

Lift Up My Eyes

I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
—Psalm 121:1-2

Why did the psalmist say these words? Firstly, it is possible that in a moment of temptation he was thinking, Shall I look to the hills like so many others are doing? Those who were worshiping Baal were increasing in number rapidly. Many were looking to the hills for help, so the psalmist pauses and asks: “Where does my help come from?” But he realizes his help does not come from the hills. Quite the opposite, in fact; his help comes from the Lord.

Secondly, it is possible that the writer was referring to the tradition of looking to mountains. There were those who, by looking to the mountains in the direction of Jerusalem, had a good feeling. For “the mountains surround Jerusalem” (Ps. 125:2)

Have you been wrestling with a problem of temptation from a certain direction, and you know that by looking in that direction, you are looking where temptation will be? Do you know the best way to prevent yourself from falling into sin? It is to keep from falling into temptation. Most of us have a fairly shrewd idea of what will tempt us. What may be my weakness may not be yours, and what may be yours may not be mine.

Perhaps you are looking to tradition for help. I think England is the most traditional country in the world. I sometimes thought Westminster Chapel was the most traditional church in England. Maybe you like tradition. But you can be so tied up in tradition that you never reach the Lord. You can come to church and get a good feeling. But that is just looking to the hills for reasons of tradition. Your good feeling may not be

from the Lord at all.

In any case, whether we look because of temptation or tradition, the psalmist says, “[Our] help comes from the Lord,” not the mountains.

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