

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2015

Psalms 121 & 139

Before I could be confirmed in my hometown Presbyterian Church, I was required to memorize Psalm 121. It became my “go to” Psalm (along with Psalms 23 and 100) throughout my life. Psalm 121 has been especially important to me when I travel, particularly when I am driving (mostly alone), whether for short distances or long distances.

I have been driving long distances alone almost since I began driving at the age of seventeen. My first experience of driving long distances was with my family on a trip west after my high school graduation. My father permitted me to drive for a couple of hours each day as we crossed Iowa, South Dakota, and Wyoming into Colorado, as long as the road was relatively straight through farm country.

When I was given my own car (a surprise college graduation gift from my parents), I drove back to college from my home in New Jersey to south central Pennsylvania, over 200 miles. That summer I really began my years of solitary driving: New Jersey to Cincinnati, Ohio, back through Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; then north from New Jersey to Vermont for the summer (with side trips to Massachusetts on weekends); then from New Jersey to Maryland for my first job. My parents said little except, “Be careful.” I realized how blessed I was to have my own car and to have parents who had confidence in my ability to drive. What I didn’t realize, at 21 years of age, was how God was protecting me as I drove. It is only as I have aged that I have become really conscious that solitary driving is a problem for some, women especially. In recent years I have become very aware of how God has been and is continually with me.

Recently I needed to drive to northern Alabama for a family event. For the first time the thought of driving totally by myself was daunting. I prayed for guidance. God led me to the solution: take a friend—at least most of the way. Driving the Florida Turnpike to Kissimmee to pick up my friend would be no problem because the road is familiar. My friend had jumped at the chance to join me. She had never been in that part of the country, AND she had a niece living in the area where we would be staying. God certainly had us in His hands as we traveled north and returned to Florida.

Over the years of my driving alone, God has directed me on how to do it: plan ahead; know how far I can drive in a day; know where the overnight stop(s) will be; make reservations ahead of time, so that finding accommodations won’t be a problem; and take the Autotrain when it is practicable. Fortunately, I have friends and/or family who have been willing to house me for one or two nights on my travels. This is an added blessing because it enables me to maintain contact with them. However, even when I stay in motels, I know that God is with me.

Although I do not have a GPS, I do have “On Star” in my car. It is comforting to know I can get directions if I am not sure I am on the route I wish to be on. I like using maps and rely on them for my specific route choices. However, I know that it is God’s hands, which are leading and comforting me as I travel alone the highways of the U.S. It is to God that I look because “my help cometh from the Lord” and because I know from Psalm 139 that God is with me always.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for all of Your blessings: for Your comfort and care as I drive alone for long distances or close to home; for Your guidance in all that I do and in the choices I make as I go through my daily life. Please continue to keep me under Your loving hands and to continue to guide me in all that I do. I pray in Jesus name, Amen.

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