

Notes on Psalm 121 for Homegroups.

The key Hebrew word in Psalm 121 is “*Shamar*” translated as ‘watch over’ or ‘keep’.

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills –
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 / keeps** you will not slumber;*

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

⁵ *The LORD **watches over / keeps** 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 **watch over / keep** you from all harm –
he will **watch over / keep** your life;*

⁸ *the LORD will **watch over / keep** your coming and going
both now and for evermore.*

The other key word is the ‘LORD’. Apart from the question in verse 1, He is in every verse!

As you prepare, ask yourself what strikes you? What questions arise in your mind? Investigate what it says about the Lord, and what promises it gives.

1-2. Who is the Lord?

5. The Lord is a shade. At Psalm 84:11, the Lord is a sun. It’s poetry.

6. ‘The sun will not harm you... nor the moon...’. Just as when we say, ‘*from dawn till dusk*’, we mean all day, so sun and moon are a pair of ‘opposites’ to include everything in between. It’s a way of saying, Nothing out there will harm you. [By the way, the ancients did think that sometimes the moon had a bad force; our word ‘lunatic’ comes from the Latin for moon].

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION.

1. What do verses 1 -2 mean to you? What sort of help do you think is meant?
2. Verses 3 – 4. Why is it important to know that the Lord doesn’t go to sleep?
3. Verse 7. We sometimes experience danger and harm. So what is promised in this verse?
4. When would this psalm be a particular encouragement and help to you? In what circumstances can it be what we need?
5. How can we know the protection of the Lord in our lives today?
6. Is there a line or a phrase that you want to memorise or hold onto? Why?