



# **NEW LIFE**

## **BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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*"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)*

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**LORD'S DAY 23 JULY 2006**

Dear Readers,

## **GOD, OUR DIVINE HELPER**

### **Psalm 121**

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.*

*My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.*

*He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*

*Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.*

*The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.*

*The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.*

*The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*

This Psalm has often been called the Pilgrim's or Traveller's Psalm, and some commentators believe it was penned for pilgrims or travellers making their way to Jerusalem for worship. The message of the Psalm concerns divine help and protection: the expression "my help" occurs twice in the first 2 verses and we see the constant recurrence of the word "keep" (or "watch, guard, protect"). Hence, it is particularly relevant to those who are travelling, away from the comfort and safety of home. The Psalm is also suitable for all occasions, for we are always in need of divine help, protection and preservation wherever we are.

We live in an age where many of us are engaged in constant travel, be it for work or leisure (via air, land or sea), and some of us spend more of our time away from home. Sometimes, we forget and take our personal safety for granted until we read of some tragic accidents, especially to people or in places near to us. Today, we live in a world of uncertainties and unknown dangers: everything from suicide bombers, bird flu, SARS, to serious accidents, robberies and sicknesses. How should Christians face these dangers and insecurities?

Psalm 121 answers the question of how believers should deal with their fears and insecurities in an uncertain world. Wherever we are, at home and especially away from home, we are exposed to dangers more than we are aware of; and this Psalm directs and encourages us to place ourselves in the care and protection of God. It is promised that if we put our trust in God, we shall be safe under His protection, so that nothing will happen to us but what God sees as good for us. This Psalm reveals 3 wonderful and blessed truths about our divine Helper.

### **1. God is Our Helper**

Vv1-2 remind us where we should look to and the help we should look for. "From whence...

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cometh my help" is actually a question. And it is answered in v2: "My help cometh from the LORD which made the heaven and the earth." Hence, the Psalmist will lift up his eyes unto the hills or towards Jerusalem, the place where he will stand before God who is his Helper. The lifting up of the eyes is a posture of prayer and is expressive of confidence in prayer, of hope and expectation of help (cf John 11:41).

We must see all our help in God, and from Him we can expect it in His own way and time. God helps us through various agencies: through other people, through His angels, through divine intervention in nature and circumstances of life. Let us remember that our help comes from the Lord. If He does not help, no one can help us; if He does, nothing can hinder or hurt us. In our hour of need, we must always look upwards to a gracious God to help us, for looking downwards on ourselves, we shall find nothing but what will increase our fears and anxieties. Satan will endeavour to keep our eyes upon our difficulties and fears that we might be disquieted and discouraged (eg. Elijah in 1 Kings 19). Hence, we must resolve not to be blindfolded by Satan, but to lift up our eyes unto God.

If the Lord is our help, we must not rely upon creatures, or men and worldly means, not even our own flesh. We must look beyond all these to God and in God alone. And we must look to God not only when seemingly there is no outward help from men, but also and especially so when all seem to go well with us, when there is abundance of friends and help at hand. For then we are most in danger of putting our trust upon ourselves, men and circumstances, forgetting our divine Helper. Is God our Helper today (cf Heb 4:16)?

## **2. God is an Able Helper**

What is the use of someone who wants to help but is unable to help us? God not only is engaged to help us, more importantly, He is able to help us. In v2, God, our Helper, is described as the Maker of heaven and earth, and, therefore, mighty to help (cf Ps 124:8). His help is never in vain; He made heaven and earth, and He who did that can do anything. In declaring God as the Creator of the heaven and the earth, it is important for us to remember the awesome power and might of the God who is our Helper. There are times when we become so overpowered by our problems and fears that we fail to realize the omnipotence of God. And we get overwhelmed by our difficulties until we realize the greatness of the power of the God who is engaged to help us.

In Acts 4, the disciples had been arrested, threatened and warned not to witness anymore in the name of Jesus. Yet when they gathered to pray with fellow saints, their prayers was "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is...." (v24). It is good to begin our prayers this way (with who God is) because when we do so and really think of who God is, we will see our fears and anxieties in its true perspective. We will no longer see it in our own strength, in our own ability. Rather, we see our difficulties and fears in the light of God's greatness and all these suddenly aren't so difficult. Jeremiah prayed this prayer: "Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee" (Jer 32:17) and God affirmed what Jeremiah knew of Him, "Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?" (Jer 32:26-27). That's WHO our help is coming from. We're calling upon the One who has created the heaven & the earth. And if God be for us, who can stand or be against us?

And more wonderfully, God our Helper is always on duty, always there for us. He'll never slumber; He'll never sleep: "He that keepeth thee will not slumber" (v3b). Jacob had a beautiful picture of the unceasing care of divine Providence on the night when he fled from his father's house (Gen 28:10). Jacob had neither walls, nor curtains, nor bodyguards around him, but the Lord was in that place though Jacob knew it not, and therefore he was safe. Jacob fell soundly asleep, but his God was awake. The Lord is always attentive and alert; He cares for us 24 hours a day. It is difficult to find a keeper who never sleeps. Remember how Elijah taunted the false prophets of Baal that their gods might be asleep and needed to be roused (1 Kings 18:27)? But our God is never exhausted, never weary, and never inattentive. He never closes His eyes on the needs of His people...

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Viewed in the light of this fact, how delightful is the assurance of God's unceasing care. We can sleep in safety because our God is ever awake. We are safe because He never slumbers. When dangers are around us, our Helper is fully awake, and will not permit us to be taken unaware (cf Ps 3:5).

This assurance is great comfort for us pilgrims along the journey of life. We have a Helper omniscient, omnipotent, never slumbering, unchanging. Help is on the way, and will not fail to reach us in due time, for He who sends it to us is never known to be too late. God who created all things is equal to every emergency; heaven and earth are at the disposal of Him who made them. Therefore, let us learn never to doubt Him or His ability to keep us and ever to rest content in Him. We may face uncertain dangers in life but we have a certain help. When we face uncertainties and dangers in our life, we are able to sing with conviction like the Psalmist in v2. Who is your helper today? What kind of helper is he? Can he help you?

### **3. God is a Reliable Helper**

Do we not get frustrated with answering machines or call centres when we try to call the bank or some major corporations for assistance? Somehow, we never seem to be able to get the help or answer we need immediately as we are always put on hold. What if our God is an answering machine? But our God is not like this. Ps 46:1 assures us that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present (well-proved, reliable) help in trouble." How does He do so? In every way possible!

- He will not suffer thy foot to be moved (v3a). The sliding of the foot is a description of misfortune or mishaps, especially in mountainous Palestine where a single slip of the foot was often accompanied by great dangers. Though the paths of life are dangerous and difficult, yet we shall stand fast, for God will not permit our feet to slide.
- He not only protects us whom He is the keeper of, but He refreshes us : He is thy shade upon thy right hand (v5b). He keeps us under His shade, so that we may sit with delight and assurance.
- The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night (v6). There are dangers of the day and of the night, but in both and from both we shall be preserved. Did not God protect David from the murderous intents and attempts of King Saul and his own rebellious son, Absalom?
- The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil (v7). God keeps us from ALL evil. "All" is an all-inclusive word: it includes everything and excludes nothing. God guards us from all evils great and small, temporary and eternal, no matter what may be their character or how long they may continue.
- He shall preserve thy soul (v7b). Our soul is kept from sin, error, despair and pride; it is kept from the world, the flesh, and the devil; kept in the love of God; kept unto eternal glory. What can harm a soul that is kept of the Lord? We are precious in God's sight; and therefore He will with a peculiar care preserve us (Lk 22:31-32).
- The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in (v8). When we go out in the morning to work and come home at night to rest, God shall keep us. Our exit and entry are under His protection. We are kept, at all times and in all circumstances, by His mighty power; we are preserved even "for evermore" (2 Tim 1:12).

What glorious promises! How blessed and assured is God's protecting care. He is a reliable Helper and He will never fail nor forsake us (Heb 13:5-6). All of us can look back on our lives and say, "If it were not for the protection of the Lord, we would be seriously hurt or dead." The next time when we are on travel or are worried about our personal safety or in need of help, let us commit our ways to Him and seek His protection. We can always count on Him to help us and to be there for us.

**WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON**  
**CHURCH THEME: STRIVING TO LIVE ABOVE OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS**  
**IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:3)**

Our **worship services** begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
<b>Morning</b>	<b>Today: 23/07/2006</b>	<b>Next Week: 30/07/2006</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day morning.</li> </ul>
<i>Chairman:</i>	Seetoh Yoong Chiang	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Rev Lim Chee Boon	Rev Lim Chee Boon	<p style="text-align: center;">NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pray for journey mercies:</b> For those who are travelling. Peter &amp; Esther Chia (Switzerland), Jun Ng (S'pore). Also, pray for Mok &amp; Carol, Amanda and Feng Qian who are on vacation in Singapore until autumn. Continue to pray for Zi Ming and David who have returned to S'pore after completing their courses.</li> <li>• <b>Continue to pray for those who are sick:</b> Also, continue to pray for Rev Lim, for a quick appointment with the TIA clinic.</li> <li>• <b>Visa Application:</b> Continue to pray for Mok for the successful application of his missionary/minister's visa. He submitted his application last Wednesday.</li> <li>• <b>Maasai Mission:</b> Continue to pray for Sis Chan Pui Meng – for God's protection to be with her and for blessing in her clinic ministry to the Maasai people.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">~~~~~</p> <p><i>Keep Thou my all, O Lord, hide my life in Thine;</i></p> <p><i>O let Thy sacred light over my pathway shine;</i></p> <p><i>Kept by Thy tender care, gladly the cross I'll bear;</i></p> <p><i>Hear Thou and grant my prayer, hide my life in Thine.</i></p>
<i>Message:</i>	Christ's Triumphant Entry	Are You Afraid To Believe?	
<i>Text:</i>	John 12:12-36	John 12:37-50	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Yanning	
<b>Evening</b>			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Alvin Chow	Jeff Pun	
<i>Speaker:</i>	Rev Lim Chee Boon	Rev Lim Chee Boon	
<i>Message:</i>	The Sign of the Rainbow	The Scroll Opened	
<i>Text:</i>	Genesis 9:1-17	Rev 5:1-14	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Jun	Ming Yann	
Other Duties			
	<b>Today</b>	<b>Next Week</b>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Alvin/Jonathan	Jeff/Jonathan	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Yanning	Joyce	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen Poh	Maureen Poh	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Prema/Yetta	YAF Group 1	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	DHW – Genesis 25	DHW – Genesis 25	
Appointments of the Week			
Wed 26 July	7:30 pm	<b>Mid Week Prayer Meeting:</b> C'man: Rev Lim	
Fri 28 July	7.00 pm	<b>Young Adults Fellowship:</b> Led by Rev Lim (Book of Daniel)	
Sat 29 July	4.00 pm	<b>Prayer Meeting &amp; Bible Study:</b> Spkr/C'man: Ming Yann	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
<b>Offering:</b> £300.53		<b>Lunch:</b> £13.50	
<h2 style="margin: 0;"><u>The Lord's Prayer</u></h2> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen</i></p>			