

Psalm 121 is among the best known – perhaps not quite on a par with Psalm 23 but not too far behind. “I lift my eyes to the hills...”

People have always looked up at mountains and hills. Maybe it’s because they are there – you can’t miss them – they stand out. They look strong and majestic. And when you get to go up to the top of the mountain or hill you look again and see for miles – you can see further than from down on the lowland. You get a new and wider perspective.

Look up

At school we were told to look up, don’t look down. To look up is positive, to look down is negative. Look up, look where you’re going, look forward. That will give you an air of confidence, of assurance in what you are doing, of how you are.

This psalm tells us to look up and to be confident that God is around us. It’s about faith, trust and assurance. We can be sure that God will watch over us. He doesn’t fall asleep on the job, he is watchful 24/7, he has us in his hands, he keeps an eye on us coming and going as we journey through life. It is quite possible that this psalm would have been sung by pilgrims travelling to the temple at Jerusalem. And it would give them re-assurance that they would be kept safe with God watching over them. We will hear later about [Abraham going on his journey](#); travelling with the assurance that God was with him.

The Bible is full of stories of people going up mountains: Abraham, Moses, Jesus, to name but a few. They went up the mountain for various reasons and sometimes they met God there. Down the centuries, and today, many people say that they feel closest to God when they are out in the wide open and lofty spaces of creation.

Be curious

The late Stephen Hawking, the physicist, said “Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious.”

We should look up and be curious, just as the writer of psalm 121 is, and wonder where does my help, my strength as some translations have it, where does it come from? We should wonder about the whole of creation that we can see. And we should ask why? As a previous vicar of this parish once said “keep asking why and sooner or later you will be led to God.” And then you will find faith and trust and assurance that God does watch out for you – just like psalm 121 tells us. Amen