



Benediction: Our Hope

SUPPLIES Needed



TO PRINT:

- Large Memory Verse to hold up (1 copy)*

TO GATHER:

- Hymnal/lyrics for songs*
(Optional: guitar or music to sing along with)
- Basket for offering*
- All supplies needed for the “Shadow Activity” in the Hearing the Word section

OPTIONAL:

- Kid’s Activity Sheet (1 copy/child)
- Elements of Worship Icons*
(Found in the introduction section.)

*These items will be needed every week.

LEADER’S Review

Is your hope in the Lord? We would all immediately answer, “Yes,” of course. Do our children see that our hope lies in the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, or do they see us seeking after the hope of this fallen, frustrating world? Are you hoping to always be healthy and find you spend too much time, energy, and money in pursuit of good health? Instead, are you spending enough time and energy on your only hope—the Lord—telling His story, serving His kingdom, seeking to know and love Him more each day? Our lives tell the truth.

As you ask your students about what their hope is, pray that you will be able to tell them the truth about your own struggles of hoping in things of this earth, rather than in Jesus alone. As you look at this great benediction from Psalm 121 today, bless your children with the great hope that they have in the One and only God, their forever shadow.

Wonderful things in the Bible I see.

This is the dearest: that Jesus loves me.

Though I forget Him and wander away,

Still He does love me whenever I stray;

Back to His dear loving arms would I flee,

when I remember that Jesus loves me.

— “I Am So Glad That Our Father in Heaven”



THE Lesson

Call to Worship

Use as many verses of this hymn as your students have learned. (2-3 minutes)

- “Take My Life and Let It Be”

Praise

Use this time to teach one of the hymns below and make it this month’s praise song. (5 minutes)

- “The Lord Bless You and Keep You”
- “I Am So Glad That Our Father in Heaven”

Tithes and Offerings

Have the children sing “This Is My Father’s World” as they pass around the offering basket. (2 minutes)

This is my Father’s world, and to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father’s world: I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.

Confession of Faith

Recite the Apostles’ Creed. (2 minutes)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell. The third day He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.





Reading of the Word

Read scripture. (1-2 minutes)

Psalm 121

- ¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
- ² My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
- ³ He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
- ⁴ Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
- ⁵ The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade on your right hand.
- ⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
- ⁷ The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
- ⁸ The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.



Prayer

Recite the Lord's Prayer together. (1 minute)

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.



Hearing the Word

Teach the lesson to the children using the text below as a guide. (4-6 minutes for lesson)

We have just read a psalm the people of God sang all the time. It was their constant reminder of God's blessings, His benediction, upon them. Do you remember last week how we defined the part of worship called the benediction? A benediction is a statement of blessings from God upon His loved ones. Do you remember how we described blessings? *(To praise, congratulate, or salute)* Who pronounced the first blessing? *(God—on His creatures and upon man)*

(Hearing the Word—Continued)

This psalm starts right where we started our study of worship. “My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.” When the writer looked up to the hills, he may have thought of several things. One, the hills reminded him of a powerful Creator. Only God can make a mountain. Something else the writer may have thought about was that during those days the hills were where most people built their idols. They would make false gods and put them high on the hills, perhaps in hopes they would be more powerful if they were higher up. The writer may have been looking up on Jerusalem. Mt. Zion was where all the true worshippers came together to worship the only true and living God. The important thing is he asked the question, “Where does my hope come from?” He was saying, “Who is going to take care of me?” “Where do I go when I am afraid?” “Who’s watching over me?”

The most important thing was he knew the answer to that question. It is the right answer to all of our questions. “My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.” Why would you want to trust a god that you made rather than the God who made you? Because of sin and the Fall, men have become that foolish. In our world, we may never trust in stone or wooden gods on a hill, but we trust in many other things. Where are some of the places we look for help? Money, other people—doctors, teachers, even, ourselves? All of these can help or seem to help sometimes, but what kind of help do we really need? We need help for our dark sinful hearts, and only the Lord can fix that.

“He will not let your foot be moved.” That means He will keep us going in the right direction.

“He who keeps you will not slumber.” He will always hear when you call upon Him.

“The LORD is your keeper.” When your parents have to go somewhere without you, do they leave you alone? No, they get someone to “keep” you. God never leaves. He always keeps us.

“The LORD is your shade on your right hand.” Some people believe the writer meant that as far as you can reach out, God will always be there. Others say this word means shadow. Again, it means God is always there. Can you lose your shadow? Can it go anywhere without you?

He is the Maker of the sun and the moon. If He controls them, can He do all things? Yes. We do not need to fear anything.

“The LORD will keep you from all evil.” Even though bad things may happen to us, God will never forsake His children and will protect us so we can live with Him forever.

For how long? Until we get older? Until we tell him to go away? No, forever and ever.

This psalm is a benediction of God, reminding us we have hope because He is our God.

What do you fear? **Let children answer. Remind them with each fear God is their shadow, their keeper.**

What or whom do you trust? Parents, teachers, money, friends? Why is hoping in God our only real hope? He is our Maker and the Maker of all heaven and earth.

The very last line of our memory verse for this month says God will “give you peace.”

What is peace? It is definitely the opposite of fear. It is the opposite of confusion. It is the opposite of anger. It is the opposite of all of those emotions that make you mad and sad. When we believe God’s Word as it is written in this psalm, we trust Jesus who is the King

(Hearing the Word—Continued)

of Peace. He will never leave us or forsake us. Maybe the greatest thing you fear is death. Has our God saved us from death? Yes, He has. We no longer need to fear death because Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the dead. We do not even have to fear death. Because of Jesus, we will live forever with God. That is why this psalm ends with the word FOREVERMORE. Jesus has won eternal life for us.

Look at the pictures of Psalm 121 again and tell me what you learned? ***(Take time to talk about each thing listed in the psalm and what they tell about God.)***

Let's pray and thank God—the One who is all that we need. Dear Father, thank You for knowing and providing everything we need in this life and for sending Jesus, so we may live forever with You. Amen.

ACTIVITY: Shadow Activity. *Have children lie flat on butcher paper and have several youth/adult helpers trace their bodies. You may want to trace with chalk on black paper and cut it out. Have students color in with black or brown on white paper. Remind them that this is their “shadow.” If time or space will not allow for a project this large, have them trace their right hand. They may want to copy the words, “Jesus is the shade at my right hand” on their traced hand.*

Work on memorizing the hymn and the memory verse while they are completing the classroom activity. If you have extra time, the students may want to draw pictures like the ones that you used to illustrate Psalm 121.



Benediction

Recite the following verse. (1 minute)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace (Num. 6:24-26).

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