"WHERE TO LOOK IN TROUBLED TIMES"

Psalm 121 & 123

1-13-2021

INTRODUCTION:

***There is only one place to look! Look unto the LORD!**

2 Reasons:

I. Look unto the LORD, Because He is your <u>PROTECTION</u> (Psalm 121)
(The Lord <u>preserves</u> me)

II. Look unto the LORD, Because He is your <u>PROVISION</u> (Psalm 123)
(The Lord <u>provides</u> for me)

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2 Timothy 3 1-5: "This know also, that in the last days
perilous (fierce; Harsh; Hard to take)
times (Kairos – seasons; events or periods of time) shall come.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves (selfishly affectionate for themselves), c
ovetous (money loving),
boasters (empty, vain braggers),
proud (mentally esteeming themselves superior to others; seeking to outshine others),
blasphemers (slanderers of God; speaking evil of the Lord and His ways),
disobedient (not compliant; rebelliously impersuasible)to parents,
unthankful (not graciously appreciative),
unholy (impious; wicked),
Without natural affection (undevoted to those one should be devoted to),
trucebreakers (Covenant or treaty violaters),
false accusers (diabolos – devilish slanderers),
incontinent (without self-control),
fierce (untamed and savage-like),
despisers of those that are good (in opposition to goodness and good people),
Traitors (betrayer; handing someone over to the enemy),
heady (rash and reckless; headstrong),
highminded (lifted up or puffed up with pride),
lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (philedonos not philotheos);
Having a form (semblance or outward shape)
of godliness (good reverence),
but denying (rejecting or disregarding)
the power (dunamis – no ability to provide strength) thereof: from such turn away."

***There is only one place to look! Look unto the LORD!**

2 Reasons:

I. Look unto the LORD, Because He is your <u>PROTECTION</u> (Psalm 121)
(The Lord <u>preserves</u> me)

Note: The repeated phrase: "keep…preserve"

V. 1

"Unto the hills" - Not the hills where the pagan gods were worshipped (Jer. 3:23), but to the hills of Jerusalem, Mount Zion -- where O.T. Israelites met the true God.

The Holy Hill of God - SEE: Psalm 48:1-2 (Ps. 2:6; Is. 2:3)

This psalm is a song of ascents, which was sung by pilgrims as they journeyed up the hills to Jerusalem.

"From whence cometh my help" - This is a new sentence, which actually is a question (cp. NKJV).

The Psalmist is saying, "Where does my help come from?"

It is vain to trust in man, yea even princes (Psalm 146:3-5)

V. 2

Since God could do the most astounding miracle of creation, He could very easily help those who trust Him.

Evolution has resulted in global unthankfulness, and has robbed the naive from seeking God's help.

To help us, the resources of Heaven and earth are available and at the disposal of the One who made them!

V. 3

"To be moved" - to slip (Psalm 66:9)

The ground is firm and the traction is good on the solid Rock!

The mirey clay is history for the believer (Ps. 40:2)

"Keepeth" - to guard; to watch over and protect

Our guard is god! And He never falls asleep like every human watchman is so prone to do. God is aware of our trials; He is alert to our problems. He is not uninformed; He knows and sees all.

"He keeps us as a rich man keeps his treasures, as a captain keeps a city with a garrison, as a royal guard keeps his monarch's head" (Spurgeon, p. 15)

V. 4

Any time that Israel experienced chastening in the form of oppression from enemy nations, it was not because God was unaware or disinterested, but because of her sin!

"Neither slumber nor sleep" - God never gets drowsy nor does He require or desire sleep. Reason: He is spiritual, not physical, immortal not mortal

V. 5

"Thy shade" - A place of shelter - Ps. 91:1-6

"At thy right hand" - may be a reference to the servants who would stand at the right hand of their master and shade him and fan him.

V. 6

Some places in the Negev in Israel attain temperatures of up to 120 degrees in the shade!

How does the "moon" smite? Normally it does not, but in the future Tribulation it will (Isaiah 30:26; cp. Revel. 16:9)

V. 7

Not only does God preserve our physical life, but our spiritual as well!

"From all evil" - hence, our prayer is "Deliver us from evil" (Mt. 6:13). Our God is able to deliver us (Dan. 3)

V. 8

"Going out and thy coming in" - a figure of speech for "<u>everything</u> you do"

NOTE: This promise is for those who look to God for their help (v. 2)

II. Look unto the LORD, Because He is your <u>PROVISION</u> (Psalm 123)
(The Lord <u>provides</u> for me)

V. 1

With an attitude of dependence, humility, and expectancy, the psalmist looks up to his only source of sustenance and strength.

V. 2

In ancient times, the slave was totally dependent upon his/her master for the supply of all needs.

Those "at <u>ease</u>" are usually the ones that cause the righteous to have problems (James 2:6). Complacency and idleness are the devil's workshop.

v.2-4 – "Mercy" = Chanan (to bend over, indline or condescend so as to meet the need of someone who is in desperate need of help; The word is believed to be derived from a root word meaning "to bend or to incline" (Theo. Wordbook of the O.T. p. 302); it describes the action of a superior to an inferior as he stoops or condescends to extend a favor.
The Hebrew word "chanan" depicts God's heartfelt (compassionate) willingness to grant favor on someone who has a need.

To show compassionate pity and grace. The word excludes all ideas of merit.

The word has the idea of giving or bestowal of good on him that is destitute of it. Undeserved kindness. Both Mercy and Grace are tied together in the word Chanan.

God's mercy is an extension of His love. It is often called "transitive love" or expressed love.

In the same way that God's righteousness (justice) is holiness in action, and just as God's faithfulness is a manifestation of His truthfulness, God's mercy is a concrete demonstration of His love. It is love in action.

Mercy is closely related to grace, but is not the same.

How does mercy differ from grace? Both stem from His love, but are two aspects of His love.

"Grace" - God's giving to man what he does not deserve (the gift of God - heaven).

"Mercy" - God's withholding from man what he does deserve (the wrath of God - hell).

Both happen simultaneously. Whenever God is merciful, He is gracious and whenever He is gracious, He is merciful.

Mercy and grace are opposite sides of the same coin.

Justice is getting what we do deserve.

Mercy is not getting what we do deserve.

Grace is getting what we do not deserve.

What do Noah, Moses, Samuel and the Virgin Mary have in common?

--Noah found grace int he eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8).

--God said of Moses: "Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name" (Gen. 6:8)

--I Samuel 2:26 - "And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.

--Gabriel said to Mary - "Hail, thou that art highly favored (showered with grace), the Lord is with thee . . . Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour (grace) with God" (Lk. 1:28, 30).

The Greek word "charis" - the undeserved kindness and favor of God, that is usually shown to man by means of a spiritual gift ("charisma") (Rom. 6:23; 12:6).

See Ephesians 2:1-10

Ps. 34:8 - "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Have you tasted that "the Lord is gracious"? (II Pet. 2:3)

CONCLUSION:

Satan will endeavor to keep our eyes upon the valleys, upon the problems, upon our misfortunes, upon our failures, upon our inadequacies, upon our weaknesses.

It is then that we need to look upward!