



The Songs of Ascent: God's Roadtrip Playlist Lesson 2 - Psalm 121

"Does anyone need the restroom?!"

Before we get going with this lesson...

... any comments or questions from last week?

... did you do the homework?

TURNING THE CAR ON.

If you were told that tomorrow you're starting a twenty hour road trip, how would you prepare?

Let's have a volunteer read Psalm 121. (NIV translation printed on the next page.)

As you listen, think about the following things.

- What parallelism do you note? Of what type(s)?
- Are you using a different Bible translation? Do you note any differences?
- What names or concepts are mentioned with which you're unfamiliar?

In addition to the questions above, how many speakers do you identify in this psalm? (Compare **Psalm 42:5.**)

<p>1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?</p> <p>2 My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.</p> <p>3 He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;</p> <p>4 indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.</p> <p>5 The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand;</p> <p>6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.</p> <p>7 The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;</p> <p>8 the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.</p>	
--	--

Based on the comparison to Psalm 42:5 (above), to whom might the psalmist be speaking in verses 3 and following?

How is God identified by the psalmist in verse 2? _____

Verse one presents an ambiguity right at the beginning of the psalm. What emotion is the psalmist feeling? *“Is the psalmist looking at the mountains as a source of danger or a source of help? Is his tone fearful or confident?”*¹

Discuss verse one and your understanding of it with those around you.

¹ John Brug, *A Commentary on Psalms 73-150*.

Verses 3 and 4 picture God caring for the traveler during his/her journey. In what two ways does God do so in these verses?

1. God

2. God

What comfort would pilgrim travelers millennia ago have found in this second action?

How is the “God who doesn’t sleep” also identified in verse 4?

Look over **Joshua 24:2-13 and 16-18**. What is the impact of identifying God in the above way?

Verses 5-7 describe, with increasingly spectacular promises, God’s intent to protect his people. Some particular pictures are used here which merit explanation.

Verse 5, “the shade at your right hand” -

Verse 6a, “the sun will not harm you by day” -

Verse 6b - “nor the moon by night” -

What in verse 8 shows us that this psalm is speaking not only about “normal” life?

Read **Hebrews 11:1** and **Romans 10:17**. How has the psalmist acquired the faith in God which he expresses to himself as he sets out on his journey?

Homework!

The psalmist-pilgrim who speaks in Psalm 121 goes into his/her journey confident in faith, armed with God's promises. Consider how you can make it your regular practice to go into your "pilgrimage" every day armed with those Gospel promises as well. **Do you have a regular devotional practice? If not, develop one.**

- If you're unsure where to begin, devotional books are a great resource. Pastor Tim can recommend some.
- There are also electronic resources available. Pastor Tim can also recommend some of those. WELS has daily online devotions at <https://wels.net/serving-you/devotions/daily-devotions/>.

If you do have a regular devotional practice, thank the Spirit of God for leading you into that soul-renewing habit, and ask that he continue to cause you to prioritize it.