

We now come to Psalm 120, which begins a new series of Psalms. Psalms 120-134 are a series of Psalms called the “Psalms or Songs of Ascents or Degrees.” The word “ascent” (ma ha loth) does mean to ascend or go up.

Four of these fifteen “ascent” Psalms are said to be written by David (Ps. 122, 124, 131, 133) and one of the Psalms is written by Solomon (127) and the rest are anonymous.

Now some believe that these Psalms were songs the people of Israel were singing as they marched up from Babylonian captivity back to Israel.

Others suggest that these are festival songs, which were sung by the people of Israel who were on their way up to Jerusalem to celebrate the three main festivals. It does seem from Psalm 122:3-4 that the tribes are going up into Jerusalem in response to an ordinance of praise to God. So it is possible these are festival songs.

Some Rabbis took the position that these were songs that were sung as the people ascended up into the Temple to worship.

What we may observe is that one application we may draw from these ascent Psalms is the application of going up from being down. These are great Psalms to read when you are down emotionally, physically or spiritually because they do point the way up.

Now this first Psalm is one that reminds God’s people that life is lived in a lying and deceitful world, that presents God’s people with much trouble and warfare. In the midst of this, this writer learned he needed to cry out to God for help. That is the point of this Psalm:

WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE ARE LOW BECAUSE THEY ARE BEING ATTACKED BY DECEITFUL AND LYING PEOPLE, THEY NEED TO LOOK UP AND CRY OUT TO GOD FOR HIS HELP.

Now the assumption of this Psalm is that God’s people in this world are in war (v. 7). This is not by their choosing, but by being in a godless world. Part of the war that we are in is that we are in a world of people who lie and deceive. This is true personally and this is true religiously.

We are not living in a world of truth. We are living in a world of liars. Educators lie to us; Advertisers lie to us, Entertainers lie to us, Politicians lie to us, Religious leaders and Denominations lie to us. We live in a world of liars and it is depressing and we need help.

Now there are four main parts to this song:

PART #1 – God’s people cried out to God in trouble and He answered them. **120:1**

Times of trouble and pressure and distress are great times to cry out to God. The assurance that one can pray to God in times of trouble comes from past answers we received from God. This is what gave this writer the assurance that he could do this again.

Now the trouble was very personal “my trouble.” It appears to be trouble that was verbal “lying lips.” It was also trouble that was more mental than physical. This was not an enemy he could physically fight and defeat.

Now think about this. Here we are in Psalm 120. Think of all the problems and troubles we have seen thus far in these Psalms. Time and time again the writer of the Psalms is crying out to God for help because of various problems and trouble. What this tells us is that life will not be a smooth sailing joy ride because we are living in a world filled with deceit and lies.

In times of trouble God wants us coming to Him. God wants His people to cry out to Him. He will hear and He will answer. This writer had experienced the delivering power of God in the past and he needed it in the present. So he cried to God.

We are all destined to know some kind of trouble and distress. We must adopt a philosophy that is willing to cry out to God. **One thing that trouble and distress should always do is improve our prayer life.**

The best water in a stream is water that comes from a stream with rocks in it. Those rocks not only purify the water, but it causes the water to make a nice peaceful melody. Our life will be rocky at times in this world. Those things make us pure and should make us a person of prayer so that we end up with a life that is a peaceful melody.

PART #2 – God’s people ask God to specifically deliver them from liars and deceivers. **120:2-4**

Notice what needs deliverance—the soul. Only God can deliver a soul. This is something all people need to realize.

There is great power in the tongue. One can build and one can destroy with speech (James 3:2-13). The greatest attacks against your soul will come from disloyalty and from those you thought loved you and cared for you.

It can happen in your family, on your job, with your friends and even in your church. People you tried to befriend may turn against you and even invent lies about you. These kinds of people invent lies, they twist truth and it rips into your soul. One writer observed when you are up against these kinds of people, it does not do you any good to even respond.

There are five observations we want to make about deceitful people, who are troubling to God’s people:

Observation #1 - They have lying lips. **120:2a**

There is a mysterious and satanic power of growth and destruction to liars. We should never fear the truth, but fear those with lying lips. Their lips appear luscious, but they are liars.

Observation #2 - They have a deceitful tongue. **120:2b**

These people are frauds. Their life is a fraud and their speech is a fraud. God will see to it that deceitful people will become a victim of their own lies.

Observation #3 - They cannot be stopped. **120:3**

There is nothing you can give to them or nothing you can say to them or nothing that you can do to them that will stop them from their deceit. You cannot stop them, but God can.

Observation #4 - They have speech like a sharp arrow. **120:4a**

Their speech is quiet, unseen and unsuspecting and deadly. Their speech may appear to be so soft, but it is razor sharp.

A sharp arrow slices right through its target and it takes a few moments for the affect to be seen. That is the way it is with liars. They use their speech to secretly destroy and kill, like an arrow.

Observation #5 - They have work that spreads like fire. **120:4b**

A broom tree was a tree which grew in the desert to about 12 feet high. It was used to heat and used for firewood because the wood was tough and the coals would seem to burn forever.

This is the way it is with liars and deceivers. It is not just a onetime flaw in their character. This is their character. Their burning work simmers and goes on and on. A false tongue is like a fire in that it burns, it spreads and it destroys. Their speech is fire “kindled of hell.”

When you are up against a person like this, the thing to do is cry out to God. It certainly won't do you any good to cry out to the liar, for what they promise or say doesn't mean a thing.

PART #3 – Those who are liars bring great hardship to those who are faithful. **120:5**

Meshech was located in Asia Minor by the Black Sea. It is modern day Russia. It was a long way from Palestine. The people were warlike people who were hostile to the people of God.

The area known as Kedar was an area of Arabian tribesman who lived in the Arabian Desert. They, too, were ferocious to God's people and not their friends.

Now life was not good for this writer. Instead of living in Jerusalem or in the Promised Land, he had to live among these pagan people because so many lies were told about him that he could not live there nor enjoy the fellowship with the people of God.

I believe there is a real prophetic point to this. During the Tribulation, both Russia and the Arab nations will play a key role in events pertaining to Israel. Those events will be a prelude to the time when Jesus Christ returns to give Israel her land and kingdom. The world will be filled with lies during the Tribulation, including the greatest satanic liar of all, the Antichrist.

During this time Jews will flee to these other areas and will be living as refugees in other lands.

PART #4 – Those who are liars continually destroy peace and promote war. **120:6-7**

The writer says I have had to live in this world of liars for too long. They do not want peace with God nor those right with God. In fact, they hate peace and they want war.

As God's people bide their time in a world like this the only thing they can do is cry out to God. He was surrounded by a bunch of liars. He could not trust anyone. So he cried out to God.

When we find ourselves in similar situations that is exactly what we need to do. Someone said, "No man ever yet cried unto the Lord and failed to find a response."

PARTING THOUGHTS:

- 1. In any trouble we can cry to God.**
- 2. God knows every lie and distortion and false accusation that is made against us and eventually those who made them will pay.**

Spurgeon said the Bible is filled with terrible threats from God against liars and He will execute every threat in due time.

Someone else observed that if God does not instantly pay back a liar with punishment, we may be certain He will pay it back with full interest.

- 3. Always match statements with facts. Teach this to yourself and your children. Get the facts.**
- 4. When you are falsely accused, we have some great words to remember from Jesus Christ–Matthew 5:11-12**
- 5. It is far better to be the object of the lie than the source of the lie.**