

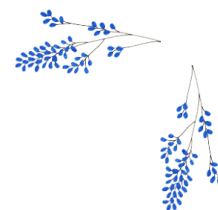


I'M TIRED,

Lord

30 Short Reflections on  
Psalm 121

for the Sleepy,  
Sleep-Deprived,  
and Worn Out



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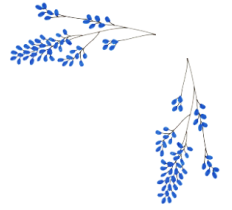
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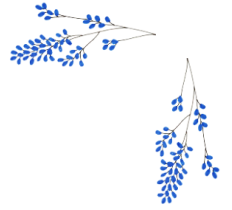
## **Introduction**

Tired minds tend to go in loops. You start with one thought, get lost on the way to the next, and come back to where you started.

This series of short devotions are meant to help your tired thought loop come back again and again to God's compassionate and consistent care for you. In Him, you'll find what you need. Even if you can't sleep. Even if you really need sleep or just a nice long vacation. Even if you've slept, but struggle to get real rest.

I pray that as you take three or so minutes to read these, you'll receive the comfort and care of the Lord through His Word.

May you find rest in the One who is with you and watching over you.



## 1. God Cares

Life is a journey, and when we're tired, it can feel like a long one. Even if we know it's worth it. Even if we're looking forward to our destination: eternity with God. Even if we know we're walking with God.

Tiredness despite faithfulness isn't new.

We see many of God's people in the Bible face exhaustion - physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We see Jesus sleeping through a storm, and the disciples dozing off in Jesus' hour of need.

However tired we may be and however long this journey seems, we can count on the God who watches over us compassionately and consistently. He doesn't slumber or sleep. He doesn't get worn down by our weakness or weariness.

In the coming devotions, we'll join in an old traveling song, a psalm of ascent, that was repeated by many Israelites as they made the long, annual journey to the temple to worship. The main theme of Psalm 121 is God's care.

Wherever we are, whatever we're facing, however tired we feel, we can worship God with the confidence that He cares for us and is with us on the long journey.

We'll come back to Psalm 121 line by line throughout this devotional series to relax and rejoice in the truth about God it proclaims. There are a few devotions for each verse to keep our tired thought loops returning again and again to the truth of our God's care.

For now, rest in the assurances of this old, old song as you read it from start to finish.

### PSALM 121

*1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?*

*2 My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

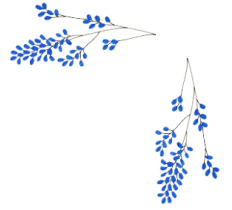
*3 He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber;*

*4 indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*5 The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
6 the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night.*

*7 The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life;*

*8 the Lord will watch over your coming and  
going both now and forevermore.*



## 2. We Lift Our Eyes to the Mountains

*"I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?" (Psalm 121:1)*

When we just want to close our eyes, but can't, there's one place we can always look for help. Up.

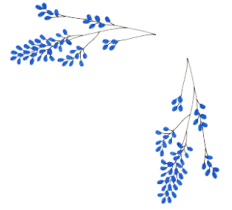
"Looking up" has long symbolized seeking God. Through Psalm 121, travelers sang about lifting their eyes to the mountains, where people worshiped. Some worshiped false gods on those mountains. They had to go "up" to their gods to get any help.

But those worshiping the One True God, the God of Israel, looked up and asked themselves "where does my help come from?" for good reason. God has always *come* to His people to help.

We may look "up" to Him, but when we look around us, we also see that our God is helping us right where we are. The God we look "up" to is also "the lifter of our heads" (Psalm 3:3). He came to us as Immanuel, the Christ. He is God with us.

So when we lift our heavy eyelids, we don't have to squint at mountains or other spiritual symbols for help. We don't have to look far at all. God, our help, is right here already.

*What reassures you that God is with you right now?*



### 3. Where Does Our Help Come From?

*"I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?" (Psalm 121:1)*

Sometimes when we're weary we find ourselves looking around a lot - for things we've forgotten, missed, or lost. For solutions to help us get real rest.

That our help comes to us because God comes for us is anchoring. The Bible is full of examples of God coming for His people - like how he came for the Israelites again and again. Through the miracles of their escape from Egypt, through smoke and fire on Mount Sinai, through the Tabernacle He provided for and instructed them to make.

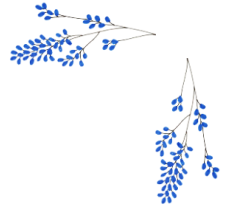
Since then, He's come for His people through Jesus. He came for us by becoming a man who got tired and slept. Who knew weariness and exhaustion. Who knew he would suffer and die for our sins. Who truly understands how long this journey can feel.

This God is the One who comes to help us still, through the Holy Spirit who lives in us. It isn't possible to come closer than to indwell!

From within us, the Holy Spirit in us reminds us of the truth and fights against our sinful bent. He convicts us, comforts us, and guides us. The Holy Spirit even intercedes for us as we pray.

However weary we feel, we can trust that help isn't just coming - He has come already and He is right here, right now.

*How has God helped you today?*



#### 4. We Need His Help Always

*"I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?" (Psalm 121:1)*

There are questions we get tired of asking, but often ask repeatedly when we're worn out. We wonder what time it is, when we'll finally get some rest, when it all will stop, what the point is after all.

One of the best questions we can ask, especially when we're weary, is: "where does my help come from?"

This question reminds us of something we often forget: we desperately need help. All the time. All the way.

We may feel like what we need most is sleep, quiet, a vacation, healing or something else. But in all things, we need God's help most.

In a world of doing, remembering we need God's help takes the pressure off. God hasn't just come for us to sit idly by. He isn't with us just to watch us figure it out for ourselves. God is our help!

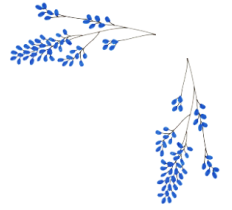
Jesus summed it up this way, *"apart from me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5).

We need God's help, and in His goodness, He offers help to us constantly.

So whatever other questions we're asking, it's good to keep "where does my help come from" front and center. We already know the answer, but asking us reminds us of the truth: we need to and are welcome to ask Him for help.

Help to rely on Him when we're weary. Help when we're too tired to know what to ask. Help to sleep. We can even ask Him for help asking Him for help!

*What can you ask God for help with today?*



## 5. Our Help Comes From the Lord

*"My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:2)*

When we help someone, we assist them with the power or ability we have.

This verse proclaims a shocking and glorious truth - that our help comes from *the Lord*. We are relying on the Maker of heaven and earth - the One that literally everything depends on, who can do anything!

In the thousands of years since this Psalm was first sung, God has proven His power in more ways than we can imagine. Just think of the power we know He has - total control, knowledge of everything, absolute love, perfection in all He does...everything He needs to bring about His good plans for us, for eternity.

If we're ever tempted to think it's unrealistic for God to promise that He'll use His unbelievable power and ability to help us, we can look to Jesus. All God's promises find their "Yes" in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20.)

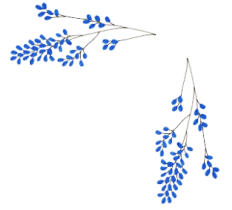
Colossians 1, a hymn of praise describing the glory of Jesus, reinforces this truth in verse 17. *"In him all things hold together!"*

Who is helping us in our tiredness and in everything we face? The All-Powerful Lord of All!

What *can't* He help us with? Nothing!

*Is there anything you want to ask God for help with but haven't yet?*





## 6. The Maker of Heaven

*"My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:2)*

It's hard to have an eternal perspective when tiredness makes it hard for us to see how we're going to keep going for the next few minutes. Heaven might not even seem particularly relevant or important to us when we're struggling.

But today is part of eternity. The context of eternity helps us see today more clearly.

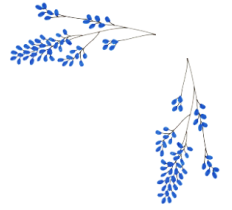
Back when the Psalm was first sung, The Maker of Heaven, who is the Maker of all, was making a way for His people on earth both physically and spiritually. At the same time, He was making a way for His son to come and save His people and anyone who believes in Him. His preparations, plans, and purpose didn't change when His people proved unfaithful time after time. The Maker of Heaven kept on faithfully making.

The same Maker of heaven is providing for us now and preparing a place for us in the future. He is making the new heaven and new earth.

Meanwhile, Jesus is standing at the right hand of God, making intercession for His people. The Holy Spirit is making us more like Jesus. God is sitting on His throne, having made a way for us to come to Him in our time of need freely and confidently through Jesus.

The eternal perspective within our reach, even when we're tired, is just this: What we're dealing with today isn't going to last forever, but what the glorious Maker of Heaven is making in us and for us will never end. And that makes today, however hard it may be, part of something so much better.

*What do you look forward to about the new heaven and new earth that Jesus is making?*



## 7. The Maker of Earth

*"My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:2)*

We have even less control than we think, and that's good news. If we had more control, we'd have more responsibility for things.

As it stands, we can't do all that much about the health crises, sad events, political turmoil, natural disasters, and other things we worry about. We're just not powerful enough.

But God is the Maker of this earth. He isn't confined within earthly limits like we are.

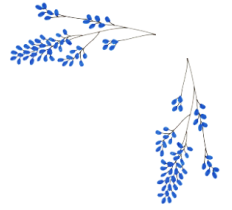
From miraculously ending the slavery of the Israelites to providing manna in the wilderness to keeping innumerable specific promises to His people across centuries, God has proven that nothing on this earth can stop Him.

Jesus demonstrated this too. He could just tell storms to straight-up stop it, fish to hang out on one side of a boat, and dead people to get up and walk. He didn't even have to be alive to prove His power over everything finite - He rose from the dead!

Whatever we wish we had control over, thank God that He is the one in control. He's proven time and again that He doesn't use His power for evil, but for good. Our sovereign God doesn't just have power, but compassion. He's not in charge of some world He inherited, but a world He personally made, sustains, and tends to - and within it, people He loves.

The Maker of earth is the Master of earth, so while we don't have all that much control, it's all under control with Him.

*What are you glad that God is in control of so you don't have to be?*



## A Prayer for Psalm 121:1-2 by Heather Blevins

God thank you for your perseverance,  
for your strength,  
and for the endurance that only you give.

When I've come to the end of myself,  
you so sweetly remind me  
to come to you for help.

God forgive me for not coming to you first.

My mind is scattered  
and the thought of self-sufficiency  
weighs me down.

Your truth is that  
the vast size of the mountains  
are your works  
and I remember my help comes from you.

Your word reminds me that  
the creator of heaven and earth  
is who will send the help I need.

Father God, I ask that you would restore my  
faith in you and there be no doubt in my  
heart that you are able and that you care.

Challenge me to daily meditate on your  
word.

I believe you breathed life into the word  
and so much of my armor  
is made of knowing your truth.

God thank you for the armor you've given  
me.

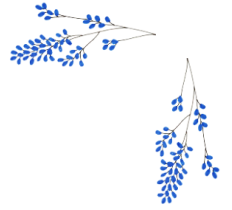
You so freely clothe me in truth,  
righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and  
spirit.

God I'm so thankful for this gift.  
I live because of you.

Please help me live for you and always trust  
you.

I love you so much.

Amen.



## 8. God Will Not Let Us Slip

*"He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber..." (Psalm 121:3)*

Little slip-ups might happen more when we're sleepy. We're more likely to stumble, trip, and bump into things physically.

But maybe you're not especially clumsy when you're tired. Maybe you're more likely to slip up by forgetting stuff or misremembering it. Or maybe things you'd normally process first and phrase more kindly or patiently come out wrong.

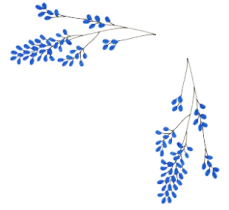
In poetic form, God not letting your foot slip is a way of saying He'll keep you on the path you are meant to be on. He won't let you slip up in a way that's past redemption.

God keeps you and I steady, moving us forward in Him even when we feel we're slipping up too much to keep going in godly confidence.

If and when we slip up, God's grace will be enough to keep us on the path: abiding in Christ. We won't be separated from His love. We won't become so weary that we give up permanently, and cease to bear fruit. He won't waste what might feel to us like aimless wandering - He'll make a way for us to worship Him wherever we are now and wherever He is leading us.

Even when we feel like our walk of faith is more like stumbling beside our Savior, He'll hold us steadily up.

*How have you slipped up recently? Have you responded to God's grace in that?*



## 9. He Watches Over Us

*"He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber..." (Psalm 121:3)*

We're not usually "on it" when we're tired. How often do we end up asking someone to repeat themselves? Or forgetting what we're doing while we're doing it? The struggle to stay alert can feel unsettling.

Because of the way God watches over us, our limited capacity for vigilance doesn't have to cause anxiety. God gave us our limits.

His way of watching over us isn't a glance when He has a spare minute.  
He doesn't just check in from time to time.  
There isn't just a chance that God's got our back.

God watches over His people vigilantly, 100% of the time, at 100% of His capacity, with a 100% desire and ability to help us. More than fixing His gaze from afar, He watches *over* us. This is a particular kind of help, one we might not even think about.

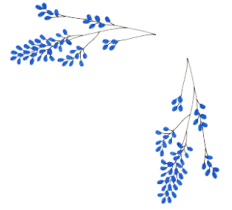
Our God protects us. He looks out for us. He sees what's happening, or about to happen, and He does something about it on our behalf.

As the earlier part of the verse describes so poetically, He's watching over us closely enough to see when we're even about to slip up - and He intercedes.

How much we are spared in His mercy that we never even notice! And of the things in life we do face, we can be sure they haven't slipped past an unaware God. They've been allowed by our intentional God, who works all things for the good of those who love Him, according to His purpose (Romans 8:28.)

He is awake, alert, and attentive to everything that's happening as He watches over us. Whatever might trouble us, we can trust God is already on top of it.

*What has God done for you that you may not have noticed or may have taken for granted recently?*



## 10. He Doesn't Slumber

*"He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber..." (Psalm 121:3)*

The idea of always being awake is awful. Especially when we're tired! But that's because we need rest. We're designed to depend on it. God is not.

God can watch over us perfectly because God never needs to close His eyes. There's nothing even to tempt Him to blink. He doesn't have limits like us. He can perpetually watch over us without the need of a break - or of something more interesting to do!

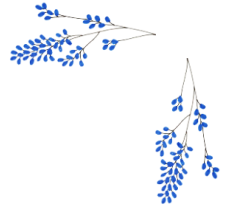
Imagine if we had to watch someone live their life, every moment of it. We get bored living our own ordinary lives - how much more boring it would be to watch someone else!

But God is actually interested in everything we do as He watches over us. He cares for us, down to every detail of our lives. In other Psalms, we see God bottles every tear we cry, counts every hair on our heads, and knows our every thought. That is diligent attention and true affection.

Our Lord is so invested in the details of our hearts and lives that He was willing to become a human. Jesus chose to be born as a baby, to grow, learn, and experience all the awkward and dull parts of being a human. He knows how it feels to be woken up by other's worries, to mediate foolish arguments among loved ones, to navigate traffic jams (though they were made up of people, not cars), to reach out for a snack and find the cupboard is empty (or the fig tree, as it were.)

May we rest in knowing that the God who is watching over us, always awake, is willing to endure dreariness and dumb frustrations out of love for us.

*What boring bit of your life are you grateful God still cares for you in?*



## 11. He Watches Over Everyone and Each One

*"...indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalm 121:4)*

The worries that keep us up at night and wear us down in life usually extend beyond our own circumstances. We fear for our families, friends, churches, communities, and nations - even for strangers whose stories we've heard.

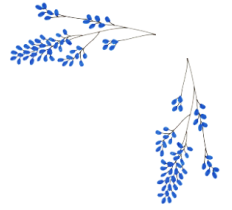
Wonderfully, the God who watches over you and me isn't limited to a "one person at a time" view. God is "He who watches over Israel" too. We see all through the Bible how God watches over Israel, His chosen people - a whole nation. Plus, through Israel, God made Himself known to all nations so that everyone could hear the good news of Jesus.

Ultimately, some of Jesus' most well-remembered words to His disciples are, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations"* (Matthew 28:19.)

This is the wonder of our God. He can hold the whole world in His hands and still become a man whose own hands were pierced for us. He can make a way for the salvation of people from every tribe and tongue, and at the same time have specifically chosen Israel and sent His son as an Israelite man.

God, without any exception, watches over everyone...and each one. Including you and I and each person that He gives us to love.

*What's a big worry you can entrust to God? How about a little one too?*



## 12. He Watches Over Imperfect People

*"...indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalm 121:4)*

We do not always feel worthy of worshiping God, particularly when we might be grumpy, bleary-eyed, or a little incoherent. But the point of worship isn't our worthiness - it's His.

The God who is praised in this Psalm for watching over Israel was caring for a people often described as obstinate, stubborn, rebellious, and stiff-necked. They could go from dedicating their lives to God to sacrificing to a golden calf in just a few weeks. They could see the goodness of the promised land and still doubt God so much they refused to enter it. They could go from promising to obey God's law that gives freedom to demanding a fallible human king.

Fortunately, God's people are never chosen because of their merits. When Jesus came for us, it wasn't because of our potential or because we'd proven ourselves in any way.

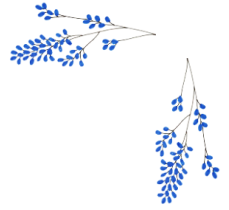
He came for imperfect people, like you and me, who are prone to being fickle, doubtful, impatient and myriad other messy, sinful things. Maybe sometimes we sin because we're tired and worn out. Certainly, sometimes, it's just because we are sinners.

But all the time, we fall short of God's glory.  
And all the time, Christ is ready to forgive us.

Even when we least deserve it, God in His mercy watches over us. What better reason to worship Him, right where we are, in whatever state we're in?

*What about God's character draws you to worship today?*





### 13. He Is Always Awake and Attentive to Us

*"...indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalm 121:4)*

While Psalm was sung to worship God, it also comes from God. All of God's Word is God-breathed! And all throughout the Bible, God repeats things that are important for us to remember.

So let's notice the repetition here.

God doesn't slumber (verse 3.)

God doesn't slumber (verse 4.)

God doesn't sleep (verse 4.)

His constancy is a comfort. It was a comfort for those who counted on God, moment by moment, when this Psalm first began to be sung. It's a comfort for us too.

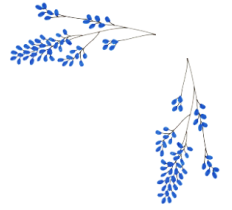
Since God is always awake and always attentive, He can reasonably invite us to pray without ceasing. And we can reasonably call out to Him at any time, about anything, and pray with the faith that He is listening.

He isn't half-heartedly, sleepily listening like a loved one might do at 3 o'clock in the morning. He is wholly and entirely caring and comprehending.

He isn't listening to our mere mumbling, as we struggle to piece together sentences out of exhaustion. Knowing every thought of our hearts and minds, He is understanding us completely.

When we wish we could just stop, sleep, and wake refreshed, we can rest in the truth that God is awake, and as He watches over us, He invites us to talk with Him.

*When do you tend to forget God is ready to listen?*



## **A Prayer for Psalm 121:3-4 by Emily Robertson**

Father in Heaven,

I thank you for these promises over my life,  
and the reminder of who you are.

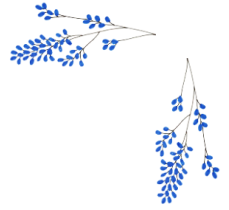
I thank you that while I climb into bed each night,  
Often weary from the demands of the day  
And unable to let go of all that has weighed me down,  
You promise to keep me under your  
Ever-watchful, never sleeping gaze.

Thank you, Father,  
That you are totally unlike me –  
Unwearying, unwavering, unflinchingly present  
And unable to let any harm come to those you love.  
You need neither slumber, nor sleep;  
Your eyes are always on those you love  
And so I can sleep knowing that you do not.

I thank you that you are who you say you are  
And the promises you have made are a resting place  
For my tired body and mind.  
Help me to rest on them –  
Totally unafraid and at peace,  
Steadied by the calm assurance that  
All things are safe within your hands.

I thank you that whether I am awake or asleep,  
You are always with me,  
Calling me to place my trust in your father-like protection  
And provision over my life.

Thank you, Father.



## 14. He is Our Refuge

*"The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand..." (Psalm 121:5)*

Usually, when we're in times of tiredness, we don't have the option to just stop living our regular lives until our energy returns. Life continues, with all its demands and opportunities. We have to keep going. We have to keep using what the poetic language of Psalm 121 refers to as our "right hand."

The right hand symbolizes the working hand. It's a picture of doing the things that need done.

Most of the time when we read about the "right hand" in the Bible, we're reading about the "right hand of God" as a way of describing God's work. It's with His right hand that He provides, like Psalm 16:11 pictures. He strengthens His people with His right hand, as Isaiah 41:10 reassures us. With His right hand, Psalm 20:6-7 explains, He saves us.

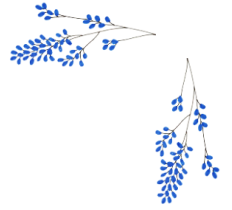
We have a "right hand" because we are made in God's image, and He is a God who *does*. Part of His good work in our lives is watching over us and providing for us as we do the work He plans for us to do.

What "working" looks like varies for each of us and in each season of life. Sometimes we have to scale back to just the necessities. Sometimes we have to persist through a too-busy time. But at all times, we can rely on the Lord in our work.

He looks out for us as we do what He calls us to in this life.

Whatever we must work at and no matter how tired we may be, our good God is working on our behalf. He is our right-hand refuge - strengthening, protecting, equipping, and upholding us as we work to His glory.

*What sort of work must you still do while tired? How do you see God helping you to keep going in it?*



## 15. He Gives Us Rest

*"The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand..." (Psalm 121:5)*

Obedying God means persevering in faithfulness even when we're struggling. Even when we don't have much energy. Even when we're scaling back on our to-do lists. Even when it would seem understandable for us to forget about God to focus on self-preservation.

"Take my yoke upon you," Jesus said.

He didn't hide that faith takes work.

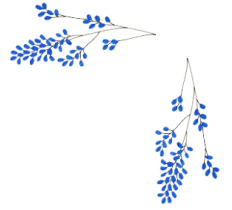
But the Lord promises more than a yoke.

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest," Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* (Matthew 11:28-30).

God's Word reminds us *what good* work it is we're called to - following Christ. And this work isn't aimless or independent. The Savior who teaches us and guides us as we persevere in faithfully following Him promises to give us rest. He is gentle with us. He is humble in heart. He cares for our souls through all He calls us to.

When persevering in faithfulness seems like just one more weight we can't carry, we can look to Christ. He'll help us today as He works in us and through us.

*What about Christ makes your burden feel lighter?*



## 16. He Renews Us

*"The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand..." (Psalm 121:5)*

A little reprieve can make a big difference. When you're in a time of tiredness, anything that takes the edge off is welcome. Less noise, less light, getting to close your eyes, having what you need within reach so you don't have to get up - these little things count more when you're past your energy limit.

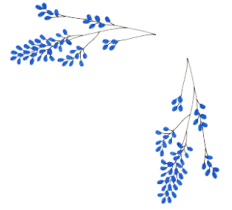
Shade is a poetic way of describing a little reprieve.

Imagine a blistering hot day, like the Israelites who originally sang this Psalm might have experienced at times traversing rugged arid terrain on their way to worship at the temple. If there was just one tree offering shade, they'd flock to it as we would. We all feel the pull and appreciate the refreshment of a little respite when we're getting worn out.

God offers this. He offers us help in huge and significant ways. Like salvation! But He also offers us help in small, ordinary ways. He is the shade at our right hands, giving us a verse that encourages a tired heart. Or a lyric that reminds us we are known and loved. Or the prompting of the Holy Spirit in a friend who remembers to pray for us. Or a neighbor who pulls the trash can in for us, never realizing they were the hands and feet of Christ that day.

In little ways we easily miss, God watches over us and renews us continually.

*Are there little things, small provisions, you can thank God for today?*



## 17. He Sustains Us

*"...the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night." (Psalm 121:6)*

Building on the image of God watching over us and renewing us as the shade at our right hand, Psalm 121:6 reassures us the sun will not harm us by day. Since most of us probably aren't particularly at risk of sunstroke like the Israelites singing this Psalm while walking arid roads originally, it's easy to skip past.

But what is the harm of the sun?

Read as poetry, we see it as over-exposure. It's something that bears down on us relentlessly, draining us dry as we keep pressing on.

That we can probably understand, and the same promise applies.

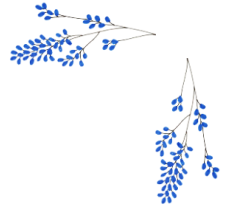
Just as God provides for us in the work we have to keep doing, just as the Lord offers us rest as we persevere in faithfulness, just as He renews us in little ways, the Lord protects us from what threatens to wear us out entirely.

He protects us in all sorts of ways, and one of them is by sustaining us. He won't let the relentless things in our lives wreck us.

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 describes this; *"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body."*

We might be worn out, but we're not beyond God's sustaining power. Death, and all the things that even feel like dying after day, don't have the final say. Jesus made a way, and His own death and resurrection prove it. Praise God.

*What feels relentless in your life? How is the Lord sustaining you anyway?*



## 18. He Keeps Us Safe in the Dark

*"...the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night." (Psalm 121:6)*

Being scared of the dark is common, and not just among children. Even adults safe in their own homes can get nervous in the dark. The dark of night reminds us how much is unknown to us, and can send our minds chasing the "what ifs." We fill in the blanks of darkness to brace ourselves for the worst.

But we are watched over and protected by the God who knows everything.

He is never lying awake wondering what the future holds or what that sound in the other room was or how the week's trouble is going to sort out. He already knows.

In John 11:44-46, Jesus says, *"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness."*

Because of Christ, because of the hope and assurance we have in Him, we can rest in Him despite the "what ifs" that particularly enter our minds at night. There is no "if" in which He will leave us or forsake us. There is no "if" in which He'll even be accidentally inattentive for a moment. There is no "if" in which He won't both care about our fears AND be capable of addressing them perfectly.

*Are there any 'what ifs' you can release to the Lord today?*



## 19. He Watches Over Us In Every Circumstance

*"...the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night." (Psalm 121:6)*

Some of our challenges are hard to define. Some seem resolved only to come up again. Some are unlikely to resolve in this lifetime. Thankfully, whatever we're facing, God's care for us is comprehensive.

C.H. Spurgeon, reflecting on Psalm 121:6, wrote:

"Day and night make up all time: thus the ever-present protection never ceases. All evil may be ranked as under the sun or the moon, and if neither of these can smite us we are indeed secure." -C.H. Spurgeon

From morning to night, and night to morning, and all the time in between, we are under the loving, constant watch of our God. It's not just that God cares for us at all times, but also in all circumstances. This truth is echoed throughout God's Word, like in Psalm 139:7-8, where we read:

*"Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there."*

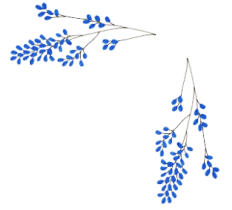
Later, Romans 8:38-39 assures us:

*"...neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,  
neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,  
neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Whatever we are facing, whenever we are facing it, God cares and is keeping us safe from the worst harm that ever could be: separation from Him. It won't happen. He is with us, now and always.

*What kinds of harmful or potentially harmful circumstances are you trusting God to care for you in today?*





## A Prayer for Psalm 121:5-6 by Lois Flowers

Dear Lord,

Whether we feel seen or unseen by other people,  
we rest in the truth that you are always with us,  
always watching over us,  
always protecting us from the gravest danger: separation from you.

The world is wearing us out, Lord, so we cast our cares,  
worries and fears on you—one by one, day and night.

You know exactly what we are facing right now,  
and you will equip us with exactly what we need to accomplish it.

It's so easy to get discouraged, Lord.  
Strengthen us as we persevere—in difficult relationships,  
in daily tasks that seem so monotonous,  
in situations and circumstances that require more than we can give.

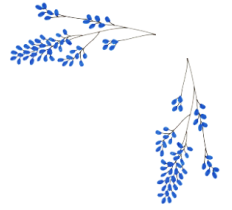
When we get stuck on the what-if roller coaster,  
reframe our thoughts to ask instead,  
"What if God were not on my side?"

Thank you for the seemingly tiny happenings that cheer our hearts  
and lighten our loads—a good word from a friend  
a freshly sprouted flower, an answer to a forgotten prayer.

Let us never forget you are always ready to help us,  
in big and small ways.

We praise you today for your ever-present protection,  
your steadfast love and your faithful guidance.

Amen.



## 20. God Keeps Us

*"The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life..." Psalm 121:7*

It can feel like we're losing our grip when we're weary. Sometimes, we actually are. Tired hands can tremble and fingers can forget to hold on. We know what it's like to not be able to keep a firm grasp, or keep track, or keep up. We know what it's like to struggle to keep hold of even our faith, as we feel too tired to pray, too worn out to trust, too weak to persevere in Christ.

But we are cared for by a God who does what we can't. Nothing slips through His fingers. No one falls out of His hands. God holds us, and He keeps us.

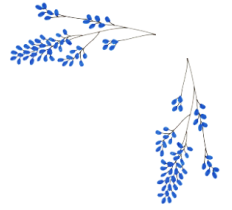
We see this in the story of the Israelites who sang this Psalm on their way to worship God. Time after time, they let go of the good commands God gave them. They cast aside their relationship with Him, turning away. They dismissed Him, disobeyed Him, and broke their vows to Him. Again and again, He miraculously brought them back to Himself, and again and again, they gave Him up.

When God, still keeping His covenant with them, sent His own son to save them, they rejected Him too. They drove nails through His hands, and still, He held onto them, dying for them and rising again.

Jesus was able to say that "not one was lost" of the people God had chosen for Him to save (John 17:12). He even, reaching through the rejection, took hold of many who were not Israelites, making the way for people from all nations to become His children.

This is the God who keeps us, and He hasn't loosened His grip over time: *"If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself" (2 Timothy 2:13).*

*What stories of God keeping His people are your favorites?*



## 21. He Keeps Us Safe From Harm

*"The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life..." Psalm 121:7*

Exhaustion is a form of harm, isn't it? It certainly tends to carry with it physical harm, like headaches. And emotional harm, since we struggle more with patience, peace and joy when we're tired. Also, relational harm sometimes because it's hard to be thoughtful, kind, or even just to connect with others when we're worn out. Plus, exhaustion is often the result of harm - illness, anxiety, etc.

How can God's Word say He will keep us from all harm?

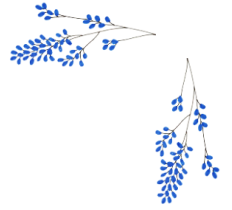
It's not like the Israelites first singing this Psalm experienced life without harm either. They'd faced extreme harm like slavery, years of war, displacement - and the more ordinary trials of life, too.

But they could trust the Lord would keep them from harm because they knew two truths:

- (1) The worst harm that can happen would never happen to them. He promised never to leave them or forsake them.
- (2) God ultimately works good out of all the bad we experience. He promised them hope, a future, and a Savior who would redeem them, and no hardship in the meantime would thwart His plan.

Those promises stand, and the truth remains. Because of Jesus, we can say like the Apostle Paul did before he was martyred that we will be "delivered safely into His kingdom" (2 Timothy 4:18). The Lord keeps us from the totality of harm. Whatever difficulties we do face, we know the Lord remains steadfast and will turn them into eternal glory someday.

*Have you ever seen God work out of a circumstance that wasn't good?*



## 22. He Watches Over Us All Our Lives

*"The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life..." Psalm 121:7*

We tend to lose sight of the big picture of life when we're just trying to get through the day. The earlier verses in Psalm 121 remind us that God is watching over us constantly, in every moment, that He is caring for us each day and each night. But here the perspective zooms out.

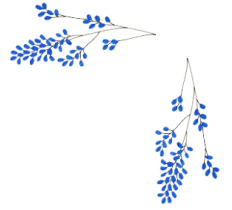
God keeps us from all harm. God watches over our lives.

From start to finish, not just on these tired days and nights, but for this whole life, He is there. And He cares.

Since God ordains our days before they come to be and knits us together in our mother's womb, He truly does watch over us from the beginning of our lives. Because of Jesus, we can look forward to life everlasting. So God will watch over us through our "ends," and forevermore.

All of life, no matter how big and incomprehensible the scope of it, is in God's hands. He who keeps us, who protects us, who guides us, who will make all things new and be with us forever, is watching over us in the details and in the big picture.

*When have you seen God care for the details of your life? How do you see Him caring for you in the big picture too?*



## 23. God Watches Over Our Coming

*"...the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)*

A life of faith is two postures lived at once: coming and going.

The first posture mentioned in verse 8 is of coming to God. We come to God to worship and we come to God to be filled. We come to God because He is the source of all things, the giver of every good gift, the all in all.

We come to God, even in our exhaustion, because there is no better place to be than with Him.

Fortunately, we don't have to go far. God is with us.

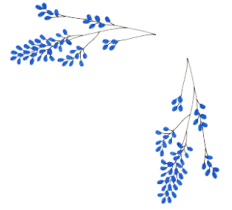
When the Israelites first started singing the Psalm on the way to worship God at the temple, God was also with them. But, because Jesus hadn't come yet, there were all sorts of things they did that symbolized how sin kept them from freely being with God. Journeying to the temple three times a year, for example, was an expression of needing to come and offer sacrifices in order to be near God because sin stood in the way.

But notice that God helped them even in their coming to Him. He watched over them as they drew near.

Since Jesus has come, and He is "the way," we come to God through Him. We can *"with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need"* (Hebrews 4:16).

God has always watched over the coming of His people, and He will help us even in making a way for us. We don't have to clear things out of the way, clean up our mess, or muster up enough energy. All we need is to utter in our hearts "help." God will bring us to Himself. The One we come to in worship is the One who enables us to worship.

*What feels like an obstacle keeping you from worship? Will you bring even that to God today?*



## 24. God Watches Over Our Going

*"...the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)*

A life of faith is two postures lived at once -

- (1) Of coming to worship and being filled
- (2) Of going out to worship God by filling others

Our true and proper worship, Romans 12:1 describes, is to offer ourselves "as a living sacrifice."

We may not feel there's much we have to offer, especially when we're so tired, but God says otherwise. Throughout His word, worship is defined as keeping His commands, loving Him with all our heart, and as loving our neighbors. Worship is going out and doing as He calls us to.

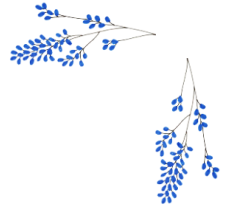
This may sound exhausting, but the Lord watches over our "going" too. *"His commands are not burdensome"* (1 John 5:3). *"His yoke is easy, His burden is light"* (Matthew 11:28-30).

When the Israelites left the temple to return from their time of worship, God was still with them. They left lighter, freer, forgiven and renewed in their knowledge of the truth, the joy of their salvation, the hope of promises of the Lord.

For us who know Christ, this is a constant. We abide in Christ! As living sacrifices, we are always both coming and going in Him. We are always able to worship Him. In whatever condition we are in, we can love Him, and being filled with His love, love others too.

In a tired season, that may look more like praying for people as they come to your mind or hitting send on a quick note of encouragement instead of going out and physically doing. That's okay. Abide in Christ, and His love will spill out of you so that your goings are also comings - and often involve bringing others' needs with you to the Lord!

*What does serving God look like for you in this season?*



## 25. God Watches Over Us Now and Forevermore

*"...the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore." (Psalm 121:8)*

Where are you right now? What time is it?

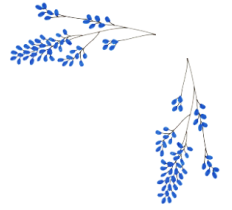
The Lord is watching over you *now*.

And if you look back, looking as far as you can remember, the same is true. God's sovereignty applies. If you look ahead, as far as you can imagine, that's still true. Wherever you are, whatever is happening, God cares.

There aren't that many songs we can sing in any circumstance or mood, but Psalm 121 is one of them. It's true now and forevermore that God is watching over you, and that this is always good news. It's worship when we're weary to say:

"I'm tired, Lord. I lift my eyes up to the hills. Where does my help come from?" and to remember, and remember, and remember again. Our help comes from the Maker of Heaven and Earth. He will not let us slip from the path He has laid out for us. He will watch over us and our loved ones constantly, without wanting or needing to look away. Caring consistently. He will be our refuge, our help, our sustainer and provider, day and night, He will work good out of all things and keep us safe in Him eternally, all our lives, both now and forevermore!

*What else can you add as you look to God in prayer and worship?*



## **A Prayer for Psalm 121:7-8 by Katy Morgan**

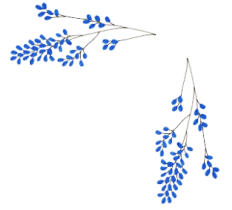
Watch over my life, Lord,  
Watch over me.  
Keep me as I come to you;  
Guard me as I go to others.

Watch over my life, Lord;  
Keep me from harm -  
There is so much that doesn't make sense to me.  
You are so kind, Lord;  
Watch over me.

Watch over my life, Lord -  
Now and next moment,  
next month and tomorrow.  
Watch over my life, Lord;  
Do what's best for me.

I trust you forever;  
Bring peace to me.





## Conclusion

This series of reflections started for the sake of helping tired thought loops come back again and again to God. As it finishes, I hope you and I more easily remember that:

When we're in need of help, God, the Maker of heaven and earth, is there, willing and able.

When we feel like we can't, like we're losing it, God is keeping us close and watching over us and our loved ones.

When the days and nights feel long, and things are overwhelming, God is with us. He is watching over us, giving us refuge, protecting us and sustaining us.

When we are worn out and feeling all the hard effects of this broken world, God is watching over our lives. He is caring for us in all circumstances, right now and forever.

When your thoughts loop around again, searching for somewhere to rest in your tiredness, may Psalm 121 come to mind. May you and I remember the One who doesn't forget us for a moment.

*How will you remind yourself of God's care in your tiredness?*

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## PSALM 121

*1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains—  
where does my help come from?*

*2 My help comes from the Lord,  
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

*3 He will not let your foot slip—  
he who watches over you will not slumber;*

*4 indeed, he who watches over Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*5 The Lord watches over you—  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
6 the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon by night.*

*7 The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life;  
8 the Lord will watch over your coming and  
going both now and forevermore.*