

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#) For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalm 120

4/1/13

Psalm 120 God Hears When the World is Saying Wrong Things
There is uncertainty regarding the author, time, or circumstances of these Psalms, but it is apparent [Psalms 120-134](#) work together, and are called the "Songs of Degrees," and sometimes "Songs of Ascension."

Verses 1-4 contrast God's listening to help, and our having to listen to others; Verses 5-7 state how hard it is to live among warmongers.

Verses 1-4: (**Verse 1**) God hears our cries from distress. Jacob said God had done so ([Genesis 35:3](#)); David said God had ([2 Samuel 22:7](#)); Paul said distress cannot "separate us from the love of Christ" ([Romans 8:35](#)). (**Verse 2**) Integrity, trust, faith, dependability all are ruined by "lying lips" and a "deceitful tongue." "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight" ([Proverbs 12:22](#)). Having a "deceitful tongue" is responsible for destroying the credibility of gossips, talebearers, editorial writers, propaganda press, factory fables, and many others.

(**Verse 3**) There will be a judgment against a "false tongue." "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" ([Revelation 21:8](#)). (**Verse 4**) Whoever said "words can never hurt me" wasn't familiar with this verse. Words can pierce like "sharp arrows of the warrior," and burn like "coals of the broom tree."

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ([James 3:2-8](#))



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Verses 5-7: (Verse 5) Little is certain of these places, “Meshech” (slave traders, [Ezekiel 27:13](#)) and “Kedar” (wanderers, [Isaiah 21:16-17](#)), but they represent the hostile environment many people experience, even today.

(Verses 6-7) Patience and longsuffering can wear us down or wear us out when we are mismatched with polar opposites on a subject like “war” and “peace.” There is “a time of war, And a time of peace” ([Ecclesiastes 3:8](#)), however “wisdom is better than weapons of war; But one sinner destroys much good” ([Ecclesiastes 9:18](#)). The wise can avoid war, but the foolish advocate it and their foreign policies depend upon it! Christians are not waging carnal war against their enemies ([2 Corinthians 10:2-6](#)). “When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him” ([Proverbs 16:7](#)).

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