

8. "May the Lord keep thy coming in and thy going out; from henceforth now and forever." The Prophet concludes by promising the last and most desirable consolation of all. Not only will the pilgrim, "who in his heart hath disposed to ascend by steps," be so protected in any particular part of his journey; but he will be always protected throughout the journey. Every journey consists of an entrance and exit; for, as we go along, we enter on one road, and when that is finished we leave it; then we enter on another, from which we also depart; so also we come into a city or a house, and we go out of them; we enter another and out we go again, until we finish the journey by arriving at our country. Thus it is that we get along on the road of life, entering on and completing good works; for to begin corresponds with coming into; completing with going out; "from henceforth now and forever;" from this day and forever, may the Lord guard thy coming in and thy going out, and protect and save thee.

END OF PSALM 120

You are Psalms

Some people think you never get discouraged, but the fact is, when you do, you know where to run. Your prayers are open and honest because you realize that God already knows your heart, He's just waiting to hear you spill it. And when you do, what starts out as heavy ends up becoming a song of praise. You may struggle... and often you do... but each time, you grow in your understanding of God's faithfulness. You're just a song waiting to happen.

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PSALMS (SONGS OF PRAISE)

TRUST
IN THE
LORD *and do good;*
dwell in the land and
enjoy safe pasture.
PSALM 36: 3

PSALM NUMBER: 120

God is the keeper of His servants.

1. I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me.
2. My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.
3. May he not suffer thy foot to be moved: neither let him slumber that keepeth thee.
4. behold, he shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel.
5. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy protection upon thy right hand.
6. The sun shall not burn thee by day; nor the moon by night.
7. The Lord keepeth thee from all evil: may the Lord keep thy soul.
8. May the Lord keep thy coming in and thy going out; from henceforth now and forever.

The Psalms are songs of praise and cover a period of about 1000 years, from the time of Moses (ca. 1400 B.C.) to the Israelites' return from exile (ca. 450 B.C.). They deal with selected events of that period and provide us with the thoughts and feelings of those who went through the experiences recorded. After being made a Cardinal by Pope Clement VIII, Saint Robert Bellarmine, prepared for posterity his very own commentary on each of the Psalms. Enclosed are his interpretations on each of the Psalms.

PSALM NUMBER: 120

EXPLANATION OF THE PSALM

1. "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me." Travelers look at nothing more frequently than the place for which they are bound, and if they cannot see it, they fixed their eyes on the point next to it, from which they derive great consolation, so much so that they gather fresh strength and courage to prosecute their journey. The earthly Jerusalem being in the mountains, and the celestial Jerusalem being above all the heavens, this traveler, whether real or imaginary, says, "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains," where the holy city is situated, "from whence help shall come to me," that of consolation.

2. "My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." The traveler declares he expects no help from the mountains to which he raised his eyes, but from him who presides over the holy city that is on the mountains, which he explains more clearly in the beginning of Psalm 122, where he says, "to thee have I lifted up my eyes who dwellest in heaven." He then describes the true God by the creation of heaven and earth, as he did in another Psalm, when he says, "for all the gods of the Gentiles are devils: but the Lord made the heavens."

3. "May he not suffer thy foot to be moved: neither let him slumber that keepeth thee." The Prophet, now speaking in his own person, answers the traveler, and says you did well and wisely in raising your eyes to the mountains, in not regarding the vanities you met on the road, and seeking for help and consolation from the founder of your heavenly country; and I, therefore, sincerely hope "he may not suffer thy foot to be moved," that he may now allow you to slip or to fall on the road, but that he may so strengthen your feet that they may continue to be sound during your journey to your country. "Neither

let him slumber that keepeth thee." I also wish and pray that the Father, who is your guardian, may be always vigilant in guarding you, so as never to suffer your feet to be moved. God is said to slumber, in a figurative sense, when he suffers us, as if he did not avert to it, to fall, as he who slumbers has no cognizance of what is being done. "Thy foot to be moved," is a Hebrew phrase for falling into sin, as in Psalm 17, "my feet are not weakened," and in Psalm 72, "my feet were almost moved; my steps and well nigh slipped."

4. "Behold, he shall neither slumber nor sleep, that keepeth Israel." The Prophet promises the pilgrim the grace he had been asking for, saying, I pray that the Father, who undertook the care of you, may not slumber; and he certainly will not slumber; because he who has charge of his own people, the people of Israel, including all the pilgrims in this world, who hasten to go up to their heavenly country, never sleeps nor slumbers.

5. "The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy protection upon thy right hand."

6. "The sun shall not burn thee by day; nor the moon by night." The Prophet just assured the pilgrim so confiding in God that he would be protected, that he may not fall on the way; and he now promises another consolation, that he would be protected from the heat of the sun in the daytime, and that of the moon in the night; because God will be like a shade to him, that he can hold in his hand, so as to protect himself on every quarter. The Lord not only protects Israel, his people in general, "but he is thy protector" in particular, and his protector, as the Hebrew implies, is like a parasol, held in the hand, and raised over the head, and can be moved so as to give protection on any side.

7. "The Lord keepeth thee from all evil: may the Lord keep thy soul." He now adds another consolation, a general one. Not only will the Lord guard you from falling and from fatigue, but he will protect you from every other evil that could possibly befall you on the journey, so that your soul and your life will be preserved whole and intact through the whole journey.