

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Twenty-One - Finding Comfort In Surveying God's Watchful Care Of His People (Psalm 121:1-8)

I. Introduction

- A. In the dispensation of the Law, Jesus said that the nations all seek answers to such questions as: "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Matthew 6:31-32a) He went on to say that the believer's heavenly Father knows about such needs in His own, and plans to add them unto His people when they make the kingdom of God their primary focus in this life, Matthew 6:32b-33.
- B. Psalm 121:1-8 beautifully details God's care of His people, Israel, and we as Christian believers who enjoy God's fellowship and care today can find comfort in surveying how extensive is God's care of us. That way we also can avoid falling into the insecure stresses of the fretful nations.

II. Finding Comfort In Surveying God's Watchful Care Of His People, Psalm 121:1-8.

- A. The psalmist stated that he would lift up his eyes unto the hills in Ps. 121:1a. Though many of the Western world think the psalmist meant he felt closer to God in mountains rather than on the plain, in the context, the psalmist referred to the high hills of Jerusalem where the glory of God indwelt the temple complex. In effect, he as a pilgrim making the annual *ascent* up to Jerusalem (see the introduction title to the psalm) referred only to the Lord Who then **happened** visibly to indwell the temple that was situated up in the hills.
- B. Then he asked the rhetorical question, "Where does my help come from?" and answers it, "My help comes from Jahweh (The "I AM," or Eternally Existing One), Maker of heaven and earth." (Ps. 121:1b,2)
- C. Since the expression "heaven and earth" is an antonymical pair, including everything in between the heavens and the earth, namely, the whole **universe** was created by God, the psalmist **builds** upon the **universal Creatorship** of Israel's God to focus on God's able, comprehensive watchful care of Israel:
 1. First, God's watchful care is all-sufficient, coming from the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Creator of the universe Himself, Psalm 121:2.
 2. Thereupon, God's watchful care is constant, for He who helps His people does not slumber or sleep as the universe is always a dynamic, thriving entity revealing its ever-dynamic Creator, Ps. 121:3-4.
 3. Thereupon, God's watchful care is protective in a variety of constructive ways as follows (121:5-8):
 - a. God's watchful care protects His people's God-given **abilities** or **talents** that keep them productive for their welfare: the "right hand" that Jahweh shades to protect from the wearing rays of the sun picture the hand of one's **ability** in imagery, 121:5 (Theol. Wordbk. of the O. T., v. I, p. 382)
 - b. God's watchful care protects His people at **all times**: the "smiting" of the sun and moon, figures for harmful entities that would harm both day and night (The ruler of the day and of the night, the sun and moon respectively, Gen. 1:16 with 1:14, picture all that occurs during those time periods).
 - c. God's watchful care comprehensively preserves His people's life principles (**nephesh**) from calamity, that "soul" part that came to exist when God breathed into Adam the breath of life, Gen. 2:7. Since this includes physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms, God protects one's whole person, v. 7.
 - d. God's watchful care protects His people in their lives' activities, in their "going out" and "coming in", antonymical pairs to picture all events in between these major start and stop acts of a day, 121:8a.
 - e. God's watchful care will continually and forever to protect His people in their lives' activities, 121:8b

Lesson: *Because the believer's help is the all-sufficient CREATOR of all that makes up the believer himself and all that is around him, the believer can expect comprehensive help and care from God.*

Application: *(1) We must recall that God's program for Church era believers differs from that of believers like the psalmist, and that **modifies the experience of God's care:** (a) the psalmist wrote under the Mosaic Covenant where the godly were guaranteed physical blessings for obedience, Deut. 28:1-14. (b) On the other hand, **GODLY Church era believers by God's will can experience physical TROUBLES for various reasons in God's plan, cf. 2 Cor. 4:8-11; 12:7-10, etc. (2) Accordingly, we apply Ps. 121 today to mean that God watches over every area of our lives, but WITHIN that watch-care He may ALLOW troubles to come that fulfill His will of revealing Christ's glory in us!***