

Trusting the Lord in Turbulent Times

Psalm 121

We are witnessing a tectonic shift in our world today. My old prof Howard Hendricks said it right: *Everything nailed down is coming loose*. This psalm, sung by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for the feasts, directs pilgrims of every age to trust always in the Lord.

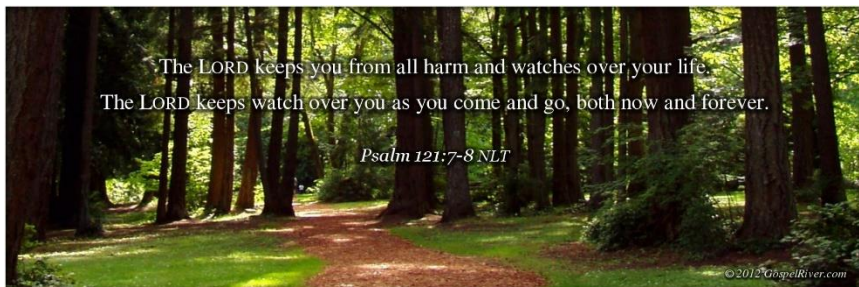
A Song of Assurance: He is Able to Keep You

- The psalmist trusts in the Lord, his omnipotent Helper (1-2)
- The Lord is a trustworthy helper to all who trust in Him (3-8)

The Rest of the Story: A ‘Song of Ascents’

- Pilgrims on a journey – to worship Yahweh in His temple.
- Pilgrims today on a journey – to our eternal home in heaven.

*Trust the Lord in the thick of life
When problems loom on the horizon
When times are rugged
When the heat is on
Trust the Lord...for your now, and forever.*



Digging Deeper

1. The opening line of Psalm 121 is well known: *I lift up my eyes to the hills...* This line has been interpreted two different ways: The older King James Version reads, *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help*. In most translations the second line is a question: *Where does my help come from?* The best clue to which reading is better is the superscription, which identifies this psalm as ‘A song of ascents.’ What does this title refer to? What are ‘the hills’ that the psalm speaks of? Why did the psalmist need help?
2. Whatever danger ‘the hills’ held for the psalmist, his help came from a much higher place and power (v2): *My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth*. Sometimes, when life is turbulent, even our ‘molehills’ can seem like mountains. Have you ever felt that way? Did you call to the Lord for help? How have you found God faithful in your life?
3. What doubts about God does the psalmist address in verses 3-4? Having your foot slip when you are climbing in the mountains can be dangerous; what does the first line of v3 assure us about God? The affirmation that God does not get tired or fall asleep reminds us that God is *always* trustworthy. The psalmist adds that God *watches over Israel*. Why was this significant to Jews in Old Testament times? Considering the rebirth of Israel as a nation, *how much more* significance does it have for us today?!
4. Verses 5-7 use a figure of speech called a *merism* to emphasize the extent to which God watches over us. A merism is when two contrasting parts are used to express one totality. For example, if I said, ‘God loves you whether you’re 1 or 100,’ what I mean is that God loves you *no matter how old you are*. What does the *merism* in verse 6 tell us about how much of the time God will watch over us? What do the merisms in v.7 tell us about where and when God watches over our lives? What is the message of this psalm for believers living in turbulent times?