetual security!

**Jude 24–25... Now to Him who is able to keep
you from stumbling, and to make you stand in
the presence of His glory blameless with great
joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through
Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty,**

dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

CONCLUSION

You and I are on a journey of life. Psalm 121 is a great song for us to live by. Here's the point...

YOU NEED GOD!

He wants to be your helper.

- **He is a present help**
- **He is a powerful help**

He wants to be your keeper.

- **He provides stability**
- **He provides security**

You can trust Him at every stage of your journey. Some of you are in a very difficult stage right now. Fear and uncertainty are overwhelming you. Come to the altar and express to God your appreciation for His help and for His ability to keep you. Trust Him!

Some of you have never admitted that you need God. You're winging it as you journey through life. I urge you to stop right now. Admit to God that you are a sinner, and you can't go on without Him. Receive Jesus by faith and commit your life to Him!

**1 Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child, and forever, I am.**

**2 I think of my blessed Redeemer,
I think of Him all the day long;
I sing, for I cannot be silent;
His love is the theme of my song. [Refrain]**

**3 I know I shall see in His beauty
The King in whose law I delight,
Who lovingly guardeth my footsteps,
And giveth me songs in the night. [Refrain]**

**Refrain:
Redeemed, redeemed,
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!
His child, and forever, I am.**

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