

# GRACE BIBLE MISSION

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LESSON: WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW

Study 3: THE GUARANTEE OF GOD'S KEEPING POWER

(Scripture Portion: 1 Peter 1: 1-12)

There is surely no more comforting truth in the whole Bible than that God guarantees to keep His children from the present moment of time until they arrive safely in Heaven. How comforting this is to the new convert – look up Jude 24; to those in middle life – look up 2 Timothy 1:12; and to those nearing the journey's end – look up 2 Timothy 4:18! There was one special petition that our Lord Jesus offered in His great intercessory prayer – look up John 17:15. Peter gives the same emphasis to this glorious truth in 1 Peter 1:5. It is important, of course, to study the setting and context of the words, and to see what verses 2 to 4 say in introducing verse 5. They tell us that as believers we are chosen, sanctified, cleansed, born again and bound for Heaven! The Lord is not only keeping Heaven for us, but He is keeping us for Heaven; so His keeping power operates on both sides of the veil. If we belong to the Lord, Heaven is certain --look up John 10:28; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 13:5-6, and compare Colossians 3:3; but what about all the intervening days, months and perhaps years before we actually get to Heaven? How can we be kept by the power of God day by day? Notice the following three truths:

## **1. THE POWER BY WHICH GOD KEEPS US IS DESCRIBED AS 'GOD'S POWER'.**

The Greek here is very significant, for it literally reads, 'kept in the power of God'. It is a military metaphor, and the thought is of a garrison guarded by soldiers – look up and compare 2 Corinthians 11:32. See, then, what a tremendous power is available to keep us all along our earthly pathway. It is nothing less than 'the power of God'. Think of His power in creation, in history, in providence, in redemption and in His final intention. Surely the same God of power can keep you? His power is absolutely sufficient, and He guarantees to make it available to you and operative in your life until the end of your earthly pilgrimage, when you will no longer need to be through faith 'shielded by God's power', for then, faith will be lost in sight.

## **2. THE EXTENT TO WHICH GOD KEEPS US COVERS EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF OUR EARTHLY LIFE.**

How, in fact, do we need to be kept by the power of God? Here are some suggestions:

1. *We need to be kept from the power of the flesh within.* We need to be kept from indwelling sin, for we still possess the old Adamic nature and this nature is unchanged, powerful and very assertive – look up Romans 8:2.
2. *We need to be kept from the power of the world without.* We are in danger of being allured by its attractions and its evils – look up 1 John 2:15-17.
3. *We need to be kept from the power of the Devil around us.* He is a powerful foe and always seeking our downfall. Sometimes he comes as an angel – look up 2 Corinthians 11:14; and sometimes as a roaring lion – look up 1 Peter 5:8.
4. *Our mind needs to be kept in peace.* Our mind needs fortifying and freeing from doubt, despair, depression, discouragement...look up Isaiah 26:3.
5. *Our heart needs to be kept.* It needs to be kept free from fear – look up Isaiah 41:10; from worry – look up Philippians 4:7; and from anxiety – look up Psalm 37:1.
6. *Our will needs keeping.* It is powerless to do the thing that pleases God unless the Lord takes control of it – look up Philippians 2:13.
7. *Our whole spirit, soul and body needs to experience the keeping power of God.* Our personality needs to be kept – look up 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

These are the ways in which we need keeping and in which God offers to keep us. But *how* can we experience His keeping power? Suppose we are tempted to lie, to think unclean thoughts or succumb to doubt or despair – how can we experience and enjoy the keeping power of God at such times?

## **3. THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH GOD KEEPS US IS THAT OF OUR FAITH IN HIM.**

As Peter says, we 'who through faith are shielded by God's power...' We are 'guarded by the power of God operating through our faith.' In every experience of life God offers us His keeping power; faith receives this, and as we receive, so we are kept. All we have to do is to trust Him, to receive what He offers and to lean on Him, for the Lord says, 'Trust in Me, and I'll keep you. As you trust I'll support and sustain you. When tempted to sin, to fear or to despair, just look to Me and trust in Me, and you will be "shielded by God's power

until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time"! Now, here is one final question: How does the Lord keep us when we put our trust in Him? He keeps us in two ways:

1. *By the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within.* Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who is not only with the Christian, but is *actually inside* the Christian. He is there to keep the Christian in every situation of temptation, testing and trial, and to give deliverance from everything that is contrary to the will of God – look up the following references: John 14:16-17; Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 6:19. But the Lord also keeps us:
2. *By the angels without.* This is a wonderful truth that many Christians do not appreciate, namely, that God's ministering spirits have been entrusted with the responsibility of watching over God's children – look up and compare Psalm 91:11-12; Hebrews 1:13-14.

Thus, the Lord says, 'I want to keep you. I guarantee to keep you. It is My purpose to keep you, and your part is simply to put your trust in Me. As you do this you will be "shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is to be revealed in the last time."' Now read Psalm 121, and conclude this study by lifting up your heart in praise and thanksgiving to God in the words of Jude 24 and 25.

Kept by the power of God,  
Kept by the power of God,  
Day by day, come what may –  
Kept by the power of God!