

**THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**  
**Psalms: Living By Faith In God**  
**CXXI. God's Comprehensive Insurance For Today**  
**(Psalm 121:1-8)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Last fall, a survey by Chapman University found that “(f)ear is playing a bigger role in American life than at any time in recent history.” (Sarah Kuta, “These Are America’s Biggest Fears in 2024 as the Country is ‘Becoming More Afraid,’” October 25, 2024; smithsonianmag.com) The survey found that the ten top fears were (1) corrupt government officials, (2) people we love becoming very ill, (3) cyberterrorism, (4) people we love dying, (5) Russia using nuclear weapons, (6) a lack of enough money for the future, (7) U. S. going to war, (8) North Korea using nuclear weapons, (9) terrorist attacks and (10) biological warfare.

This list of fears applies to us locally: (1) On the fear of corrupt government officials, last week, thousands of homeschoolers met at the state Capitol in Hartford to urge lawmakers not to take away their rights. The case of a 20-year captivity of a Waterbury boy under the pretext that he was taken out of a public school to be homeschooled has spurred some lawmakers to try to create strict government rules for homeschooling. However, the fault for this tragedy was failure by state officials themselves to follow up claims by the boy’s former school principal who called the state Department of Children and Families “more than 20 times” on the boy’s disappearance. (Susan Raff and Zoe Strothers, “Thousands of homeschooling parents in Hartford urging lawmakers not to take away their rights,” May 5, 2025; msn.com) (2) On the two fears of people we love becoming very ill or dying, several families we know face them. (3) On the six fears of attacks to our social structure or nation (cyberterrorism, Russia using nuclear weapons, the U. S. going to war, North Korea using nuclear weapons, terrorist attacks and biological warfare), we often read stories in newspapers about such issues. (4) On the fear of a lack of enough money for the future, a believer shared with me her fear on this matter last week, and the April 25, 2025, report, “New UN Report Warns of Global Social Crisis Driven by Insecurity, Inequality and Distrust” (unu.edu) stated that “economic insecurity” is a huge global fear.

**Need:** *So, we ask, “How should we deal with the fears that we face today?”*

- I. Psalm 121:1-2 reveals that God addressed the fears the psalmist faced in his pilgrimage to God’s temple:**
  - A. The introductory note to Psalm 121 identifies it as “a song of ascents” that Hebrew pilgrims sang as they traveled up the hills to the Jerusalem temple (H. C. Leupold, The Exposition of the Psalms, 1974, p. 868).
  - B. When the psalmist then said that he lifted up his eyes to the hills from which his help came, he testified that he looked to God, the Maker of heaven and earth, Who dwelt in the Jerusalem temple, Psalm 121:1-2.
  - C. The reason the psalmist thought of **God’s help** while making a pilgrimage to the Lord’s temple was that God in Exodus 34:23-24 and Deuteronomy 16:16 told Israel’s men to appear at the temple three times a year for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles, and that He would protect their nation from invaders when their warriors were at the temple and not guarding their homes and the border.
- II. The psalmist in Psalm 121:3-8 then described how God comprehensively protected him and his nation:**
  - A. God protected the psalmist when he was busy doing what the Lord required him to do, Psalm 121:3a: As the psalmist made his required pilgrimage to the Jerusalem temple, God would not let his foot dangerously slip on the rocky paths that ran along steep inclines in the hill country surrounding Jerusalem, Psalm 121:3a.
  - B. God protected the psalmist and his society and nation with unwavering vigilance, Psalm 121:3b-4:
    - 1. The Lord Who watched over the psalmist would not slumber, and He would not slumber or sleep while watching over not only the psalmist, but also the entire nation of Israel, Psalm 121:3b-4.
    - 2. This claim contrasted Israel’s God with the Baal pagan fertility god of the area’s Canaanites “who, when vegetation died off, was thought of as having gone off duty or as being asleep for a period.” (Ibid., p. 869)
    - 3. Thus, God in vast superiority to the area pagan Baal god was always vigilant to guard not only the psalmist, but his entire social structure, environment and nation from harm by potential enemy invaders.
  - C. God protected the psalmist as his Guardian, Psalm 121:5:
    - 1. The Lord watched over the psalmist as his Shade on his right hand, Psalm 121:5.
    - 2. Since unguarded exposure to the tropical sun could become a life-threatening crisis in the Ancient Near East, “(a) shade or shadow is a common figure for protector, and the right hand often mentioned as the place of a protector.” (Ibid., p. 870; Joseph A. Alexander, The Psalms, 1975, p. 510; cf. Psalm 110:5)
    - 3. The psalmist thus testified that God was his protective Guardian.

- D. God consistently protected the psalmist, Psalm 121:6:
  - 1. God had made the sun and moon to rule the day and night respectively (cf. Genesis 1:16), so the sun and moon were put in verse 6 for all entities in the day and night that might threaten the psalmist's welfare.
  - 2. Thus, God consistently protected the psalmist from all that could harm him at any time, day or night.
- E. God protected the psalmist from all the different kinds of harm that he could face, Psalm 121:7:
  - 1. The Lord watched over the psalmist to preserve him from "evil" and from harm to his "soul" (v. 7 KJV).
  - 2. "Evil" translates the Hebrew noun *ra'* that means "evil, injury, calamity" (Kittel, *Bib. Heb.*, p. ; B. D. B., *A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T.*, p. 948-949), what could involve either moral evil or physical harm.
  - 3. The word "soul" renders the Hebrew noun *nepesh* (Kittel, *Bib. Heb.*, p. ), what refers to one's physical, emotional, mental and spiritual life principle (Robert B. Girdlestone, *Syns. of the O. T.*, 1974, p. 56-59).
  - 4. Thus, God watched over the psalmist to guard him from every kind of harm to every part of his existence.
- F. God protected the psalmist in all of his activities in life, Psalm 121:8a:
  - 1. The phrases "going out" and "coming in" (KJV) are an antonymical pair that refer to all the activities of one's day from leaving home in the morning to returning home at night (Leupold, op. cit., p. 870-871).
  - 2. Thus, God protected the psalmist in all the activities of his daily life.
- G. The psalmist concluded the psalm by claiming that God would protect him forever, Psalm 121:8b!

***Lesson:*** *When the psalmist obeyed the Lord, God protected him, God guarded him, his society and his nation's welfare with stable vigilance, God protected him as his Guardian, God guarded him at all times, He guarded the psalmist from all harm in every realm, God guarded him in all his daily actions and He would do so forever.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) Though the psalmist lived in the dispensation of the Mosaic Law where obeying the Law resulted in God's reward of comprehensive protection, in PRINCIPLE, a believer in Christ TODAY who obeys Scripture enjoys all the protection he needs to fulfill God's plan for his life. (3) May we believers then obey Scripture to enjoy the maximum comprehensive protection God has for us today.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message and/or provide additional guidance . . .)

We apply God's Psalm 121 protection with other Scriptures to the fears we mentioned in our introduction:

(1) On the fear of corrupt government officials, (a) Psalm 121:3b-4 and 5 promised that God as our honorable Guardian will protect our society and nation with steadfast diligence. (b) Romans 13:1-5 claims that God permits the officials that are in power to come to power, so we can trust His sovereignty over them, and (c) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 with Revelation 3:21; 7:17 reveals that regardless of our current mini-Great Tribulation of despotic leaders in many institutions, God uses them to drive people to Bible teaching churches for His nurturing truth of the salvation gospel and edification as believers. Our part is to apply Scripture and teach it to troubled people who come our way.

(2) On the two fears of people we love becoming gravely ill or then dying, (a) Psalm 121:7 reveals that God protects the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms of believers, and (b) Revelation 1:17-20 directs that Christ sovereignly determines who dies, when, and where his soul goes when he dies. (c) 2 Corinthians 5:8 states that at death, a believer's soul is instantly taken to heaven to be with Christ. We should thus not fret over even serious illnesses or death to ourselves or to other believers but focus on fulfilling God's will in our lives (2 Corinthians 5:9). (d) If we are concerned about unsaved people we love becoming ill or then dying, Colossians 4:3-4 directs us to pray for witnessing opportunities, and for the words to say when those opportunities open up to us by God's provision.

(3) On the six fears of attacks to our social structure or nation (cyberterrorism, Russia or North Korea using nuclear weapons, the U. S. going to war, terrorist attacks and biological warfare), Psalm 121:3b-4 promises God will guard our social structure and nation, what indirectly applies to world nations. Also, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 reveals that God will keep the world order strong enough until the rapture so that we believers can abound in life and service!

(4) On the fear of a lack of enough money for the future, (a) Psalm 121:7 and 8a and 8b with Matthew 6:25-34 inform us that God will take care of our livelihood needs if we occupy ourselves with our assignment from Him in advancing His Kingdom. (b) Our personal responsibility is that we take practical steps to secure the livelihood He has for us as suggested in Matthew 6:26: "God feeds the birds not by miraculous supply of food but through natural processes involving the earth and the birds' use of their faculties." (*Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, 1978, fn. to Matt. 6:26) God likewise often meets our living needs if we stay vigilant, think, plan and use our hands to work! (Proverbs 20:13)

**May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then heed Scripture to enjoy the greatest comprehensive protection God has for us today.**