

**A CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP
PSALMS OF ASCENT**

THE LORD IS AROUND US - COVENANT

Text: Psalm 125

Key Word: Covenant

Key Thought: God's Covenant Places Many Assurances in Our Lives

The emphasis of Psalm 125 is not about the precarious pitfalls of Christianity but rather its solidity. The life of a Christian is not to be portrayed as one walking a tightrope without a safety net high above a breathless crowd who are waiting with anticipation to gain a thrill from your fall. **It is rather entering a place of security in a well-guarded fortress.**

This is a good Psalm for those who have struggled with consistency in their faith. The walk of faith is displayed by these pilgrims making their yearly journey to Jerusalem. Mountain climbing is not an easy effort. There are many hazards to be overcome. One of the most serious is losing a foothold. Places that appear to be secure can often give way under pressure sending a climber cascading over a slope.

The term that best describes it in the Christian realm is "**backsliding.**" It is the portrayal of a believer who has lost ground in his upward climb. It is when we slip back to our old ways of doing things because it is easier than struggling to overcome the hazards of our faith.

Have you ever wondered why some Christians never seem to slip back into their old ways while others make it a habit of doing so? What makes them different from each other? This Psalm offers us an answer to those questions.

There Are Certain Blessings Which Are Promised to Those Who Remain under the Covenant of God. These blessings are truly a reality for those who put their trust in God. There is no need to backslide into the ways of our former life as we continue our journey into new life in Christ.

I. THE SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:1-2)

II. THE SUPPLY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:3-5a)

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:5b)

I. THE SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:1-2)

Even though there has been given every possible argument for **NOT** trusting God there is **NO** conceivable reason why we should give up trusting in God. To trust in anyone or anything else is foolishness in comparison. Those who trust in Jehovah will be as secure, stable, fixed, & firm as the mount where David and the ark of the covenant dwelt.

"Those who trust in LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken (removed - KJV) but endures forever."

Psalm 125:1

The psalmist used an example that would be firmly fixed into the minds of the Israelites. There was nothing more secure than mount Zion because it housed the Ark of the Covenant. Since God could not be moved, neither could His place of His glory.

God never changes, therefore, He can be trusted. We vary but He doesn't.

1. Some people are like the sand - shifting and treacherous.

"But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practise is like a foolish man who built his house on sand."

Matthew 7:26

2. Some people are like the sea - restless and unsettled.

"But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud."

Isaiah 57:20

3. Some people are like the wind - uncertain and inconsistent.

"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming."

Ephesians 4:14

4. Believers are to be like mountains - strong, stable and secure.

Psalm 125:1

I. THE SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:1-2) (Contd.)

The mountains around Israel are unequal in height. Mount Olivet is 185 feet above Mount Zion. Yet the mountains and valleys form a perfect network of deep ravines whose perpendicular walls form a very efficient system of defence. When emperor Titus came against Jerusalem, he had much trouble overcoming the mountains alone.

We have a secure defence system in Christ. Above us is the army of the heavenly host. Surrounding us is the wall of protection of God's guards. Under us is the Rock of our Foundation. God offers us a security that we can't find anywhere else.

"There are two reasons why we trust people: one, because we don't know them; and the other, because we do."

"In God we trust; all others pay cash."

2006 The Key Called Promise

*** In Bunyan's allegory, Pilgrim's Progress, the incident is related how Christian decides to leave the **Main Highway** and follow another **Path** which seemed easier. But this Path led him into the territory of **Giant Despair** who owned **Doubting Castle**.

Eventually he was captured by Giant Despair and kept in a dungeon. He was advised to kill himself. The Giant said there was no use trying to keep on with his journey.

For the time, it seemed as if **Despair** had really conquered Christian. But then, **Hope**, Christian's companion, reminded him of previous victories. So it came about that on Saturday around midnight they began to pray, and continued to pray until almost morning.

Just before daylight, Christian broke into a passionate speech saying, *"What a fool am I thus to lie in a stinking Dungeon, when I may as well be at liberty. I have the **Key** in my bosom called **Promise** that will I am persuaded, open any lock in **Doubting Castle**."*

Then said **Hopeful**, *"Pluck it out of thy bosom and try. And the prison gates flew open."* ***

II. THE SUPPLY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:3-5a)

"The scepter (rod - KJV) of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, . . ."

Psalm 125:3

This is NOT a rod used to inflict punishment upon someone, but rather a measuring rod that was used to justly divide the lands and estates of a particular inheritance. The wicked could not seize the land that had not been allotted to them.

God owned all the land because He created it. He had the right to give it away. The enemy tries to unjustly take what is ours to claim as his own. He has no rights unless we surrender to his subtle schemes.

"To your offspring (seed) I will give this land."

Genesis 12:7

The unrighteous do not have a right to claim this land. It is ours by divine covenant.

"the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever."

Psalm 37:29

God has set borders in place to divide the inheritance of the just and the unjust. **We have a lot that is NOT to be surrendered to our enemy. The enemy has no right, no part and no place in what has been inherited to us.**

We have been given a lot of . . .

1. Faith, grace and sanctification
2. Happiness, joy and peace
3. Heaven for our eternity

Heaven's supply is not empty. The doors are open for the child of God. The angels of heaven are waiting to deliver the goods. The Treasury of David is our supply.

We do not have to allow the enemy to take up rest (remain) on our "lot." Israel struggled with their faith. **They had a "saw-toothed history."** **They were up one day and down the other.** One day they were walking through the Red Sea in exuberant praise only to enter a wilderness where they grumbled and complained. One day they are blowing trumpets of victory at Jericho while the next day they are running from the army at Ai.

II. THE SUPPLY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:3-5a) (Contd.)

Israel had its share of the wicked who worked at taking their inherited land. They faced Pharaoh, the Philistines, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, and Caesar. **All came but NONE REMAINED. There is no permanence in the wicked.** They come and go like the autumn leaves and the Maple Leafs (did I say that?).

Our supply in the Lord though is eternal. It does not mean that we will only have sunny days.

2045 Correct Balance

*** In His providence, God knows how much joy and sorrow, how much pleasure and pain, how much prosperity and poverty are proper for His child. He knows the correct balance of sunshine and storm, the precise mixture of darkness and light it takes to perfect a son and daughter. ***

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:5b)

"Peace be upon Israel"

Psalm 125:5b

Once we learn the importance of becoming established and entrenched in God, settled and surrounded by His security, then we can properly receive His gift of peace. In today's vernacular we could say **RELAX** because God has everything in control. Nothing that we say or do will ever prove that God has abandoned us in our time of trouble.

*** When climbers approach the treacherous cliffs of a mountain, they rope themselves together. It often happens that one of them slips and falls back.

The others in the climbing party are secure enough to help the one reestablish his foothold and grip on the mountain.

There is also a veteran who always leads the way and points to the best approach for what lies ahead. Our Veteran is Jesus who has gone on before us to lead us into a victorious ascent. ***

When He is at the lead, we can relax while still being on our guard. **Climbing may make us weary but it doesn't have to be worrisome. The weather may be adverse but it doesn't have to be fatal. We may slip, but we don't have to plunge to our death.**

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:5b) (Contd.)

4296 Two Pictures

*** Two painters each painted a picture to illustrate the concept of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among far-off mountains.

The second threw on his canvas a thundering waterfall, with a fragile birch tree bending over the foam; at the fork of a branch, almost wet with the cataract's spray, a robin sat on its nest.

The first drawing was only **Stagnation** while the second was truly **Rest**. For in rest there are two elements - **tranquillity and energy; silence and turbulence; creation and destruction; fearfulness and fearlessness.** ***

Psalm 125 offers us peace in the midst of a time of trouble. It is a peace that prevails as the waters rage around us. It is based NOT upon feelings but rather upon a confidence that has never been broken. **The weary pilgrim arrived at this way of peace by travelling upon the road of righteousness.**

We have a peace that is **internal** - abiding in our hearts; **external** - for others to benefit from; and **eternal** - because it will never end but only get better as we reach toward our destiny. It is also **universal** - because everyone who puts their trust in God can benefit from it.

Have You Been Living and Experiencing the Benefits of God's Covenant?

I. THE SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:1-2)

II. THE SUPPLY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:3-5a)

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:5b)

Israel (Jacob) once struggled with God. But when he surrendered to the will of God and put his trust in God he gained the blessings of the covenant.

C:\My Documents\WPWin(X7)\Sermons.2016\Psalms\Ascent\Psalms 125.wpd

Date: May 22/16

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: But I Have Trusted in Thy Mercy - D

**A CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP
PSALMS OF ASCENT
THE LORD IS AROUND US - COVENANT**

Text: Psalm 125

Key Word: Covenant

Key Thought: God's Covenant Places Many Assurances in Our Lives

There Are Certain Blessings Which Are Promised to Those Who Remain under the Covenant of God.

I. THE SECURITY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:1-2)

"Those who trust in LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken (removed - KJV) but endures forever."

Psalm 125:1

1. Some people are like the sand - shifting and treacherous - *Matthew 7:26*
2. Some people are like the sea - restless and unsettled - *Isaiah 57:20*
3. Some people are like the wind - uncertain and inconsistent - *Ephesians 4:14*
4. Believers are to be like mountains - strong, stable and secure - *Psalm 125:1*

II. THE SUPPLY OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:3-5a)

"The scepter (rod - KJV) of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, . . ."

Psalm 125:3

Genesis 12:7; Psalm 37:29

We have been given a lot of . . .

1. Faith, grace and sanctification
2. Happiness, joy and peace
3. Heaven for our eternity

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE COVENANT (Psalm 125:5b)

"Peace be upon Israel"

Psalm 125:5b