Notes



AUGUST 12, 2018

The Lord is Your Keeper Kevin Rhodes

Meeting Times

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30am

Worship 10:30am

Worship 6:00pm

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00pm

Ladies Bible Class will resume in the fall

In modern America few people show concern over their safety when traveling. Oh, many still say a quick prayer before an airplane takes off, and some might express concern for the reckless drivers they encounter at an ever-increasing rate, but the nature of travel has changed so dramatically that people generally feel safe and secure within the confines of a temperature controlled motorized vehicle capable of great distances and averting problem areas via instructions on a smartphone. Contrast all this with the weary Israelite traveler, returning to Jerusalem to attend a feast, who faced many perils in the process of his journey to worship. Especially after the captivity carried large populations away from Judea to settle in areas far away from the epicenter of their faith, faithful Jews would leave their homes and cover many miles to return to their homeland. Such a pilgrimage included a vast number of dangers inherent in ancient travel. The odyssey itself required physical endurance. The route also could take them through hostile territory, including to some degree Samaria, and areas of pagan influence.

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More than that, they would find it necessary to watch carefully as they traveled due to the marauders and thieves that camped in strategic locations along major roads, often hiding in the caves within the mountainous countryside. Thus, the concern expressed in the opening of Psalm 121 came from a very real place: "I will lift up my eyes to the hills— From whence comes my help?" (Psa. 121:1). Faith initiated the journey, as Psalm 120 implies. However, the people would also need great faith to sustain their travels and ensure that they arrived in Jerusalem as planned, and the remainder of the psalm captures this faith in God's providential role in their safety perfectly.

The psalmist makes an unequivocal statement of faith: "My help comes from the LORD Who made heaven and earth" (Psa. 121:2). Yahweh, as implied by His name, will be there, and He will help. Moreover, the help He can offer comes with the power of creation behind it. Such a declaration moves far beyond fear and passes timidity to embrace confidence and security. At this point in the psalm, the wording takes an interesting turn. Abandoning the first person declaration of faith, the psalm now moves to third person. While some consider this someone else's response to the original question, I believe it better represents the psalmist's faith that the same confidence He has in God should characterize others when they remember His character. The LORD provides the steadiness to secure a defense against any foe's attack (Psa. 121:3). He remains ever alert and cognizant of His covenant with Israel and all its attendant promises (Psa. 121:4). "The Lord is your keeper" (Psa. 121:5a). He is more than able to care for you, protect you, and guide you, offering constant protection whether from the heat of the sun or the perils that strike at night (Psa. 121:5b-6). He always acts with our best interest at heart. Thus, if there are any doubts remaining, the final two verses surely dispel them. "The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore" (Psa. 121:7-8). God extends His protection to cover "all evil." No evil exists that He cannot counter. His protection addresses your very "soul." This likely refers to His commitment to protect the whole of our being, but its spiritual implications remain and are indeed profound. Moreover, the protection provided suffers no lapses in time. Every moment you live, God is there for you.

Jews arriving safely in Jerusalem after a potentially treacherous journey surely had reason to give thanks to God—but really no more than what His people enjoy each and every day. When you place yourself in His hands, the LORD is your keeper. And while that surely offers peace in the midst of a chaotic and sometimes cruel world, it provides even more when considered in terms of "even forevermore."

Order of Service

Opening Remarks	Clay Bond
Song Leader	Tom Barr

Song #299 I Stand Amazed

Song #388 Let Every Heart Rejoice and Sing

Prayer Chris Windham

Song #367 *Jesus Paid It All*

Communion Sam Phillips

Ray Parks

Song #312 I'll Be a Friend to Jesus

Song #465 O for a Heart to Praise My God

Sermon Clay Bond

Song #436 Nearer, Still Nearer

Offering

Closing Remarks Clay Bond

Song #391 Let Me Live Close to Thee

Dismissal Prayer Don Petrosky, Sr.

Upcoming Events:...

➤ August 15th Summer Series: Cody Westbrook will speak to us about the Beauty of Fellowship

.Wednesday Devotional...

July 4-Aug. 29 Summer Series

...Prayer List...

Gay Kyle, Eugene & Barbara Haydon, Bud Bond, Don Walker, Gary Schneider, Kathy Ivanciw's mother Shirley, Butch Crownover, Chris' cousin Tyler has begun cancer treatments, Melvin Wright, Petrosky's grand daughter-inlaw Christie severe eye problem

Remember our college students who are away at school: Jarrett Haydon, Emily & Courtney Meredith, and Dylan & Steven Petrosky

Attendance: Sunday AM: 42 PM: 29 Wednesday: 30 Contribution: \$2929.80