



God's Providential Care

- Psalm 121 -

1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains – 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 you will not slumber; 4 indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD watches over 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 keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; 8 the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and for evermore. (Psalm 121)



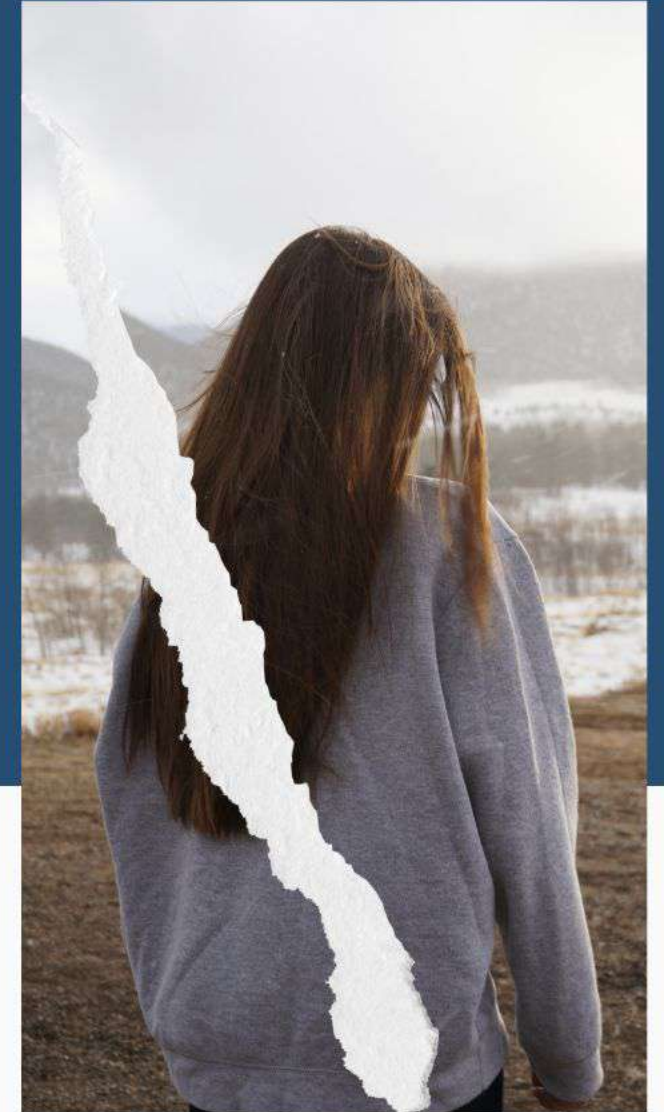
A Dangerous & Unsafe World

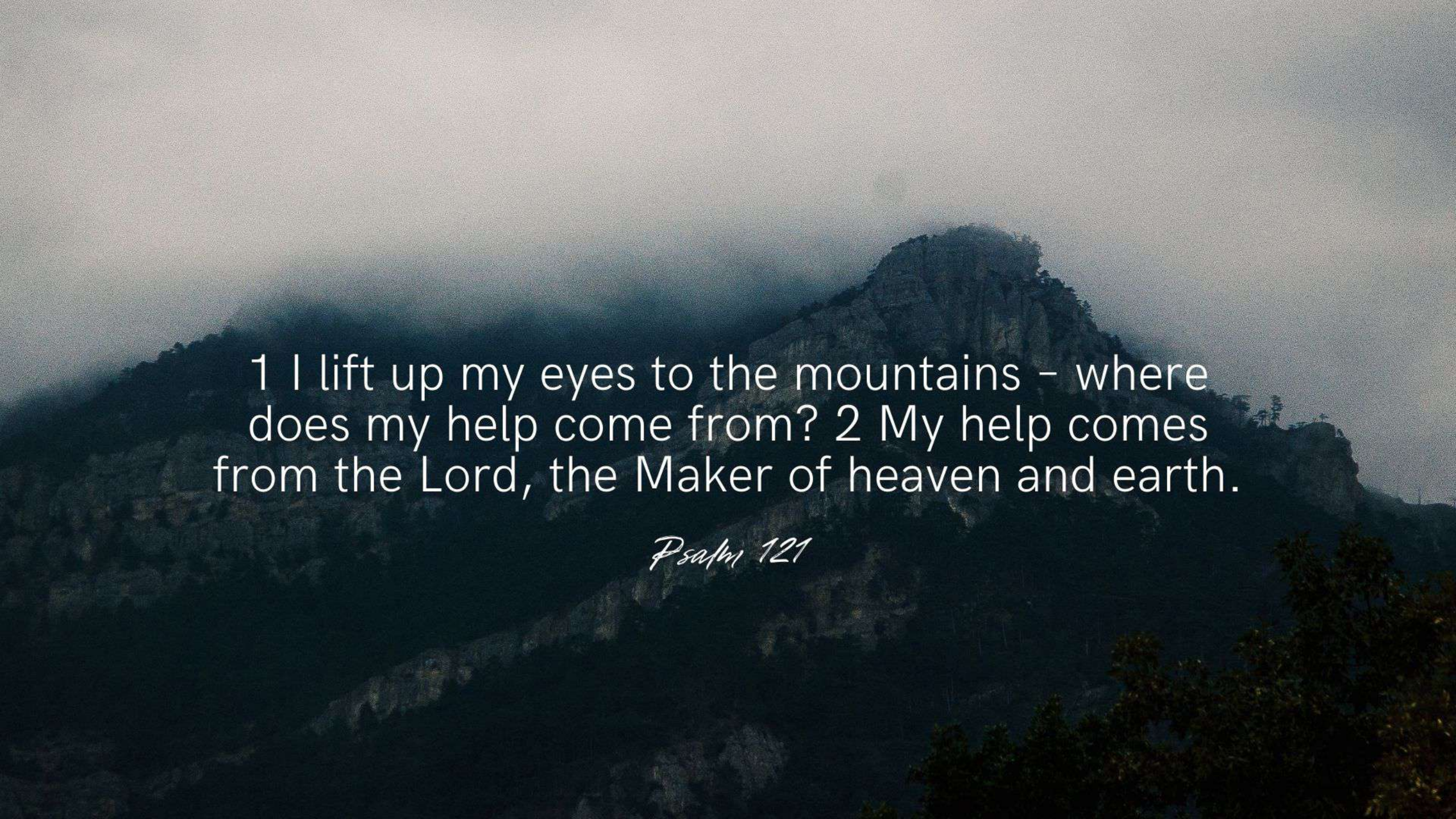
Provisions for law and order can break down with dismaying ease: a crazed person with a handgun or piece of explosive can turn the plans of three hundred air passengers into instant anarchy.

Disease can break through our pharmaceutical defenses and invade our bodies with crippling pain and death. An accident – in an automobile, from a stepladder, on an athletic field – can without warning interrupt our carefully laid plans. We take precautions by learning safety rules, fastening our seatbelts and taking out insurance policies. But we cannot guarantee safety.

Eugene Peterson

Who Will Help Me?



A misty mountain landscape with a large rock formation in the center. The scene is dimly lit, with a soft, hazy atmosphere. The mountains are covered in dense green foliage, and the sky is a pale, overcast grey. The text is overlaid on the central part of the image.

1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains - where
does my help come from? 2 My help comes
from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121



FALSE

H O P E



DANGER!

Eugene Peterson

Palestine was overrun with popular pagan worship. Much of this religion was practiced on hilltops. Shrines were set up, groves of trees were planted, sacred prostitutes both male and female were provided; persons were lured to the shrines to engage in acts of worship that would enhance the fertility of the land, would make you feel good, would protect you from evil. There were nostrums, protections, spells and enchantments against all perils of the road. Do you fear the sun's heat? Go to the sun priest and pay for protection against the sun god. Are you fearful of the malign influence of moonlight? Go to the moon priestess and buy an amulet. Are you haunted by demons that can use any pebble under your foot to trip you? Go to the shrine and learn the magic formula to ward off the mischief. Whence shall my help come from? From Baal? From Asherah? From the sun priest? From the moon priestess?

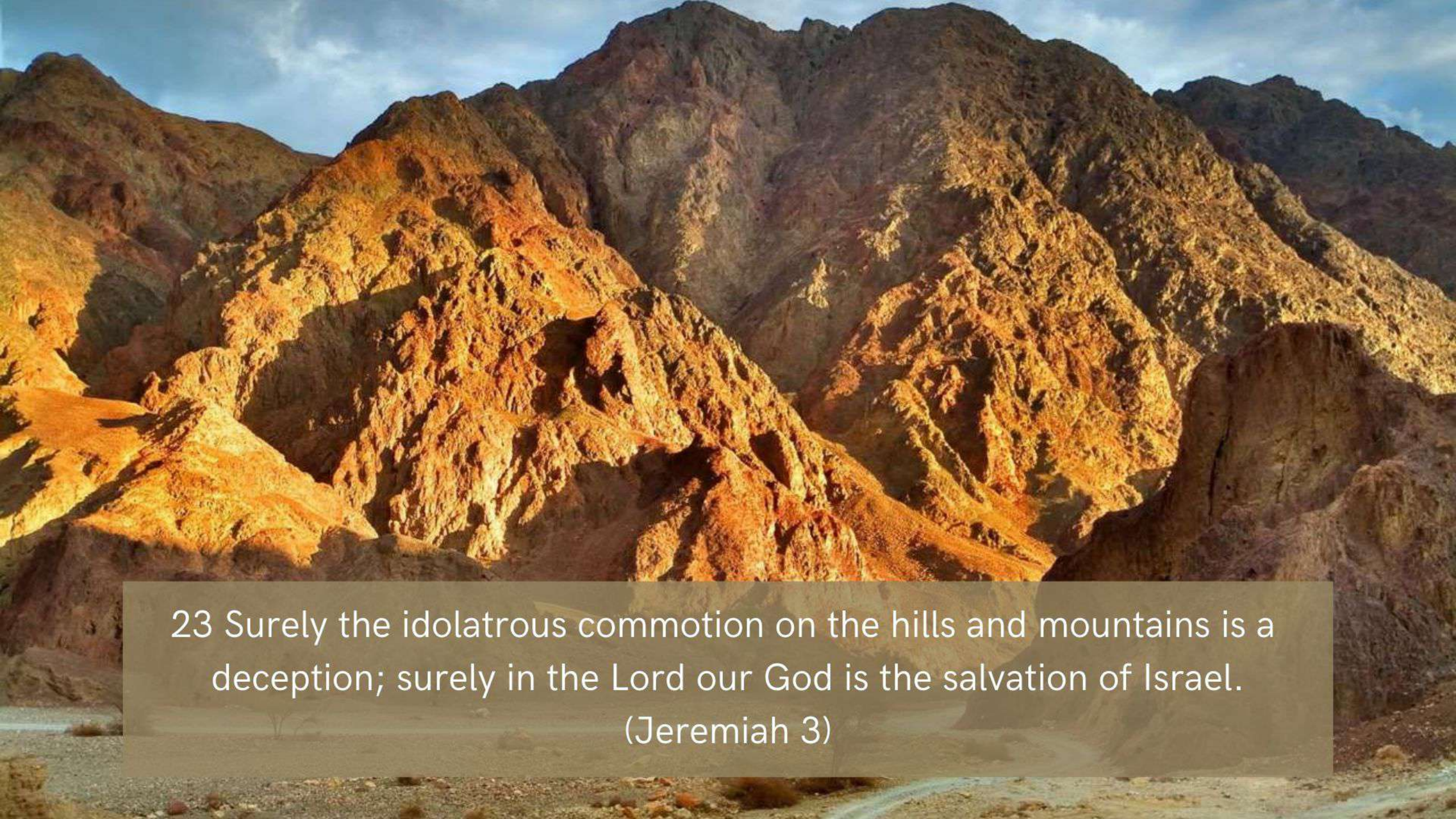




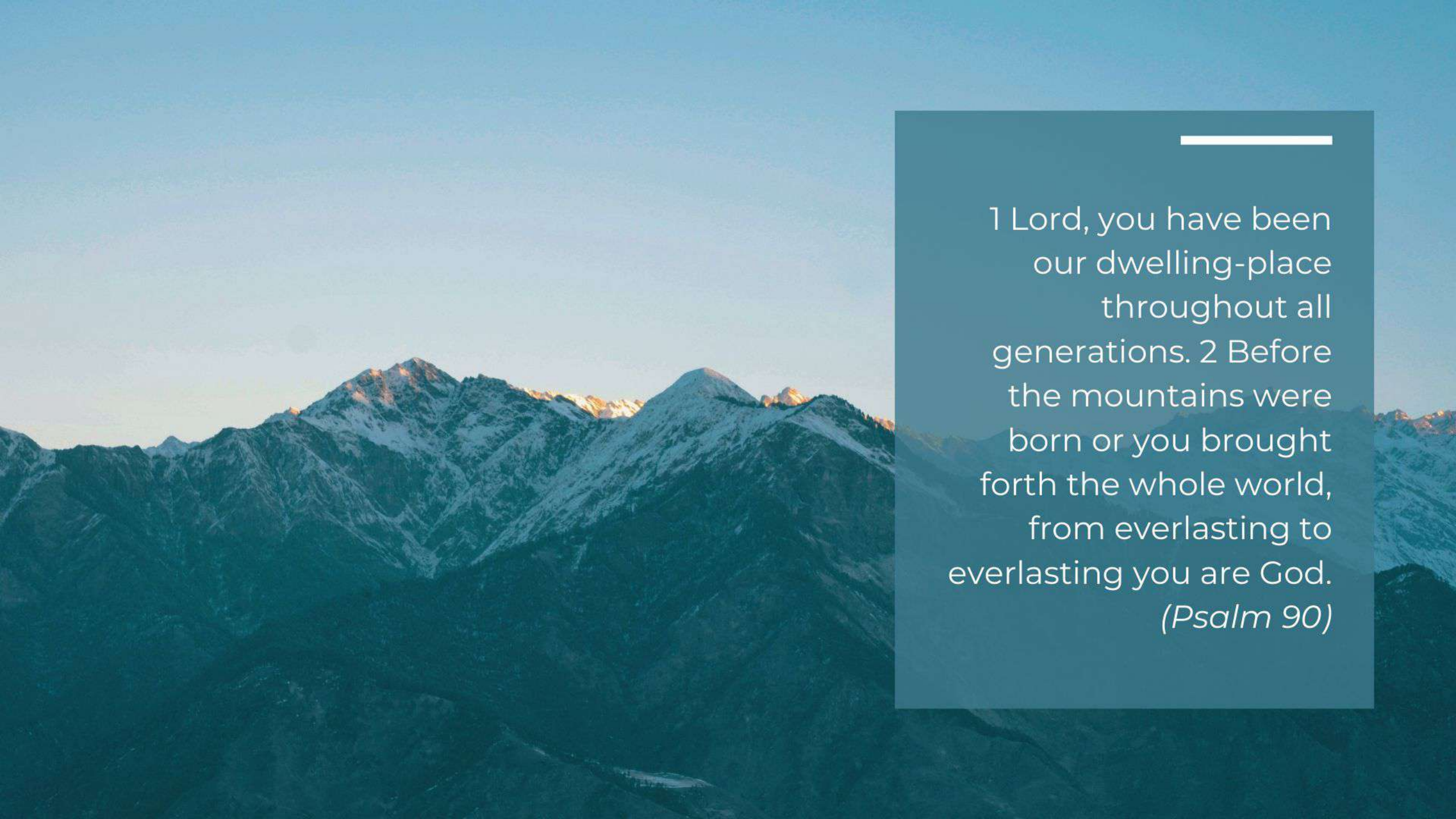
T R U E H O P E

**2 MY HELP COMES FROM THE LORD,
THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.**

PSALM 121



23 Surely the idolatrous commotion on the hills and mountains is a deception; surely in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.
(Jeremiah 3)



1 Lord, you have been
our dwelling-place
throughout all
generations. 2 Before
the mountains were
born or you brought
forth the whole world,
from everlasting to
everlasting you are God.
(Psalm 90)

11 'Tell them this: "These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens."
12 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.

Jeremiah 10

THE LORD WATCHES OVER YOU

3 HE WILL NOT LET YOUR FOOT SLIP – HE WHO WATCHES OVER YOU WILL NOT SLUMBER; 4 INDEED, HE WHO WATCHES OVER ISRAEL WILL NEITHER SLUMBER NOR SLEEP. 5 THE LORD WATCHES OVER YOU – THE LORD IS YOUR SHADE AT YOUR RIGHT HAND; 6 THE SUN WILL NOT HARM YOU BY DAY, NOR THE MOON BY NIGHT.
(PSALM 121)

The Lord Is Your 'Shomer'

2 Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I shall never be shaken.

(Psalm 62)

17 Unless the Lord had given me help, I
would soon have dwelt in the silence of
death. 18 When I said, 'My foot is
slipping, 'your unfailing love, Lord,
supported me.

(Psalm 94)





God never sleeps,
so that we can.

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*He will neither
slumber nor sleep*

PSALM 121:3-4

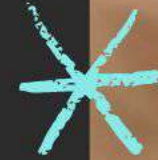
How Long Can You Stay Awake?

Everything that we know of operates on a cycle of work and rest. We work during the day and sleep at night. The sun rises and then it sets. Trees blossom during the spring and rest in winter. The grocery store stays open 24 hours a day but only because it cycles through different people.

Nothing in the created order operates at the same level all the time without rest and without deterioration. Everything either rests or gets tired or breaks down or needs to be replaced.

But God is not in the created order. He stands above it. He never gets tired. He never gets distracted. We have coffee and energy drinks and Mountain Dew to keep us awake. God doesn't need it. God can focus on you with 100% of his energy and attention and still have 100% left to focus on the person sitting next to you. That's what being infinite means. He watches your every move and still has enough left over for everyone else in the world. There is nothing else and no one else that can do that.

Paul Taylor



5 The Lord watches
over you – the Lord is
your shade at your
right hand;

PSALM 121



THE LORD WATCHES OVER YOU

6 the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night. 7 The Lord will
keep you from all harm – he will
watch over your life; 8 the Lord will
watch over your coming and going
both now and for evermore

(Psalm 121)



6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.


Psalm 121



Sun Stroke



Moon Stroke



“ 7 The Lord will keep
you from all harm – he
will watch over your life; ”

The promise of the Psalm – and both Hebrews and Christians have always read it this way – is not that we will never stub our toes but that no injury, no illness, no accident, no distress will have evil power over us, that is, will be able to separate us from God’s purposes in us. No literature is more realistic and honest in facing the harsh facts of life than the Bible. At no time is there a faint suggestion that the life of faith exempts us from difficulties. What it promises is preservation from all the evil in them. On every page of the Bible there is recognition that faith encounters troubles. The sixth petition in the Lord’s Prayer is “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” That prayer is answered every day, sometimes many times a day, in the lives of those who walk in the way of faith.



St. Paul wrote, "No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

All the water in all the oceans cannot sink a ship unless it gets inside. Nor can all the trouble in the world harm us unless it gets within us That is the promise of the psalm: "God guards you from every evil." None of the things that happen to you, none of the troubles you encounter, have any power to get between you and God, dilute his grace in you, divert his will from you (see Romans 8:28, 31-32).

(Eugene Peterson)





**The LORD will watch over your coming
and going both now and forevermore.**

- Psalm 121:8 -

The Creator is Lord over time: he “guards you when you leave and when you return,” your beginnings and your endings. He is with you when you set out on your way; he is still with you when you arrive at your destination. He guards you now, he guards you always.

EUGENE PETERSON

U N C E A S I N G P R O T E C T I O N



God never sleeps so
that we can!



The Lord Watches Over You

Psalm 121



He will not let your foot slip

