

Lenten Devotional March 18, 2024

Psalm 121

- 1 *I lift up my eyes to the hills —
from where will my help come?*
- 2 *My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.*
- 3 *He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.*
- 4 *He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.*
- 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.*
- 7 *The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.*
- 8 *The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and for evermore.*

Devotion

The Rev. Dr. Richard W. Wingfield '02/'13

The annual vacation to my grandmother's house was always a memorable journey. As a young child this five hour trip seemed to take forever, but my parents would keep me occupied by singing one of those traveling songs to take the boredom and restlessness out of the trip. The Songs of Ascent (120-134) were those travelling songs during the pilgrim's triennial journeys to Jerusalem to celebrate the feasts. This psalm would be sung to remind them of God's ability to help and to keep them while they travelled.

This is a wonderful psalm to pray as you go through life. It's a psalm for all seasons and points to the God who keeps you. Life is a journey of faith filled with both wonder and worry, faith and fear, awe and anxiety. Yet, the psalmist reminds you of God's faithfulness to God's people. God is intricately involved in your life. God, and God alone, sustains you on this journey. God goes before you and is there to guide and protect you (vv. 3-4), God is with you and watching over you (vv. 5-6), and God will keep you in every aspect of life (vv. 7-8). Thus, you do not need to live in fear or worry because God's ever-present help is with you.

Rehearsing this psalm will keep you grounded in your struggles. It's easy to get down and discouraged, especially during those mundane moments when you are exhausted and struggle to get out of bed. But even amid your distress, knowing God's keeping ability helps you to keep going on.

Choose to live life in total reliance on God who is the keeper of your soul. Don't seek help from anywhere else than from YHWH. Wherever he calls you to go, however hard the journey feels, whatever

fears emerge along the way, hear the psalmist say, “The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.”

Prayer

God, you are the great I AM, the Creator and Sustainer of all life. Gently whisper in our ear the reminder of your presence with us, especially during those moments in life when we wrestle with our emotions. Help us to rest in your presence with us and your protection for us. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.