

**Psalms of Ascents Series: “Songs for the Road”
Meeting Guide**

Date: June 2nd and 3rd

Pray

Apart from God, we can do nothing. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion. Throughout your time together, continue asking God for help.

Discuss

Read Scripture

Read Psalm 120 together.

Bible Study

Spend the bulk of your time discussing God’s Word together.

Remember:

- Walkthrough the Bible study together using the HEAR method and talk about what stuck out most to you in the passage.
- Make sure you move the discussion to the application section of your study.
- Affections, beliefs, and practices: Make sure to apply the passage to all of your life.

Pray

- Take time to pray for one another to live as pilgrims rather than settlers in this world.

Psalm 120 (ESV)

Deliver Me, O Lord

1 “In my distress, I called to the LORD, and he answered me.

2 Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.

3 What shall be given to you, and what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue?

4 A warrior’s sharp arrows, with glowing coals of the broom tree!

5 Woe to me, that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell among the tents of Kedar!

6 Too long have I had my dwelling among those who hate peace.

7 I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war!

Study: Psalm 120

Open:

- What are some of the routines that you go through before taking a trip or vacation? How do these “routines” enhance your travel to your destination? Do your preparations usually make the trip go as planned? Why or why not?

Study:

- 1) It seems like an odd way to start a pilgrimage, especially since this song doesn't even speak of traveling. It does express the feelings of homesickness we can experience as we've settled in a strange place. How does this song help set the tone for the journey in the songs that follow?
- 2) What feelings language is expressed in this song and why?
- 3) How does the psalmist describe the culture in which he's living? How does he deal with the frustrations he has with his culture? What are the two things that bother the psalmist about his culture (see verses 1-4 and verses 5-7)?
- 4) What are some of the lies that the world tells us? How do you respond to them? Why?
- 5) How does the psalmist ask for God's deliverance in verse 2? Do you think that this should be a regular pattern for the Christian? Why or why not?
- 6) Where do you see the hostility of the world around you? How do you respond to this hostility?

Verse 5: Meshech and Kedar, mentioned in verse 5, are names of people groups. The Meshech lived in northern Turkey and later pushed north and east of the Black Sea into the Caucasus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. Kedar, named after a son of Ishmael (see Genesis 25:23), refers to a wild Arab tribe in the desert (see Isaiah 21:16-17; Jeremiah 49:28-29). These people groups lived so far apart that the references can be, as Derek Kidner wrote, "a general term for the heathen." They are examples of the warlike tribes among whom the pilgrim singers of Psalm 120 were dispersed.

- 7) Have you settled down in Meshech or Kedar, or are you a pilgrim traveling to your true home? How would someone discern if they are a settler or a pilgrim?
- 8) What does it look like to live life as a pilgrim among lying and hostile neighbors?
- 9) What advice does Peter offer us in 1 Peter 2:11-12 as we live as pilgrims and sojourners? What makes it hard for us to live this way?
- 10) Have you experienced God's help in the past as you've made decisions to follow His way instead of the world's?

Apply:

- 1) How do you typically deal with your frustrations with things in our culture that are not as they should be?

- 2) How is God calling you to see your place in the world as a Christian? What hope can we find in Psalm 120 that God will help us?

PRAY:

- Here's a sample prayer from Eugene Peterson:

“Rescue me from the lies of advertisers who claim to know what I need and what I desire, from the lies of entertainers who promise a cheap way to joy, from the lies of politicians who pretend to instruct me in power and morality, from the lies of psychologists who offer to shape my behavior and my morals so that I will live long, happily and successfully, from the lies of religionists who ‘heal the wounds of this people lightly,’ from the lips of moralists who pretend to promote me to the office of captain of my fate, from the lies of pastors who ‘leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the traditions of men’ (Mark 7:8). Rescue me from the person who tells me of life and omits Christ, who is wise in the ways of the world and ignores the movement of the Spirit.” (A Long Obedience in the Same Direction, pg. 27)

- Ask God for help to repent from following the lies of our culture, and to follow Him as faithful pilgrims.