

# “Where Does Our Help Come From?”

## Psalm 121



### Directions

- **Pray:** *Ask God to strengthen you by His Spirit to help you grow and change for His glory alone.*
- **Read/Meditate:** *Psalm 121*
- **Highlight/Underline:** *3-5 truths from this devotional that impacted you spiritually and come ready to discuss.*

Where does our help come from? Depending on how you answer that question, or whether or not you have even thought of asking the question that the Psalmist asks, will say a lot about the kind of person we are. If we are persons who are self-sufficient and believe that we have all the resources necessary within us to face any and all situations, then we will not hear with any understanding and neither will we care about what the Psalmist promises. So this devotional is not for the self-sufficient, but it is for those who do care what God has to say.

Hopefully, those of us who have ears to hear and who know the saving grace of Jesus Christ through the forgiveness of sin, are not to be numbered among the self-sufficient. We care. But, if we are honest with ourselves, we will admit that we need help, at times more than another, but we always need help. The help that we need can be of various sorts; it can be external to us, or internal. It can be circumstantial or personal and related to our health.

For instance, sometimes we need help in the midst of a loved one dying, or in a difficult circumstance. May be as parents we need help in bringing up our children? We are also in need of help as we get older. Let's face it, we are getting older. It's hard to believe that at one time, we thought we were indestructible. But, as we get older, we are finding that there are times in our life when our needs revolve around our bodies. Our eyes fade, our teeth fall out, we are afraid to go out at night and our legs give way. (Ecc. 12: 1-5). It is especially in these cases that the need for help touches our hearts; the very core of our existence. At such times, we find ourselves dealing with sickness, and we notice that every time we get sick, the recovery time is longer and sometimes we never recover.

Why is this? Well, the short answer is that we must face the fact that infirmity belongs to the human condition. You might say, that such an answer as the one I just gave is obvious. If that is

the case, then longer and more profound answer to the question of why we need help, is because our infirmity is evidence, is a symptom and a reminder, of the foretaste of death due to sin. The reason why it is so troublesome to us is because even though everyone gets sick and dies, and even though sickness and death can be shown to be statistically significant, sickness and death are not normal for human beings. The problem is not simply being human, the problem is sin and separation from the Living and true God. Just because sin is the problem the Psalmist promises us that our help is found in the name of the Lord,

*Lord, help me, lest I perish*

So today, and over the next few devotions, we will rejoice in the help that comes from the Lord. Help which is offered to us in the words of this Psalm. Help that is embodied in Jesus for He came to save His people from their sin.

*The first thought is: My help comes from the LORD.*

There has been much ink spilled on the circumstances that surround the writing of this Psalm, but no one really knows the exact circumstances in which this Psalm was written, We are not even sure of the exact life situation to which the psalmist speaks. But perhaps we can say somethings.

The Psalm bears the title, A SONG OF ASSENT. That being said, perhaps we may be permitted to think of a band of pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem for one of the yearly feasts. At least some of the Psalms of this grouping were sung on such an occasion. Perhaps these pilgrims are just a day's journey from the Holy City. As they approach Jerusalem, in anticipation of their arrival at the Temple, they lift their eyes to the horizon where they see mount Zion in the distance. As they gaze upon the hills that surround Jerusalem, they lift up their eyes to the hills and realize that their help comes from the Lord who is enthroned in the Temple on mount Zion. Finally, in less than a days journey, they will be at the the house of the Lord, and they will sing, "Our feet are standing in your gates O Jerusalem. (Psalm 122:1)

So that evening they lie down and they are reassured by the thought that though they must take their rest before that final days journey to Jerusalem; the Lord who watches over them will neither slumber nor sleep. Well, it may be that such a scenario takes us a little further than the words of the Psalm itself. And if that is your thought, then perhaps we may simply to look at the hills and for them to suggests to us the thought of permanence, solidity and sufficiency.

When we look at the mountains, the Rockies or the Alps and hills on the backdrop of Psalm 121, our response often falls along these lines:

*Now there is a prime example of self-sufficiency. If there is ever something that is sturdy and immovable and does not need any body's help, it's the hills.*

*Yes, I lift up my eyes to the hills. The hills do not need help, but where is my help going to come from? My help comes from the Lord the maker of heaven and earth.*

What glorious words the Psalmist speaks. But isn't it the case that when we are familiar with a text of Scripture, such as this, we have a tendency, at worst, to treat it with contempt, while at best, we don't even hear it. That is hear it, not just the soundwaves on our ear drum, but hear with *understanding*. So, let's not let those few glorious words in verse 1 and 2, pass over us too quickly. Let's hear with understanding. Why? Because when we lift our eyes to the Lord, we are believing the promise, we are confessing that our help will, indeed, come from the very One who has set those hills in place; the maker of heaven and earth. Our helper is as solid and reliable as the very mountains and hills themselves.

It is the Prudential Insurance Company that has picked up on that image. That company speaks of itself as being as solid as the rock of Gibraltar (I wonder if they know that it is hollow). But long before there was a Prudential Insurance Company another Psalmist wrote,

As the mountains surround Jerusalem so the Lord surrounds His people, both now and forevermore.

Yes, it is true. Our help comes from the Lord. He is the maker of heaven and earth. He is the source of our help and that is our testimony and our confession today. But before we leave the Psalmist, it will be helpful for us to *hear* that the help that the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth, has promised to His people, is not hollow, or an isolated thought in the Scripture and certainly not in the book of Psalms.

Psalms 146:5-6 says,

*Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob. Who's hope is in the Lord his God the maker of heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them.*

We need to be reminded of Psalm 124: 8 that says,

*Our help is in the name of the Lord the maker of heaven and earth.*

In our next devotional, our attention will be drawn to two things about these words as we have them in Psalm 124 and also in Psalm 121, that are worth noting.

Until the next time....