

June 2, 2013 by Steve Brandon



# Look To The Lord

## Psalm 121

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- 1. He is Your Helper (verses 1-2).**
- 2. He is Your Keeper (verses 3-8).**

My children love the Narnia books written by C. S. Lewis. They are very entertaining and have some great lessons to teach. I first read through them to Carissa when she was a little girl. When she was 5 or 6, we would read them together at bed time. A few years ago, we read them through as a family, reading together in the evening. I'm on my third time through with my two youngest children, Stephanie and David.

Presently, we are about half-way through the second book, Prince Caspian. This past week, we arrived at the moment in the book when Doctor Cornelius, Prince Caspian's tutor, was sending him away because his life was in danger. His uncle, the acting king, King Miraz, just had a baby boy. Certainly, he would try to kill the prince, the rightful ruler to the throne.

So, Doctor Cornelius saddled up his horse for him. He filled up a satchel with some food. And then, just as Caspian was to flee for his life, Doctor Cornelius gave him a most prized possession. He gave him a horn and said to him, ...

"[This] is the greatest and most sacred treasure of Narnia. Many terrors I endured, many spells did I utter, to find it, when I was still young. It is the magic horn of Queen Susan herself which she left behind her when she vanished from Narnia at the end of the Golden Age. It is said that whoever blows it shall have strange help--no one can say how strange. It may have power to call Queen Lucy and King Edmund, and Queen Susan and the High King Peter back from the past and they will set all to rights. It may be that it will call up Aslan himself. Take it, King Caspian: but do not use it except at your greatest need. And now, haste, haste, haste". [\[1\]](#)

And off Caspian went, fleeing from his uncle, who was sure to kill him. As the story unfolds, Caspian indeed finds himself in his greatest need and blows the horn. This brings help to Narnia -- the four Pevensie children. They come to help the rightful king. And as the story ends up, they restore kingdom to Caspian.

Now, wouldn't it be nice to have a horn like this? Whenever you are in the gravest of danger, you can blow the horn, and help will come. Oh, but we do have such a horn. It's called prayer. Deuteronomy 4:7 says, "What great nation is there that has a god so near to us as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him?" Psalm 91:15, "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him." And Acts 2:21 says, "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."

We have Susan's horn. When we blow the horn of prayer, help comes. It may come in ways that we don't quite expect. But, we do have the promises that help will come.

But, in many ways, it's even better than that. With Susan's horn, you need to blow it and then the help will come. But, with God, He is active, long before you blow the horn. God is active. God helps and guards and keeps and protects His people at all times.

Such is the theme of our text today. God is our helper. God is our keeper.

We will look today at Psalm 121. This, of course, is one of the Songs of Ascents (Psalm 120-134). There are fifteen of them. These are the songs that Israel would sing as they would "go up" to Jerusalem to worship three times a year, according to the command of God (Exodus 23). They helped to prepare the hearts of the pilgrims for worship. My hope and aim in working through these Psalms is that God would help us prepare our hearts for worship as we meditate upon the themes of these Psalms.

We aren't taking them in order. Much like we sing hymns in various orders, we are taking them week by week. This week, we land in Psalm 121. It is a mountain Psalm. You can see the mountains mentioned right there in verse 1. "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where shall my help come?" (ESV translates this, "hills").

Next week, we will look at another mountain Psalm: Psalm 125. Psalm 125:2 says, "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, So the LORD surrounds His people From this time forth and forever."

It's appropriate for us to look at these "mountain Psalms" at this time. This past Wednesday (May 29th), marked the 60th anniversary of the first successful climb to the top of Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world. Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay of Nepal reached the top of the mountain on that day and became world-wide heroes. So, let us look to the mountains, ...

Psalm 121

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains;  
From where shall my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.  
He will not allow your foot to slip;  
He who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, He who keeps Israel  
Will neither slumber nor sleep.  
The Lord is your keeper;  
The Lord is your shade on your right hand.  
The sun will not smite you by day,  
Nor the moon by night.  
The Lord will protect you from all evil;  
He will keep your soul.  
The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in  
From this time forth and forever.

Over the years, as I have spoken with people about this Psalm, I have found that many have cherished this Psalm.

For instance, last Sunday evening, I ran into an old friend. He asked me what I preached on that morning. I told him, "Psalm 124 - Had it not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us, ... then they would have swallowed us alive." I continued, "This next week, I'm preaching Psalm 121 - I will lift up my eyes to the mountains, from where shall my help come?" His wife, who was standing right beside him, gave testimony as to how she loved that Psalm.

It's a special Psalm for many. It's a special Psalm for my family. Years ago, Yvonne and I wrote a little tune to these words that stuck. And in our family, we have sung these words hundreds of times. The kids of Kids KLUB love to sing this Psalm as well. I know that many of you here know this song as well.

This Psalm naturally breaks down into two sections. The first comes in verses 1 and 2. The second comes in verses 3 through 8. You can see this in the subject of the sentences. Verses 1 and 2 are written in the 1st person. In other words, "I's" and "me's" and "my's"

Psalm 121:1-2

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains;  
From where shall my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.

Verses 3 through 8 are written in the third person. In other words, "He" and "The LORD" and the "sun" and the "moon."

You can also see this division in the key words. Two words dominate this Psalm. They are the words, "help" and "keep." In verses 1 and 2, the word, "help" appears twice, ...

Psalm 121:1-2

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains;  
From where shall my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.

In verses 3-8, the word, "keep" appears six times. The ESV does a great job of translating this word consistently.

Psalm 121:3-8

He will not let your foot be moved;  
he who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, he who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.  
The LORD is your keeper;  
the LORD is your shade on your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
The LORD will keep you from all evil;  
he will keep your life.  
The LORD will keep  
your going out and your coming in  
from this time forth and forevermore.

I'm using these two words at the basis of my outline this morning. He is Your Helper (verses 1-2). And He is Your Keeper (verses 3-8).

Let's look at my first point, ...

1. He is Your Helper (verses 1-2).

Verses 1 and 2 come in the form of a question and an answer. The question comes in verse 1. The answer comes in verse 2. So, let's look first at the question in verse 1.

The Psalmist says, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come?" When the Psalmist mentions the mountains here, he is certainly referring to the mountainous regions surrounding Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem was in the mountains, which meant that any traveler to Jerusalem would travel "up to Jerusalem."

That's what the "Song of Ascents" is all about. They are songs that you sing as you "go up." And how appropriate it was for the pilgrims to offer up this Psalm, "I will lift up My eyes to the mountains."

The mountains were their destination. How often did the settlers of the west coast of America traveling the Oregon Trail lift up their eyes to the mountains as they headed west and beheld the Rockies? Often. How often does the mountain climber stop and gaze upward at his final destination? Often. So also, as the would-be worshipers walked up the hills leading to Jerusalem, they couldn't help but to set their gaze upon the mountains in front of them, where they soon would worship the Lord.

And lifting up their eyes, this song would force them to ask the question, "From where shall my help come?" You can sense the angst in the voice of the Psalmist. You can detect a bit of trouble.

Perhaps his trouble is physical. The walk up to Jerusalem wasn't so easy. In our days, you can drive to Jerusalem. In those days, it was by foot. Jerusalem sits some 2,500 feet above sea level.

As the travelers to Jerusalem were hiking up the mountain, with the sun bearing down upon them, with thirst parching their throat, with their legs aching, and with fatigue setting in, they would know that they needed help for their journey. And the Psalmist lifts his eyes up to his destination and asks, "From where shall my help come?"

Perhaps his trouble was spiritual. Do you remember Psalm 120? It is the Psalm just before this one. We looked at it a few weeks ago. We found the Psalmist away from God and away from His people.

Psalm 120:5-6  
Woe is me, for I sojourn in Meshech,  
For I dwell among the tents of Kedar!  
Too long has my soul had its dwelling  
With those who hate peace.

He felt himself persecuted (verse 2). He felt himself alone in standing for peace (verse 7). And in His trouble, He cried to the LORD (verse 1).

Perhaps his trouble was financial. He was having difficulty making ends meet. The rain didn't fall last year and the crops were less than needed. A thief had broken into his home and stolen some of his property.

Perhaps his trouble was relational. He was having problems in his marriage. He was having issues with his rebellious children. He had a neighbor who was giving him fits.

Perhaps his trouble was health related. He (or a family member) was sick. Perhaps his trouble was emotional. A close family member passed away and he was dealing with the grief. Some change was taking place in his life that gave him anxiety for the future.

We have no idea of what was going on in the life of the Psalmist that caused him to consider the source of his strength. The point is this: the Psalm is general enough that there is nothing we can determine about the Psalmist and his circumstances. It applies to all circumstances.

Are you in need of help this morning? Do you have physical need? Do you have spiritual need? Do you have financial need? Do you have relational or emotional need?

This is a great question for you to ask. Where does your help come from? Where do you look for help?

The Psalmist places us on the right path in verse 2, "My help comes from the LORD." When he was on his journey, looking up to the mountains, he looked past the mountains unto the LORD, his God. His help didn't come from the mountains. His help didn't come from Jerusalem. His help came from beyond Jerusalem and beyond the mountains. His help came from the LORD.

Where does your help come from? Are you a self-made man? Or, do you rely upon another? Do you look to the LORD for help? Church family, this is my heart for all of you -- that you would find your help from the LORD.

There is a way that we can face the difficulties of life and not turn to the Lord. We can easily turn to other things. When sick, we can look to doctors. When financial crisis comes, we can look for another job to meet the void. When relational difficulties come, we can withdraw into our own hole. When you have difficult choices to make concerning your future, you can try to figure it out all by yourself. When temptations come, you can try to overcome them by sheer willpower.

And these things may help you in the day of trouble. But, with such a perspective, you will be looking to yourself and your own means, rather than to God and to His means.

But, my encouragement to you is to look to the Lord to be your help. Now, I'm not discouraging your visit to the doctor. Nor am I saying that you shouldn't be on the lookout for a better job. Nor am I telling you not to fight temptation with all of your strength. But, what I am saying is that your ultimate help in all things ought to come from the Lord.

The LORD is fully capable of being your help in every circumstance. The Psalmist identifies the LORD as the one "Who made heaven and earth." If God made the heaven and earth by the word of His mouth, then certainly, He can be your help, in whatever trials come your way. The LORD can be trusted! He is Your Helper (verses 1-2).

My second point comes in verses 3-8, ...

2. He is Your Keeper (verses 3-8).

These verses, are filled with God's promises of protection. Over and over and over again, we see that He will protect us and guard us and keep us. Some of these promises are negative. Some of these promises are positive. Some of these promises deal with our physical safety. Some of these promises deal with our spiritual security. But, all of them come back to the main point: "The LORD is your keeper" (as verse 5 says).

This word translated, "Keeper," is a very common Hebrew word. This Hebrew word can be translated with a bunch of different English words, but all of them are getting at the same meaning. It can be translated, "keep, guard, watch, protect, retain, preserve, refrain, or care for." The idea here is of surrounding and protecting and holding something, and not ever letting go.

As I mentioned earlier, this word is used six times in this Psalm. In Verse 3, "He who keeps you will not slumber." In Verse 4, "He who keeps Israel, will neither slumber nor sleep." In Verse 5, "The LORD is your keeper." In Verse 7, "The LORD will keep (i.e. protect) you from all evil." In Verse 7, "He will keep your soul." And in Verse 8, "The LORD will keep (i.e. guard) your going out and your coming in."

Where does our help come from? It comes from the Lord, who "keeps" us (verse 5) and "protects" us (verse 7) and "guards" us (verse 8). This is the reason why we can say, "My help comes from the LORD." This is the reason why we are to "look to the LORD."

Let's look at the particulars. Let's start in verse 3 (and I promise to move quickly). Verse 3 says, "He will not allow your foot to slip" (verse 3a). The imagery here is taken from one who is walking down a path, with stumbling blocks in the way.

You parents know what the Psalmist is talking about. How many times have you taken your little ones by the hand to protect them from stumbling? You are taking a walk somewhere along a trail, which is filled with tree roots and rocks and sticks. You are holding your child by the hand. When the way is difficult for their feet to negotiate, and they begin to stumble, you just hold them up by one hand and lighten their load. Soon, they regain their balance and are off walking again. It doesn't really matter whether or not they are holding on to you, as your hand is the one that is gripping their hand. It's impossible for your children to stumble, because you won't let go of your grip.

As Richard Sibbes said long ago, "When the child falleth not, it is from the mother's holding the child, and not from the child's holding the mother. So it is God's holding of us, knowing of us, embracing of us, and justifying of us that maketh the state firm, and not ours". [\[2\]](#)

Obviously, the Psalmist isn't talking about not skinning your knee. He's talking metaphorically. He won't allow you to slip into harming yourself. When He holds us up with His hand, we won't slip.

The Scriptures use this word picture several times throughout the Scripture. Psalm 66:9, "He does not allow our feet to slip." Psalm 94:18, "If I should say, 'My foot has slipped,' Your lovingkindness, O LORD, will hold me up." These promises are not true of the wicked. We read in Deuteronomy 32:35 of the wicked, "In due time their foot will slip."

In the context here in Psalm 121, it is those who find their help in the LORD who will be protected by the LORD.

Paul's promise to the Corinthians echoes this thought, "No temptation has overtake you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

Have you ever thought about how it is that God can do this? It is only because God is the sovereign God, who has complete control over all things in this universe. He can make sure that you the temptation never comes upon you more than you can bear.

Oh, it might seem too much. And, like Asaph, your "feet [may come] close to stumbling" (Ps. 73:2). But, the One who "is able to keep you from stumbling" can "make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy" (Jude 24). If only you will trust Him.

Will you?

In answering that question, I'm not asking you to put forth your willpower this morning to say, "Yes!" Rather, I'm asking you if you will trust in the LORD and His strength.

As your pastor, my prayer is the prayer of Psalm 115:9-15

O Israel, trust in the LORD;  
He is their help and their shield.  
O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD;  
He is their help and their shield.  
You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD;  
He is their help and their shield.  
The LORD has been mindful of us; He will bless us;  
He will bless the house of Israel;  
He will bless the house of Aaron.  
He will bless those who fear the LORD,  
The small together with the great.  
May the LORD give you increase,  
You and your children.  
May you be blessed of the LORD,  
Maker of heaven and earth.

In the second half of verse 3 we see another promise, "He who keeps you will not slumber" (verse 3a). God is always alert. God is always watchful. He is ever looking out for our good.

This is in contrast to the pagan deities, who were known to sleep at times. Perhaps you remember when Elijah was on Mount Carmel with the hundreds of prophets of Baal. He said, "Let's have a contest between your God and my God. Choose one ox for yourselves ... and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other ox and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire under it. Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, He is God" (1 Kings 18:23-25).

When the prophets of Baal had done so, they "called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, 'O Baal, answer us'" (1 Kings 18:26). Then, they "leaped about the altar which they had made" in seeking to stir up Baal to respond with fire (1 Kings 18:26). But no fire came to burn the sacrifice, not even a spark. Then, Elijah mocked them saying, "Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened" (1 Kings 18:27).

But, what may have been true of Baal is never true of the LORD. He will never fall asleep on His watch. He will never fall asleep at the wheel. His watch is 24 hours each day, 7 days each week, 365 days each year. This truth is reinforced in verse 4, "Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep".

The Psalmist here is being insistent upon this point. This first word, "Behold" calls attention to what he will say. The mere repetition of this basic truth emphasizes it strongly. God doesn't slumber. He doesn't sleep. He is the faithful watchman, who will not only warn us of the impending danger (Ezekiel 33), but will play an active role in keeping and protecting us.

In verse 5, this same truth continues on. "The LORD is your keeper" (verse 5a). This is the heart of the Psalm. This is the core of the promises that God has given us of His help. God is our help, because He is the one who keeps us and guards us.

Church family, I want for you to know this. I want for you to experience this. I want for you to see the protecting hand of God upon your life. I want for you to know God as your helper.

Our family had a great picture of this a few weeks ago when we were travelling back from Wyoming. Before we ever take a long trip like this, we have our mechanic check out our car for anything that he might see as a potential problem. I figure that preventative maintenance is far better than roadside service.

Anyway, as our mechanic looked at our van, he fixed our brakes, which had been making some grinding noises. He also replaced our ball joints. He said, "You might want to replace your tires soon. I think that they will be OK for this trip. But, I would replace them before your next big trip." He then showed me the wear on the wheels. In times past, he has recommended Sam's Club as a good place to replace our tires. We had planned on doing this when we returned home.

So, we were on our way home, travelling down I-80 near Davenport, Iowa. We know the road well. We have often driven this road when returning from California, visiting Yvonne's parents.

Carissa was driving. Sure enough, one of the tires blew. But, God's timing on all things was wonderful! He really protected us and guarded us. First of all, Carissa was able to keep on the road and drive off to the side without incident, even with our trailer behind us.

Second, we called our roadside service, who came and changed the tire for us. The tire blew out bad enough that there is no way that I could have done it on my own. The jack in my car isn't large enough to lift the car high enough to replace the tire. Furthermore, there were some things I didn't know about how the spare tire was stored that I would never have figured out on my own.

Third, the weather was wonderful. As we sat and waited for our roadside service to come, it was very pleasant. Sure, it was windy. But, we didn't need a coat. Nor was it raining. We sat in the grass and waited for our help to come.

Fourth, the timing couldn't have been better. Usually, when travelling I-80, we are in a rush to get home. But, not this day. We were in no hurry on the way home. Earlier in the day, we had stopped in West Branch, Iowa, to see the Herbert Hoover Presidential Museum. At the museum, we had taken time for a nice picnic lunch. We had our blowout somewhere around 3pm. By 5pm, we were on our way again.

Fifth, the location couldn't have been better. We had our flat about half a mile from the exit ramp into Davenport, Iowa. On our way home from California, we have taken this off ramp on several occasions to order a pizza from Sam's Club.

So, once the tire was fixed, we took the exit ramp, drove right to Sam's Club to have our tires replaced, just as I had planned on doing when we returned home. While we were there, we enjoyed our pizza as well. Right there in Sam's Club, we were able to thank the LORD for his protection over us.

All in all, we were probably delayed about 4 hours. But, it happened on a day when we could easily have a 4 hour delay. I do believe that this was the LORD keeping us and protecting us. If this had happened on our way out to Wyoming, it would have been a different matter. We were much more pressed for time. The weather was cold and rainy for much of our trip out. But, God has His hand upon us. "From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD."

In the last half of verse 5, we see the promise of how God will protect His people physically. "The LORD is your shade on your right hand" (verse 5b). This was particularly appropriate for those in Israel ascending Mount Zion to worship. The climate of Israel is about like the climate of Los Angeles, which is built upon a desert. In the day, it is very hot. In the night, it can get very chilly. While in such a climate, it's one thing if you are staying inside and cool in your air-conditioned home. But, it's another thing if you are out and about traveling.

For those of you who may have had the opportunity to visit Israel, you know how hot it is. In the morning when you begin to set out on your journey, you fill up several water bottles. You also will bring along some sort of hat that will give you protection for your head. You will bring along sunglasses to help your eyes deal with the bright sun. You may even bring along some sunscreen. You take an air conditioned tour bus to your location that you are planning to see. When you get out, you are hit with this wall of heat. Should you come to a place like Jericho or like Masada, it is particularly hot. When you arrive back at your hotel in the evening, all of your water is gone, and your energy is spent.

For these pilgrims who were traveling up to Jerusalem to worship in Bible times, they would have experienced much of the same thing. As they lifted up their eyes to the mountains, they would have looked into the hot sun. Their throats would have been dry and in search of water. Their bodies would have been beaten down by the sun.

Shade would have come as a great blessing to them. Perhaps you remember when Jonah finished his preaching tour in Nineveh. He departed to the east of the city and found a nice spot of shade where he could watch and see what God would do to that wicked city. In the LORD's kindness, He "appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant" (Jonah 3:6).

This is what God has promised to those who trust Him. He would be their shelter. As verse 6 says, "The sun will not smite you by day, nor the moon by night" (verse 6). I believe that the point of application for us is toward the LORD's protecting hand over us physically.

God cares about our bodies. God cares about whether we are hot or cold or sick or bruised. When Hagar was cast out in the wilderness, she thought that she would die of thirst. And yet, God cared for her (Gen. 21:15-19). When the widow had no resources to pay her creditors, the Lord continued to fill her vessels with oil to pay her debt (2 Kings 4:1-7). When Jonah was in the belly of the big fish, God heard His cry for distress and saved him (Jonah 2). When Jesus walked along the earth, He paid special attention to those who were hurting physically.

God will protect us. He will be our umbrella to shade us in the summer. He will be our coat to warm us in the winter. He will be our shelter in the time of storm.

God protects us physically. In verse 7, we see God's protection extending to us morally. "The LORD will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul" (verse 7).

The verse teaches the perseverance of the saints. It's not so much that we are so capable in persevering. Rather, it that God is so good at preserving us until the final day. It's God who is "keeping our souls."

Jude's benediction says the same thing. "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen" (Jude 24-25). Jude is talking about God's protection upon us from stumbling spiritually. Because he has His mind upon that eternal day, when we will stand before Christ, blameless, because of His perfect sacrifice paid our debt and made us holy!

The reason why we can be confident of these things is because of the keeping power of God. Jesus says of those who believe in Him, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37). Jesus pictured it well in John 10, ...

John 10:27-29

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

This is the reality of Psalm 121, verse 7. God will keep and protect our souls.

In 1 Peter 1:4-5, Peter describes the glorious inheritance that awaits us who are in Christ. He says that this inheritance is "imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:4-5). God keeps our soul through faith. And in Psalm 121, it's those who can say, "My help comes from the LORD" whose souls are kept by the power of God.

Can you say this morning, "My help comes from the LORD"? Or, are you trusting in your own strength? Are you trusting in your own works. The prophet Jeremiah said it quite plainly, when he said, "Cursed is the man who trust in mankind and makes flesh his strength" (Jer. 17:5). The reason is simple. Such a one will experience his heart "turning away from the LORD."

And so, church family. Look to the LORD. Seek Him early. Seek Him often. Trust Him. And He will keep your soul.

And I love how this Psalm ends. "The LORD will guard you going out and your coming in from this time forth and forever" (verse 8) It matters not whether you are going out, or whether you are coming in, the LORD will guard those who trust in Him. It matters not whether it is today or tomorrow or five years from now, the LORD will guard those who look to Him. He never gives up on us. His watchful care will always be upon our lives.

"I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." (Heb. 13:5). "The LORD is my helper, I will not be afraid, what will man to do me?" (Heb. 13:6; Ps. 118:6). Church family, you can trust the LORD. Find Him to be your help.

Yesterday, I received an email from Angie Williams. You don't know who she is. I don't know her. But, shortly after the tornado in Joplin, Missouri, two years ago, I shared her story of how God had protected her and her girls. She wrote, ...

"Hi, I wanted to write you to tell you that I appreciated you sharing our 2011 Joplin tornado story in your sermon 2 years ago, my prayer has always been that I pray someone will come to know the Lord because of our story and how God saved us. We are only alive today because of the grace of God, and His protection. He was definitely with us that day, there is no other explanation."

The full version of her story is riveting. I don't have time to tell it this morning. But, suffice it to say that she was at home when the tornado hit. She and her two young daughters were in their hallway, as low as they could go.

In her email, she sent me two pictures. The first is of her house, which was totally destroyed.

The second is of the exact spot where she and her two daughters were when the tornado struck.

Though I can't share her entire story this morning, I will share her conclusions, of something that she wrote two years ago.

Thinking back over that night I can see how God had a hand in keeping us safe.

1. Treay called and told me to watch weather. He normally does not call me while at work.
2. My sister-in-law accidently texted my mom that there is a tornado warning in Joplin.
3. My mom called and told me about tornado warning just seconds before sirens went off.
4. I got out of the bathtub and stayed in the hallway.
5. We just stood up and walked out of tornado basically untouched. (I had a few cuts and bruises but no big deal)
6. The houses surrounding my house (which there are 5 of them) all had at least one wall still standing in their home and I had none. Not a single one.
7. Adley's dresser was knocked over at a 45 degree angle holding the outer brick wall up to act as a ramp at the exact spot where we were sitting across the "hall" which we believe helped things go over our heads.
8. I believe God put us in the exact spot we needed to be during the tornado. IF we were further back we would have been crushed. If we were further forward we probably would have been blown away.
9. We can't find our major appliances, but Treay's grandma's glass candy dish we got after she died was untouched.
10. Two cars flew into my house on either side of us...they could have easily landed on us!

"The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever." Church family, let us look to the LORD for our safety and security.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on June 2, 2013 by Steve Brandon.

For more information see [www.rvbc.cc](http://www.rvbc.cc).



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[1] CS Lewis, "Prince Caspian", p. 58.

[2] Richard Sibbes, Complete Works, Volume 6, p. 439.