

FBC Service Sunday July 19, 2026, Looking Up in the Valley Psalm 121

Sermon Introduction: Looking Up in the Valley

“My Help Comes from the LORD.” (Psalm 121:2)

expected to travel. We've prayed for those facing illness.

We've stood beside grieving families. We've watched tears flow. We've stood by hospital beds, we've stood at gravesides

We look at our church directory, we look at the seats usually filled in our pews, and we see the heavy toll of sickness. **Some have felt the sharp lingering ache of bereavement.**

We've wondered why some prayers seem to take longer to answer than others.

During times like these we naturally ask: "Where can I find help?"

Not merely advice. Not merely sympathy. But real help.

That is exactly the question Psalm 121 answers.

Psalm 121 was not written for people sitting comfortably at home. It was a travelling song, a song for people climbing a difficult road.

They faced uncertainty ahead, danger around them, and weariness within them. They were pilgrims travelling up the steep, exhausting, and treacherous road to Jerusalem.

That is why their question is also our question: “*Where does my help come from?*”

Their answer has encouraged believers for over three thousand years. **It can encourage us today.**

The Psalmist does not tell us to deny the valley. He tells us where to look while walking through it.

He doesn't say, "everything's under control."

He asks for help and that is the beginning of faith. God never intended us to carry life alone.

When you're staring down another week of chronic pain, when you're looking at an empty chair at the dinner table, the question looms:

Where does our help come from?

Not in the hills. Not in our circumstances. Not in ourselves. Not in our wealth. Not even in our friends.

Our confidence is in the LORD. Our problems may be great. But our God is infinitely greater.

He is the covenant God. Jehovah. The One who never changes. The One who created heaven and earth.

If He created the universe, surely, He is able to care for His children.

When we look at Psalm 121, it doesn't promise that all the bends in the road will suddenly become flat or that the journey will be easy. **But it gives every believer an anchor.**

The Psalmist looks at the hills, looks past the dangers, and anchors his soul in a beautiful, unshakeable truth: *"My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."*

The One who promises not to let our feet slip, and the One who watches over our lives, both now and forevermore.

Psalm 121 teaches us three remarkable truths about God's help and care for us.

1. Look Up—Our Help Comes from Our Creator Psalm 121:1–2

2. Rest—Our Keeper Never Sleeps Psalm 121:3–6

3. Walk On—Our Keeper Will Bring Us Home Psalm 121:7–8

These three truths show us how to put our trust in God's providence and care for our lives.

Look Up - Our Help Comes from Our Creator (1-2)

First of all, the Creator is our helper. Look at verses 1-2: *"I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."*

These are beautiful verses of Scripture that have brought much comfort to God's people over the years. I know many of you have quoted these verses in times of need. **What is it saying to us?**

It's Saying Look Beyond the Mountains to The God Who Created Them

Mountains are symbols of strength and stability. They are great in size, long-lasting and unchanging. And the God who made the mountains is even greater in power and strength.

I remember driving from Kelowna toward Calgary and seeing the majestic Rocky Mountains rising before me, vast, snow-covered, apparently immovable, leaving me in awe and wonder.

Psalm 121 reminds us that however great the mountains may appear, they are still only creation. Our help does not come from what God has made. **Our help comes from the God who made it.**

The mountains may be greater than us, but they are not greater than our God.

The mountains are upward in direction, but where do we look when we're in trouble. **Up or down? But don't look down.** That's the wrong direction!

The hills are a reminder that we are to look up.

You have to lift your eyes to look at a mountain. But don't stop there. Are you looking high enough?

Look beyond the mountains to the God who created them because God is higher than all.

We read in Psalm 90:2: *“Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”*

God is bigger than the mountains and God is before the mountains.

Our help comes from the Maker of heaven and earth. God not only made the mountains. **He made everything!**

We read in Genesis 1:1: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

Jeremiah 10:12 says: *“God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.”*

In other words, the Maker of heaven and earth has all the resources and more to meet our every need. **He’s got the whole world in his hands. And He is our helper.**

God is not only the Creator, but He is involved in every aspect of His creation and that includes you and me.

How big is your problem today? Now compare it to the Maker of heaven and earth. No burden that overwhelms us is beyond His power.

This is our Father’s world, and His providence means that nothing can happen to us outside of His will and providential care.

The Maker of heaven and earth is not an impersonal force. He has made Himself known to us in Jesus Christ. The hands that stretched out the heavens were stretched out upon the cross.

The One who watches over us entered our suffering, carried our sin, conquered death, and promises never to leave His people.

Our Creator is Our Helper. That’s the first truth we learn from this psalm.

Rest – Our Keeper Never Sleeps (3-6)

The second truth is this: Our Keeper Never Sleeps.

“He will not let you stumble; the one who watches over you will not slumber. 4. Indeed, he who watches over Israel never slumbers or sleeps. 5. The Lord himself watches over you! The Lord stands beside you as your protective shade. 6. The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon at night.”

The key word in these verses is the word **“watches.”** It means “to watch over, to guard or to protect.”

These verses teach us that God is not only the creator of the world but the protector of Israel. **And He is our protector as well!**

uneven paths, ensuring that we will not ultimately fall, or be overwhelmed by the challenges we face.

The verse doesn't promise that the path of life will be flat, smooth, or easy. Rather, it promises that when the ground gets shaky under your feet, God provides the supernatural traction and stability you need to keep from completely wiping out.

This doesn't mean you will never experience a setback, a moment of grief, or a difficult season. Even the godliest people experience hardships.

Instead, "**will not let you stumble**" means that no failure or trial will ever be ultimate or fatal to your soul. You might trip, but you will not be utterly cast down or destroyed.

Even in circumstances we cannot explain, we remain within His care.

Our Keeper Never Sleeps Verses 3-4

"He who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

What a comforting picture. The Lord Keeps

Parents stay awake with sick children. Doctors work through the night. Nurses watch over their patients. Family members sit beside hospital beds.

Eventually everyone becomes tired. But God never does.

Imagine that. Throughout every night...God has never once closed His eyes. He has never nodded off.

Never forgotten your name. Never missed a prayer. Never been distracted. Never taken a vacation.

Never needed rest.

While we sleep...**He watches.** While we worry...He watches. While we cry...He watches.

While we grieve...He watches.

Five times in eight verses, the Psalm tells us that the Lord keeps or watches over His people.

We become tired; He never slumbers. **We see only today; He sees forever.**

We lose our footing; **He does not lose His hold on us.**

We don't know the road ahead; He knows the road and walks it with us.

God is not a distant observer. He is an attentive Shepherd.

Some nights seem unbearably long. Perhaps you've experienced them.

Lying awake. Thinking. Praying. Waiting. Wondering.

Remember this. Even when you cannot sleep...God is already awake.

Our God is always awake. He never falls asleep on the watch.

A night watchman knows only too well the dangers of falling asleep on his watch, **but not God.**

He never dozes or nods off. He never even gets distracted. You can pray to Him at any time and He always focuses on you and hears you.

And because God never slumbers nor sleeps – that means that you can!

“The Lord stands beside you as your protective shade.” Verse 5

Shade does not remove the road, but it makes the road bearable. Shade does not shorten the journey, but it gives the weary traveller a place of relief.

Sometimes God changes our circumstances. At other times, He gives us shelter in the middle of them, strength for today, grace for the next step, a friend who calls, a church family that prays, or a quiet assurance that we are not alone.

A little child wakes during a storm. The thunder shakes the windows, and the darkness feels frightening. The child calls out, “Are you there?” The parent answers from nearby, “I’m here. You can go back to sleep.”

The storm has not stopped. The thunder is still sounding. But the child can rest because someone trustworthy is awake and near.

Psalms 121 does not always promise that the storm will immediately stop. It promises that our Father is present in it and our Keeper is awake.

It doesn’t matter what problem you’re dealing with, you can leave it in His hands and go to sleep at night knowing that God never slumbers nor sleeps and He will take care of it.

“The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.”

What this is really saying is that God protects you at all times, both day and night and everything in between. It covers you in the bright, busy daytime and in the dark, lonely nighttime.

God’s promise of protection does not guarantee that we will never know pain or loss.

Job’s story shows us that, although God is able to deliver us out of every physical calamity or trouble, it may not be His will to do so.

Walk On—Our Keeper Will Bring Us Home (7-8)

As we come to the end of this psalm, verses 7 and 8 say, *“The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.”*

While we can’t understand all that God is doing in the world and why He works the way He does, we can choose to trust that He is faithful, and then choose to be faithful in our own life and hold on to the spectacular promises of God.

“The Lord will keep you from all evil” does not mean evil will never touch our earthly lives.

The cross itself proves that God's beloved Son was not spared suffering. It means evil will never possess us, separate us from Christ, or prevent God from completing His saving purpose.

Evil may wound, but it will not win. Death may come, but it will not have the final word.

"The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom."

Paul eventually died as a martyr, yet he still believed the Lord would bring him safely home.

We can believe that God is doing something about evil, and that the death and resurrection of Jesus shows us that evil has already done the worst it can do, and it did not, and will not, win out in the end.

He Watches Over You Both Now and Forevermore

And then we have the wonderful promise at the end of verse 8: *"The LORD will watch over your **coming and going** both now and forevermore."* God is watching over you now, and he will continue to watch over you forever.

Both of those promises are encouraging! If you had to choose one or the other, which would you choose? **Now? Or forevermore?** It's a tough choice. But praise God you don't have to choose. They are both true for the believer in Christ!

God's promise to watch over you in Christ is true today; it is true tomorrow; it is true forevermore.

Conclusion: We are all on a journey to God, and Psalm 121 is a wonderful song for the journey. We have the assurance - God with us.

Jesus walked among hurting people.

He touched the sick. He wept at a grave. He calmed storms. He carried a cross. He rose again.

Today He still walks beside His people through every valley.

When grief lowers your head—lift up your eyes.

When the diagnosis fills you with uncertainty—**lift up your eyes.**

When the night seems long and sleep will not come—**lift up your eyes.**

When the road ahead appears too steep—**lift up your eyes.**

Your help comes from the Lord. The God who made heaven and earth.

The God who never sleeps. The God who never leaves. The God who keeps His people forever.

Because our Keeper is with us, fear does not have to rule us, and anxiety does not have to carry our burdens alone. Nothing can happen to you without God's knowledge. Nothing can separate you from His love, nothing can destroy His saving purpose, and nothing can take you beyond His keeping care.

Our help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Shepherd who laid down His life, the risen Christ who conquered the grave, and the Keeper who will not lose one of His own.

He will keep you in the valley. He will keep you through the night. He will keep you on the journey.

And when your earthly journey is complete, He will bring you safely home.

“The LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.”

Our Keeper has never failed us, and He never will.