**New Hope Global Sermon Ps. 121 The Lord’s watch care**

**Introduction**

Alex Zhou, our church’s global zoom connector/facilitator, is about to embark on a journey that is analogous to that of millions of other people in our global, covid-stricken world. His new faculty position is in Macau, but to get there he has to leave Singapore, take the only once a week flight available to reach his hometown in China to get his visa and work permits, have 21 days quarantine in a hotel room and then another 1 days of self-monitoring at home with restricted activities in China and 8-11 different tests for Covid in the 3 months before he hopes to arrive in Macau by mid-January. Three Countries. 11 covid tests. 3+ weeks of quarantine. The trip is no longer simple and straightforward and possible obstacles and detouring factors abound these next 3 months. As we were talking on wechat, the Lord brought Psalm 121 as His word of assurance and comfort for Alex in these weeks. The Psalm was actually used by the pilgrims of Yahweh journeying to Jerusalem. So it is a travel psalm. But the applications are relevant to all of us in our various life passages.

1–2I look up to the mountains and hills, longing for God’s help. But then I realize that our true help and protection *is* only from the Lord, our Creator who made the heavens and the earth.
3He will guard and guide me, never letting me stumble or fall. God is my keeper; he will never forget nor ignore me. He will never slumber nor sleep; he is the Guardian-God for his people, Israel.
5Yahweh himself will watch over you; he’s always at your side to shelter you safely in his presence.
6He’s protecting you from all danger both day and night. 7He will keep you from every form of evil or calamity as he continuously watches over you. 8You will be guarded by God himself. You will be safe when you leave your home, and safely you will return. He will protect you now, and he’ll protect you forevermore! (Passion Translation ) Psalm 121:1-8



**God’s Watch Care**

Verses: v. 1+2. The Psalm starts with the declaration of trust in the Lord who is the Maker of Heaven and Earth. Yahweh, the Creator-God is responsible for the care of His people. And since He holds all the universe together by the word of His power, (Col. 1:17), we can trust Him to hold His followers together on their life pilgrimages.

Verses 3+4: This holding work of the Lord means that his watch care is 24/7 – no slumbering on the job! Whether we are awake or asleep, the Lord’s care is constant.

But what are the problems that God needs to protect us from? Verses: 3, 5-7:

* God will not let our feet slip. Weariness, worry, unknowns just around the corner (including covid results and ravaging presence) and the treacherousness of the journey will not waylay us.
* The Lord is Your shade and protection. And this is spelled out more specifically – the sun and moon will not harm us – God sill protect us from all that distresses or threats day or night. This same theme is repeated in Isaiah 4:6 and 25:4:
	+ “The canopy of God’s glory will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain” (Isa. 4:6)
	+ You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat” (Isa. 25:4)
* God will guide us safely in our daily and life-long passages – our coming out and our going in.

For Alex and many of us who are moving around, these promises are rock-solid and a source of great comfort, security and hope.

But that’s not all. Our journeys with the Lord are not private affairs. They affect all those we come in contact with. For Christians, many other believers are walking beside us in these treacherous, uncertain times. They are laboring in prayer for the fulfillment of these promises, for our protection, for God’s victories over all that would undo us; they are holding us up in the throne-room of grace. So, as we tell of the Lord’s watch care in these comings and goings, our stories become sources of challenge and inspiration to the body of Christ worldwide. They will even be part of our thanksgiving testimonies. At our house, when we have celebrated Thanksgiving with friends or family, we have always gone around the table and had each person share something or many things for which they are thankful this year. It’s a time that builds up all those who participate and gives honor to the Lord.

In addition, our stories of God’s watch care also become a witness to all those who are watching us but don’t yet know the Lord. They will get to see what a caring, personal God we have and how wonderful it is to follow a God who is so intimately involved in the lives of His followers.

For both sets of people, these stories can bring the Lord great glory.

May it be so as we move through 2021 and begin the new year in 2022.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

 Dr. M.L. Codman-Wilson, Pastor

 New Hope Global Fellowship