

Saviour of sinners was crucified and that He shed His precious blood for the complete salvation of sinners. Just think of how great enemies of soul and body surrounded the Lord Jesus when as Sinbearer He paid the punishment for sin on His people's behalf. The gospel message is that Jesus the Saviour overcame all these enemies in the sinner's place through His almighty saving power with the result that now, as it were, mountains of peace and untold undeserved blessings reaching as high as up to and into heaven may be poured upon His people, as many as trust and obey Him.

This beautiful picture of our text comes with a price, that price being no less than the precious blood of Jesus Christ shed on behalf of sinners. You can know for sure that through Jesus Christ the Saviour and faith in Him, what Psalm 125 teaches is absolutely true also in view of the fact that from the Mount of Olives, also around Jerusalem, forty days after His resurrection from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven as the God-approved, eternally triumphant, living Saviour of sinners Who is out to give, and to give, and to give of His fullness and His blessings, freely and repeatedly, even to as many as ask Him and ever rely upon Him! We see the psalmist in this very psalm also not just presume on these great blessings the psalms speak of but in verse 4 he prays to the Lord for the fulfillment of His promised blessings, realizing it is a gift of grace. The last verse of the psalm also mentions how with the unbeliever it is so different going on in his or her own crooked ways, in paths that lead to destruction if there is no repentance and conversion. Surely this text serves then as another call for all to seek and serve the Lord while He may be found and while He is near with His mercy and grace.

The point to make now is that this verse, Psalm 125:2, gives such a precious picture of God's peace, protection, presence, and permanence but it is at a cost that is priceless in value and inestimable, nothing less than the once for all life-giving sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus paid it all, all to Him the believer owes!

Psalm 125:2 - may this verse and the whole psalm be always special to you, dear friends, thinking of the picture it gives, the price it costs, and the promise it tells! "*As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth and even for ever.*" Amen!

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the **FREE REFORMED CHURCHES** of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



A GOSPEL PICTURE FROM THE PSALMS

Hear the Word of the Lord from Psalm 125. "*They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.*"

In this message let us think just about verse 2 from this psalm. There we are told as encouragement for God's people, those who trust in and follow after the LORD, "*As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people from henceforth, even for ever.*" In the New King James Version the text reads, "*As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and for ever.*" These words were spoken by the pilgrim believers long ago as they headed to Jerusalem for worship there. They saw in the distance the city of Jerusalem with the mountains all around it, and then they could not help but think with joy how as the mountains surrounded the city of God, so the LORD Himself surrounds His people from this time forth and forever! Does this not make the Christian and Triune God sound attractive to you? Think of this, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people too!

Consider with me what this word picture all suggests and in fact proclaims to us. For one, notice how it speaks of the Lord's presence with His people constantly. We have the Rocky mountains on the West coast of Canada and those mountains don't move too much, indeed, they are set in their place and unmovable, humanly speaking. Even when there are days you can't always see them, and sometimes not at all on dark and cloudy days, still you know those mountains are there. This verse speaks of God's abiding presence with His people, yes, also in those dark and cloudy times that may come our way too in life's journey. Oh, just to realize always that even as you see those mountains that are always there, so God is always there for and with His people, even for as many as seek and serve Him and trust and obey Him. Notice the text speaks of the LORD being round about His people. The

LORD here in the Hebrew is Jehovah, and that Name means God in all His covenant mercies and loving-kindnesses and infinite goodness and almighty faithfulness! The LORD Jehovah, no one less than He, will never leave His people nor forsake them. No, thus saith the LORD, as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people. Isn't this a very comfort for God's people, to know and be sure of the Lord's presence with you, even as you look to Him for guidance and blessing day by day?

This word picture in our text speaks of more than God's presence, however. Notice further how surely those mountains around Jerusalem also speak of protection, don't they? Those mountains served as a wall or protection around Jerusalem, making it a place strong and sure. The mountains around Jerusalem are not like a straight high wall imprisoning the city, but a huge majestic fortification around the city, reflecting a protection unbelievable! You know how the city of Jerusalem has often literally been under attack. That by itself is a symbol of how God's people here below are also under constant threat of danger from evil forces of sin and Satan and this world. But there is abiding protection found with and in the Lord! Imagine having the whole Triune Godhead always present with you and always out there protecting you! No, don't just imagine it, but hear this Word of the Lord proclaiming this good news for His people, that so the LORD is round about His people, even as the mountains are round about Jerusalem.

Today people are looking for protection in all kinds of ways. But think of the protection the Christian gospel promises God's people, all who repent and believe and follow in the ways of the LORD. You are protected for body and soul, in life and in death, for now and forevermore, protected from all that may hurt and harm you, and guaranteed safekeeping in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation. Where can you get protection from sin, Satan, death, and hell, and have protection on the road to heaven but only with the LORD as revealed in Christ and His Word. And just listen to the protection offered here. *"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever."* You get twenty-four hour seven day a week protection from the LORD all the way to heaven. Jesus says in John 10:27-29, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* What abiding presence of God and almighty protection from God you find with the LORD!

But let me go on and notice further in praise to God and belonging to Him how the mountains speak also of peace and peacefulness! Would you not agree with me on this, how the picture of mountains around a valley and around a city or village or even one home can so reflect and tell a picture of peace? Under protection from the Lord and in His abiding presence, you find

what peace and sense of peace that can give! Paul says in Philippians 4:6&7 to God's people, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* In Jeremiah 29:11 we read how the Lord has "thoughts of peace" for His people, and Paul tells how He is our peace in Ephesians 2:14, and Jesus Himself tells us in John 14:27, *"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* God leads His people in the way of peace, even eternal peace. Through Christ and faith in Him we find peace with God and peace with others, and peace about the past and peace in the present and peace with the future, knowing God reigns and we may be in His hands. As the mountains surround Jerusalem so the Lord surrounds His people with His presence, His protection, and His peace!

Besides all that is mentioned so far, notice yet this next truth too how this picture reflects such permanence that is just so much steadfastness and stability. The text beforehand already tells about this idea of permanence and stability, *"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abides forever."* Here the psalmist confesses and declares how God is out to make His people like a mountain, established in His truth and grace, steadfast in His ways. Who of us doesn't need His steady hand and help guiding us every step of the way in our sinful, restless, chaotic world? Listen here to what one commentator says concerning this in words I cannot improve upon. "Some persons are like the sand, ever shifting and dangerously unreliable - see Matthew 7:26. Some are like the sea, restless and unsettled - see Isaiah 57:20 and James 1:6. Some are like the wind, uncertain and always unpredictable - see Ephesians 4:14. Believers, [however, by the grace of God] are like a mountain, strong, stable, and secure. To every soul that trusts Him, the Lord says, 'Thou art Peter' [a living stone built upon the Rock of ages]!"

As you hear this do you not wish also to be established in all your ways, indeed, now and forevermore? The gospel truth is for you who look to the Lord to guide you and trusting and obeying Him in all your ways, this word picture of Psalm 125:2 may be your picture too! For sure, how blessed you will be and what a blessing you will prove to be when you go forward with the presence of God, and protection of God, and peace of God leading you onward, permanently and steadfastly, for as long as you live!

But let me ask, 'Can you really expect that God will so bless you'? On what basis can and may sinful mankind, you and I, undeserving of any blessing from God left to ourselves, expect God so to bless and keep us as Psalm 125:1&2 proclaims? Here we should think about those mountains round about Jerusalem again. You know too, don't you, that it was on one of those very mountains around Jerusalem, Mt. Calvary, that the Lord Jesus as