

CP - 6/2/24

Psalms of Ascent – Psalm 120

Psalm 120 arises from a discomfort from this world and a cry for deliverance.

- Jerusalem sat some 2,700 feet high upon Mount Zion.
- These psalms were sung by pilgrim Jews who journeyed to Jerusalem to attend the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.
- The journey was a spiritual going-up as much as a physical one.
- It was a progression from way off to the most intimate closeness.
- They were headed to where God’s presence dwelt.
- Set our eyes on things above
- Singing has a way of moving our physical and spiritual eyes upward.
- No matter where we are, we have the great privilege to seek the Lord’s presence.

1. The Cry for Deliverance (120:1–2)

- “In my distress, I called to the Lord”
 - We see both struggle and trust mingled together.
 - “called” — past tense, completed action (looking back)
 - So remembering God’s deliverance then, the psalmist is asking for it now.
 - “me” = my soul (the deepest part of me)
- God hears you! (“answered me”)
- God will deliver you!
 - The current
 - My mind, will, emotions
 - When we go to God, we can bring all our sins and situations before Him, and He hears us.
 - The eventual
 - We won’t stay in that foreign land.
 - He will get us home and deliver us from the world and everything in it.

2. The Caution to Deceivers (120:3–4)

- The Psalmist speaks strong words to deceivers here.
- It is a caution to not get too comfortable in their lies.
- When you attack God’s child, you better watch out!
- Sharp arrows tipped with glowing coals
- How foolish it is to set yourself against God and His people!

- God will avenge!
 - Romans 12:19: “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’”
 - Proverbs 20:22: “Do not say, ‘I will repay evil’; wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you.”
 - Don’t take matters into your own hands; God will take care of it!
- God uses their own tactics.
 - “sharp arrows with burning coals”
 - Punishment

3. The Concern for the Devoted (120:5–7)

- “Meshech”— son of Japheth, whose children were barbarous; this place is often mentioned with Gog and Magog.
- “Kedar”— son of Ishmael
- These two locations are hundreds of miles apart.
- You’re a foreigner.
 - You may be dwelling, but you don’t belong there.
- You’re a temporary dweller.
 - “dwell in tents”— temporary
 - Eyes set on heaven
- You’re different.

Application

- The Holy Spirit is within you, no matter where you find yourself.
- God sees you and hears you.
- God’s answer for deliverance is always yes; it’s just a matter of timing.
- This world is not our home, so don’t try to make it your home.