

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE
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DECEMBER 29, 2019

“OUR DYNAMIC HELP FOR 2020”

Psalms 121:1-8

Our theme for the new year of 2020 is “OUR DYNAMIC HELP”. Now understand beloved that for every pilgrim in this journey of life, the road will bend in a different direction for the new year. We can never know in advance which way it will turn, for the map doesn’t display that kind of detail for us. We must walk on until we meet the bend or the dip or the steep, uphill climb that has been set in the path for each of us. And we look to God for the grace to meet that defining moment.

So many of the psalms are written for pilgrims on the path. As we read **Psalm 121**, we can hear the psalmist crying out, “Lord, I need guidance for my journey. I’ve lost my way. Can’t You show me the right way to go? I need your HELP.” As you hold your Bible open to this wonderful chapter, you find these important words in superscription: “**A Song of Ascents.**” What does that mean? There are fifteen of these special psalms, the first of them being **Psalm 120**. In those ancient days, the Israelites would travel to Jerusalem for feast days at the temple.

Scholars believe the songs of ascents were written to sing along the road from the lowlands of Palestine up to Jerusalem. The original word means “a journey to a higher place,” and that’s the way people thought about going to Jerusalem. The Jewish people always thought of going **UP** to Jerusalem, in part, because the city was higher geographically. These psalms are alive, not limited to ancient history. For us today, the pilgrimage songs become metaphors for our own spiritual journey.

So where can we go to find traveler’s assistance? First of all, we see –
THE POSSIBILITIES FOR HELP ON OUR JOURNEY, which we will look at today then next Sunday we will examine –

THE PROMISE OF HELP ON OUR JOURNEY Vs. 3-8.

So, let’s examine **THE POSSIBILITIES FOR HELP ON OUR JOURNEY**

I. WE CAN LOOK AROUND FOR HELP V-1

He has prepared for his journey through the mountains to Jerusalem. As he enters the road, he takes a moment to gaze up to the horizon. He thinks of the miles ahead, the twists and turns and surprises, the old friends and new ones whose acquaintances he will make. He thinks of the dust and the heat, the darkness and the thirsty miles. He admires the graceful line where the mountains **verses 1-2. First...** embrace the sky. I’ve always been intrigued by the prominence of mountains in the Bible. There are many passages in the Old Testament that describe the mountains as a place of blessing, but we know all too well that mountains can also be a place of danger.

But secondly, we see...

II. WE CAN LOOK WITHIN FOR FOR HELP

Now I must confess to falling victim to a widespread misconception about this psalm. Maybe you’ve experienced it too. We were raised with the traditional King James Version and its time-honored punctuation. It can be misleading in this particular instance.

Take a good look at the first verse of Psalm 121. The psalmist says, “I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help?” Is the way the New King James Version, it has corrected the punctuation, but I used to misread the two phrases as one: “I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.” I used to conclude that we look for help from the mountains.

But that’s not what the psalm says at all. The writer makes a statement: “*I will lift up my eyes to the hills.*” **Then he breaks off and asks a question:** “*From whence comes my help?*” **What a difference a dash makes!** The traveler looks to the hills, then he looks inward. And as he looks inward, he asks himself the question, “**Where am I going to find help?**” He feels all the hesitancy and concern many of us do before we set out on a long journey. Traveling has a measure of insecurity about it, because we’re out of our comfort zones. *What if something terrible happens while I’m out of town? Who can I turn to?* Finally, we see here at

III. WE CAN LOOK ABOVE FOR HELP V-2

In the second verse, we find the solid foundation of this psalm: “*My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.*” At last the psalmist comes to the point that provides the essence of his song. He is telling himself, “**I’ve looked up to the mountains, and I find no help. I’ve looked within, and I find no guidance.** But finally, **I’ve looked up, and I’ve realized the source of my help.** It comes from no one but God.”

The idea of being loved by a Creator who hung the stars in space and set the earth upon its course is a powerful source of encouragement. **If He can guide the planets, surely, He can guide our little steps. God is not merely the Creator of all things, but He is the Sustainer of all things as well** (Col. 1:16-17).

Remember this: **The One to whom you are praying is the One who made heaven and earth. He is the Creator God.** I don’t know what kind of problem you may be facing—in the weariness of the journey, I’m certain it can seem all but insurmountable. But evoke in your heart that we have a -

DYNAMIC HELP THAT WE CAN LOOK TO FOR 2020.