

Psalm 120 "A First Step Forward in a Liminal Season"

1. We are in a liminal season. We are neither here nor there, it is not what was nor what will be. In such liminal seasons God often does his greatest work - consider the Israelites in the Sinai desert. What about liminal seasons makes them fertile ground for God's work in us?

The Jews reoriented themselves to God's work in that liminal season with three pilgrimage feasts to Jerusalem. During that journey the pilgrims returned again and again to the psalms of ascent to guide them in being formed as God's people in God's world. Every journey needs a starting point, a first step toward our destination, and Psalm 120 provides that for us...

Read Psalm 120

2. The psalmist expresses deep dissatisfaction with the patterns of the world. What aspects of your own world do you find distressing or unsatisfying?
3. To where, to what, to whom do we look for help in the midst of these distressing patterns of our world?
4. To whom, to what does the Psalmist look to for help? What means of transformation does the Psalmist rely upon?
5. Turning from the patterns of the world to adopt the patterns of the kingdom in repentance is the posture the Psalmist invites us to. Such a posture in the world leads the psalmist to feel like a stranger in a strange land that brings about conflict with others. How does the adoption of such a posture lead to this feeling, this experience?