

St. Matthew AME Church  
Orange, N.J.  
Rev. Melvin E. Wilson, Pastor/Teacher

March 13, 2021

**Women's Bible Study Fellowship**  
**Winter Series: "I Am My Sister's Keeper"**

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know, he replied, Am I my brother's keeper?" Genesis 4:9 NIV

**Session IV. "The Number One Keeper"**

The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand." Psalm 121:5 KJV

**I. Review of Sessions I-III**

***Session I-"You Matter"***

How great is the love, the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! I John 3:1a

- The term, "Am I my brother's keeper?" today has nothing to do with the way it was used by Cain. Cain was being cynical, arrogant, pessimistic, ironic, dishonest and disrespectful. He showed no regard or genuine concern for his brother; after all-he had just killed him. Today this term means that we are to look out for our brothers/sisters.
- We should not only sympathize, but also empathize with each other.
- We are to encourage each other.
- When you read Genesis 4:9 in some translations, you will notice Cain's lack of concern for the actions he took. His brother did not matter to him.

***"WE MATTER"***

- We matter to God. -"God Sees Us"
- Our self-worth is based on the fact that God loves us and calls us His children. If something is important to you, it is important to God.
- We should know that we are valuable. -"I See Me"
- We must act like we are who God says we are.
- We must acknowledge each other. "I See You"
- Let others know they exist.

***Sessions II and III:***

***"What If I Were You and You Were Me"***

"Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners and those who are mistreated as if you were suffering. " Hebrews 13:1-3

- This scripture encourages us to "walk a mile in someone else's shoes, means before judging someone, you must understand their experiences and challenges.
- Empathy is about standing in someone else's place, feeling their heart and seeing with their eyes.
- We should never pass quick judgment, because you never know when you may be in the same situation. Matthew 7:1-5
- Real love for others produces tangible actions. (kindness and empathy)

***"I Am My Sister's Keeper in Word and Deed"***

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17

- Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus means bringing honor to Christ in every aspect and activity of daily living. We respect Christ at all times-wherever you go, whatever you do or whatever you say.

***"What I Say to My Sister Matters"***

Death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it, will eat its fruits. Proverbs 18:21

- Words can build up or tear down. They can motivate or discourage.
  - WORDS CAN EXPRESS OR REPRESS
  - WORDS CAN OFFEND OR BEFRIEND
  - WORDS CAN AFFIRM OR ALIENATE
  - WORDS CAN BUILD OR BELITTLE
  - WORDS CAN COMFORT OR CRITICIZE
  - WORDS CAN DELIGHT OR DESTROY
- When we speak words of encouragement to our sister, we convey respect, gentleness and humility.

"Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body. Proverbs 16:24

***"My Sister May Need My Help"***

- Everyone needs a little help sometime. No one is meant to go through life alone. Because God has blessed you, it is so important to share. You are blessed to be a blessing.
- In James 2:14-26, James moves into a discussion about the relationship between faith and deeds. The illustration that he selects to distinguish between living faith and dead faith hinges on the way believers care for the physical needs of others, loving them as we wish to be loved in the same, is one of the most important ways faith works to show itself to be true.
- Each of us should look not only to our own interests, but also to the interest of others. Philippians 2:4

**II. Session IV-"The Number One Keeper"**

"The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand."

Psalm 121:5 KJV

**Introduction**-Psalm 120-134, fifteen psalms are called Songs of Ascents- The view most generally accepted is that these Psalms were either sung by pilgrims on the ascending march from the Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem, or they were sung by worshipers from all parts of Palestine as they went up to Jerusalem for the great festivals.(three festivals mentioned in Deuteronomy 16)

- An alternate view is that the headings "Song of Ascents," refer to the 15 steps leading to the Court of Israel in the Temple, and that these psalms were sung on these steps as the Levite singers ministered at the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Psalm 121 is also considered "The Traveler's Psalm." In this psalm the singer understood that the group didn't need to arrive at Jerusalem before they came under God's protective care.
- God is just as present in the journey as in the destination.
- The traveler looked to Jerusalem as his goal, yet his trust was not in the city itself. Help would come from the God who made heaven and earth. The Creator would be his Helper.
- The sole source of help comes from God, who, as Creator has unlimited power.
- The City of God and the Temple are to be desired and delighted in; the mountains upon which they rest are to be remembered. But not from them does help come to a distressed soul; it comes from God. Psalm 121:1-2

***The Help God Brings***

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber; Behold, he that **keepeth** Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.Psalm121:3-4

- God would help His people by establishing them in a firm place, allowing them to stand and not allowing their foot to be moved.
- God helps us to stand in courage and strength and also in faith.

- God doesn't doze off, much less falls into a deep sleep. He remains attentive and **keeps** watch over us.
- He who **keeps** you (This is the first of six times in this short psalm that the Hebrew word, shamar (translated keeps and preserve) is used. The theme is God will watch over His people as a watchman watches over the city or a group of travelers.
- The psalmist is so absorbed in the thought of his **keeper**, that he barely names his dangers. With happy assurances of protection, he says over and over again that God is our **keeper**.
- God is our shade against the visible perils of the day as well as the hidden perils of the night.
- God is our guardian, protector and defender. God looks after us.

### "He is Our Keeper"

- As the pilgrims traveled, they met threats above and threats below, most of which they could not see or predict. They were fully exposed to scorching heat and volatile weather. Robbers hid in the caves and hills, knowing exactly when to expect their victims. The people knew they had to go, but they did not know if they would make it. They felt fragile, vulnerable and unsafe.
- Many fears and concerns in life come not from what we can see, but from what we can't. But what the psalmist could see told him he was in trouble, but he did not trust in what he could see. He looked beyond the threats he could see, to the God who has all power in His hand.
- GOD ATTENDS TO US AND TAKES CARE OF US.

### "He is Our Number One Keeper"

- No one is nearer to you than God.
- No circumstance can overwhelm God.
- God rules all things, made all things, sustains all things, and including every detail of your life.
- God is never surprised or shaken.
- God's **keeping** power works through our tough times.
- God's **keeping** power makes us our best selves.

If you feel your need for **keeping**; take heart, Jesus prayed, and He continues to pray for your **keeping**.

"I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you, Holy Father, **keep** them in your name." John 17:11

**MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU!**