

Psalm 120: I Am For Peace.

The title "song of ascents" identifies each of Psalms 120-134 as a pilgrim song to be sung when the Israelites "ascended" to Jerusalem for the annual feasts. He is praying for deliverance from traitors who wanted war while he was for peace.

1-2: The pilgrim prayed for deliverance from liars who would destroy him. He was sure that God would answer him.

3-4: The pilgrim, by directing a question to the wicked, affirmed that the Lord would destroy them. **The broom tree** was used for firewood because it burned longer than many other woods. The imagery of sharp arrows and **coals** of fire speaks of retribution against people with deceitful tongues.

5-7: The pilgrim lamented his having to dwell in the midst of **those who hate peace**. He was saying that these two names represented the enemies that surrounded him. He declared that he, in contrast, was **a man of peace**. For that reason he knew the Lord would justify his cause.

Romans 12:18 - *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

Psalm 121: My Help Comes From The LORD.

The pilgrim, contemplating his journey through the hills to Jerusalem, found assurance that the Lord, the Keeper of Israel, would keep him at all times on his journey.

1-2: As a pilgrim, he contemplated his journey through the hills to Jerusalem, asked where his **help** came from. He found the answer to his question in the affirmation of his faith that the LORD, who created **heaven and** earth - with those hills - was his only Source of **help**.

3-8: Verses 3-8 are therefore the words of someone, perhaps a priest, accompanying the pilgrim.

The person speaking assured the pilgrim that he would have divine protection. God, **who watches over** His own, will not **slumber or sleep**, that is, He will not be indifferent to or disregard them. The Lord will be alert in protecting His own.

The assurance was then given that the LORD would protect the pilgrim at all times. The Keeper of Israel was the pilgrim's Keeper as well; protecting him as a shade protects one from the blazing sun. **The sun and the moon** stand for dangers that occur in the day and in the **night**.

The Psalm closes with a renewed affirmation that the LORD will keep and **watch over** the pilgrim from all **harm** at all times.

Hebrews 12:2 - *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Psalm 122: I Was Glad.

David recalled his delight in going up to Jerusalem, which was the nation's spiritual and administrative center. He then called for everyone to pray for the peace and security of Jerusalem for the sake of the godly and for the sake of God Himself.

1-2: He recalled how he delighted at the prospect of the pilgrimage to **Jerusalem**. Then he relished the experience of actually standing within the city's **gates**.

3-5: He applauded the city of **Jerusalem** for its physical splendor, with its full population **closely compacted together**. He then lauded it as the spiritual center to which the nation's **tribes** went on their annual pilgrimages. He also cited it as the seat of justice.

6-9: He asked the people to **pray for the peace and security** of the city and its inhabitants. He himself then prayed for **peace for the sake** of his **brothers**, the righteous pilgrims, and for **prosperity for the sake of the** sanctuary, God's dwelling place.

***Psalm 100:2** - Serve the LORD with gladness; come before His presence with singing.*

Psalm 123: Our Eyes Look To The LORD.

Lifting up his eyes to God in heaven, the slave-pilgrim called for mercy because the people were filled with contempt from the scoffing of the proud.

1-2: He affirmed his trust in the LORD of heaven. I lift **up my eyes** means that he looked to the Lord in prayer for deliverance. He compared his trust to that of a slave waiting for a word from a master or a mistress. On behalf of the people, he continued to look to God for help.

3-4: The Psalmist asked God for **mercy** because the people were filled with contempt, that is, they had **endured much ridicule from the arrogant**. Despite this taunting of their faith, they would pray for God's mercy until He answered.

Psalm 124: Saved By The LORD.

Realizing that if the Lord had not been on their side the nations would have swallowed them up; the pilgrim blessed the Lord, who allowed them to escape.

1-5: In this part of the psalm the writer attested to the Lord's protection. He called for the nation to realize that her victory was due to the Lord's being **on** their side. Then he explained what would have happened if the LORD **had not been on their side**: the nations in **their anger** would have destroyed them. Here he used the imagery of swallowing, and floodwaters (The ruthlessness and aggression the enemies). This could apply to various times in Israel's history.

6-8: He turned to **praise** the LORD, who had not abandoned them, but had enabled them to escape. The enemies' devices were compared both to **teeth** and the **snare** of a fowler. They were saved by the LORD, **the Maker of heaven and earth**.