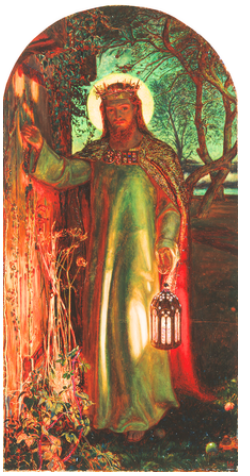
November 1. 2026

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does 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] Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
[5] The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on 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 forth
and forevermore.



The Guardian of your Life
Psalm 121

BIG IDEA: Because the LORD is our Guardian, let the Church face every difficulty, danger, and duty with confidence in His ever-present, watchful, and protective care.

OUTLINE

- The God Who Helps (vss. 1-2)
- The God Who Guards (vss. 3-8)

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These "Sermon Discussion Questions" are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. How are earthly guardians limited? From the introduction to the sermon comes this thought: "In life, we have many things and many people that watch over us."

2. Psalm 121:1–2: "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." What are some things you rely on every day that tend to underdeliver?

3. Think about Psalm 121. How is the Lord's care different from the care of anyone or anything else?

4. What would you say to a friend who recently came to faith in Christ and is grappling with reconciling the hardships she's facing with the promises of Psalm 121, particularly verses 6-7?

5. How do Jesus' life and death confirm the realities proclaimed about God in Psalm 121?

6. Is there a tendency in your life to confess that the LORD is your Helper, but functionally live as if He is one helper among many, one part of the support system you need to keep life going? What have you learned from Psalm 121 that can help?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Psalm 121 is part of a collection of psalms known as the Songs of Ascent. These were songs sung by God's people as they made their way up to Jerusalem for the annual feasts and festivals. Jerusalem was set on a mountain, so for many of God's people, worship involved an upward journey.

As the pilgrim began, he would lift his eyes to the hills and see the road and terrain ahead, a reminder that the journey was real and could be dangerous.

Praise to Jesus – Lord, we lift our eyes, our hearts, and our voices to praise You, the Maker of heaven and earth, who helps and protects us. Lord, You never doze or sleep. Though we encounter trials of all kinds, You keep our lives. You never fail. Praise the Lord!

Repent through Jesus –Lord, we repent of trusting lesser helpers as though they could hold our lives together. We rededicate ourselves to a life of poise and joy, knowing that You keep our going out and our coming in, always.

Consecration for Jesus –Because Jesus took on our sin and failure so that we might take on His righteousness and victory, God sees us united forever to His Son, Jesus. We are people forever attached to the person and work of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. The LORD is our Guardian; let us face every difficulty, danger, and duty with confidence in His ever-present, watchful, and protective care.

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

These questions are written to aid parents in leading family devotions with their children.

1. Who are the people in your life that watch over you?

2. Have you ever used a beach umbrella? Why do we use those at the beach?

3. How many times does the Psalmist use some form of the word "keep"? What does this say about the theme of this Psalm? (6 times. This psalm speaks to God as our guardian, and He is the One who "keeps" us safe. The hills and mountains were places of fear due to the terrain. They were also places of idol worship. This is why the Psalmist begins the Psalm asking about where he can find true help.)

4. How does the reminder in verse 2 that our LORD is the One "who made heaven and earth" comfort us? (We are comforted that God is the Almighty Creator of all things. Nothing or no one is more powerful than He is.)

5. How does the Psalmist describe God's help in this Psalm? (God's help is personal and eternal. God will not let our foot slip, which speaks to our temptations and sins. He will never sleep or slumber like we have to, which reminds us that God is always available to help us. He provides "shade," which shows that God refreshes us. Remember that we have seen numerous times in this series on the Psalms that God's protection does not mean that we won't face difficult situations in life. It means that God will be with us and empower us to get through the difficulties that we face.)

Scriptures for further study:
Matthew 28:20

John 16:33

John 14:15-20

Scriptures for further study:
Matthew 28:20

John 16:33

John 10:27-30

Romans 8:31-39

Isaiah 41:10

Jude 24-25

FOR STUDENTS

1. Psalm 121 is a Song of Ascent, sung by pilgrims climbing toward Jerusalem. The hills ahead were a real danger: rough terrain, bandits, and places where people worshiped idols. The psalmist looks at that landscape and asks, where does my help come from? When you look ahead at the next few months, what feels like the hills? Where do your eyes go first when you need help?

2. Verse 2 answers that the psalmist's help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. Most of us have a list of things we count on to keep life together: grades, friends, a team, a phone, a plan, our own competence. Which of those tends to underdeliver on you? What does it say about the LORD that his help is rooted in the fact that he made everything.

3. Verses 3-4 say the LORD will not slumber or sleep. We have to. We get tired, we run out of energy, we miss things, and so do every person and system we depend on. What do you actually do with your limits? How might it change the way you end your day to remember that the one watching over you never goes off duty?

4. Verses 5-6 say the LORD is your shade on your right hand, so neither sun nor moon will strike you. Notice the language is singular and personal: he keeps you. The psalm uses some form of the word “keep” six times. Why do you think the psalmist repeats it so many times? Is there a part of your life where you find it hard to believe God is that close and that attentive?

5. Read verses 7-8. The LORD will keep you from all evil and will keep your life. Yet Christians get sick, lose people they love, and face real hardship. Imagine a friend who recently came to faith in Jesus is struggling with this. They are going through something painful and wonder whether verse 7 is true. How would you answer them? What do you think it means that God keeps your life, even when he does not keep you from every hard thing?

6. The Psalm ends by saying the LORD will keep your going out and your coming in, from this time forth and forevermore. That covers ordinary days: leaving for school, coming home, starting something new, finishing something hard. Is there a tendency in your life to say the LORD is your helper while functionally treating him as one helper among many? What have you learned from this psalm that could change that this week?

7. Jesus is the Guardian this psalm points to, and he is also the one who was not kept from evil. He went to the cross, where the sun was darkened, and he was given over to the full weight of our sin, so that the LORD's keeping of us would be secure forever. How does the cross confirm what Psalm 121 says about God? What changes about how you face a difficulty, danger, or duty this week if you believe it?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. Throughout your life, when you have found yourself in need of help, where have you tended to look? Look within? Look (fixate) on the problem itself? Look for outside resources? Or, like the Psalmist, look up to God?

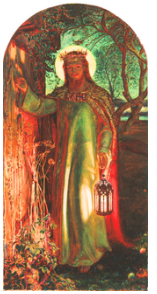
2. In this Psalm, we see the word "watch" or "keep" repeated 6 times.
Question: What main theme is the Psalmist trying to emphasize for us?

3. The Psalmist uses the word "you" in the singular form.
Question: How does this help you to understand things in a more personal and intimate way?

4. This Psalm is not promising that, as we go through the journey of life, we will not sometimes face "mountains" of trouble.
Question: How can our times of trouble serve not as a stumbling block to our faith, but rather as an opportunity to experience God's presence even more closely?

5. The ultimate help that we need from God is his saving grace and forgiveness of our sins.
Question: Have you looked up to the Lord (our Creator and Savior), to give you that help?
Note: The Lord promises to not only watch over our lives now, but also to watch over us and keep us "forevermore"—see verse 7. Do you know of anyone else offering such amazing blessings?! As Peter once said to Jesus, "Lord, where else would we turn? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). Amen.

The Blessed Life: A Study of the Psalms



"The Light of the World" (1851-156) by William Holman Hunt

Psalms Introduction

The Book of Psalms is the sacred place where the living God meets His people in the most intimate and personal of ways. He invites them to know Him not merely as an idea, but as their refuge, portion, shepherd, and King. From the opening doorway of blessedness in Psalm 1 to the climactic Hallelujahs of Psalm 150, the Psalter reveals that the truly happy life is one rooted in the person and work of Almighty God, whose steadfast love holds His people through every season of the soul.

As the Psalter moves from anguish to adoration, from darkness to dawn, it becomes a mirror of the Christian life itself. It teaches us to pray honestly, to hope stubbornly, and to sing faithfully, even when night seems long. In the deepest valleys, the Psalms give voice to the church's groan; on the highest heights, they train the church's doxology. And in every line, every cry, and every hallelujah, Christ Himself comes near, revealing the light of the world in the dark night of the soul and leading His people into the blessedness that only His grace can give.

– Pastor Bill

About the artwork and artist.

The Light of the World, 1851-1853, is an iconic allegorical painting by William Holman Hunt.

The painting depicts Jesus Christ as a regal figure in flowing robes, wearing a crown of thorns, holding a glowing lantern, and preparing to knock on a weed-overgrown wooden door with no external handle. This illustrates Revelation 3:20 from the Bible: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..." The artist William Holman Hunt is showing us that Jesus is the divine door to the living God who meets His people in the most intimate and personal ways. The closed, overgrown door → representing the human soul or "obstinately shut mind" that has long ignored spiritual calling. There is no handle on the outside → the door can only be opened from within, emphasizing free will and personal invitation to faith. The lantern → Christ as the light of the world (John 8:12), illuminating darkness and offering salvation. The work marked Hunt's deepening Christian faith (from earlier agnosticism) and became one of the most reproduced and devotional images of the Victorian era, inspiring oratorios. hymns, and widespread popular piety. It's often called a visual sermon on personal salvation.