

August 20
Psalm 141

But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

Great Psalms Scroll, c. A.D. 30-50
Found 1956, Qumran, Dead Sea
more on this in Psalm 1 presentation

The Protector



Shimei curses King David, woodcut 1860
Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1872)



Psalms – Songs to or about God

1. June 4	The Path	<u>1</u>	Tree Planted by Streams
2. June 11	The Past	<u>78</u>	God was Their Rock
3. June 18	The Shepherd	<u>23</u>	Lord is My Shepherd
4. June 25	Our Response	<u>138</u>	Gratitude for Keeping Thy Word
5. July 2	His Presence	<u>84</u>	How LOVELY Your House
6. July 9	The Creator	<u>95</u>	TODAY, if you Hear, Harden Not
7. July 16	God Revealed	<u>19</u>	Heavens Declare God's Glory
8. July 23	His LOVE	<u>136</u>	LOVE Endures Forever
9. July 30	His Faithfulness	<u>146</u>	Whose Help is God
10. Aug 6	The Confession	<u>51</u>	Create in Me a Clean Heart
11. Aug 13	The Cleansing	<u>32</u>	My Hiding Place
★ 12. Aug 20	The Protector	<u>141</u>	Protect Me from the Trap
13. Aug 27	The Longing	<u>42</u>	Deep Calls unto Deep



Theme

**Believers should seek refuge in God because
He is the only One who can give them
strength to face temptation and evil**

Psalm 141

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1-2 | The Plea – | LORD—Hurry to Help |
| 3-7 | The Requests – | LORD—Watch Door of My Lips |
| 8-10 | The Promise – | LORD—Do Not Let Me <i>DIE</i> |

Key Verse Psalm 141:8

But my eyes look to You,
Lord God.

I seek refuge in You;
do not let me *DIE*



Alternate Title

Save My Life

One of the GREATEST things about America

Perhaps that which is the envy of the rest of the world

Is that we do have Law and Order

Let me say that in another way



1-2 **The Plea** – LORD—Hurry to Help

So ... Psalm 141 opens
with a sense of urgency

¹ LORD, I call on You. Hurry to help me.
Listen to my voice when I call on You.

Oh ... who has NOT prayed such?
Who, at some point, has NOT begged such?
Anyone? ... If anyone has NOT prayed such:
God Bless that *Blessedly PEACEFUL Life*

Most of us – with a few years – have PRAYED it

¹ LORD, I call on You. **HURRY** to help me.



Spurgeon* so kindly opines on Psalm 141:

**Its meaning lies so deep as to be in
places exceedingly obscure,**

yet even upon its surface it has dust of gold.

**In its commencement the psalm is lighted up with
the evening glow as the incense rises to heaven;**

**then comes a night of language whose
meaning we cannot see;**

**and this gives place to morning light in
which our eyes are unto the Lord.**



Charles H. Spurgeon, 1885
by Alexander Melville

* *Treasury of David*, Psalm 141, <http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

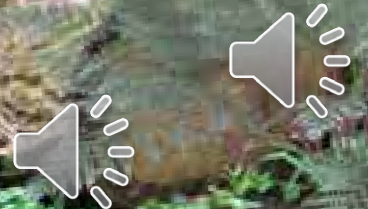
Psalms 141 – Dangerous

The Enchanted Forest

**Ask Any Logger
You BETTER have experience
Cause in the Forest
Even in the **Enchanted Forest****

There a few trees ... the **good logger KNOWS
They call these dangerous trees the ...**

Widow Makers



Psalms 141 – Dangerous

The Enchanted Forest

**Logging Today
Easier and Safer
STILL Dangerous!**

Even in the Enchanted Forest

Psalm 141 ... is about David PURSUED

David Fears for his LIFE ... hung over his head was a

Widow Maker



1-2 The Plea – LORD—Hurry to Help

With a sense of urgency ... David reflects ...

Some say this Psalm was created after his flight from his son, Prince Absalom ... who sought to kill

¹ LORD, I call on You. Hurry to help me.

Listen to my voice when I call on You.

² May my prayer be set before You as incense,
the raising of my hands as the evening offering.

And because of the latter part of v. 2

Some have said Psalm 141 was designed for **Vespers**

That is: Sunset Evening Prayers in Jewish life

Also seen in the Orthodox, Western and Eastern
Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran liturgies



Maybe Psalm 141 was written
While fleeing from his son Absalom

Shimei curses King David
1860 woodcut for
"Die Bibel in Bildern"
By Julius Schnorr von
Carolsfeld (1794–1872)

2 Samuel 16



**This is more like
how I see Shimei**

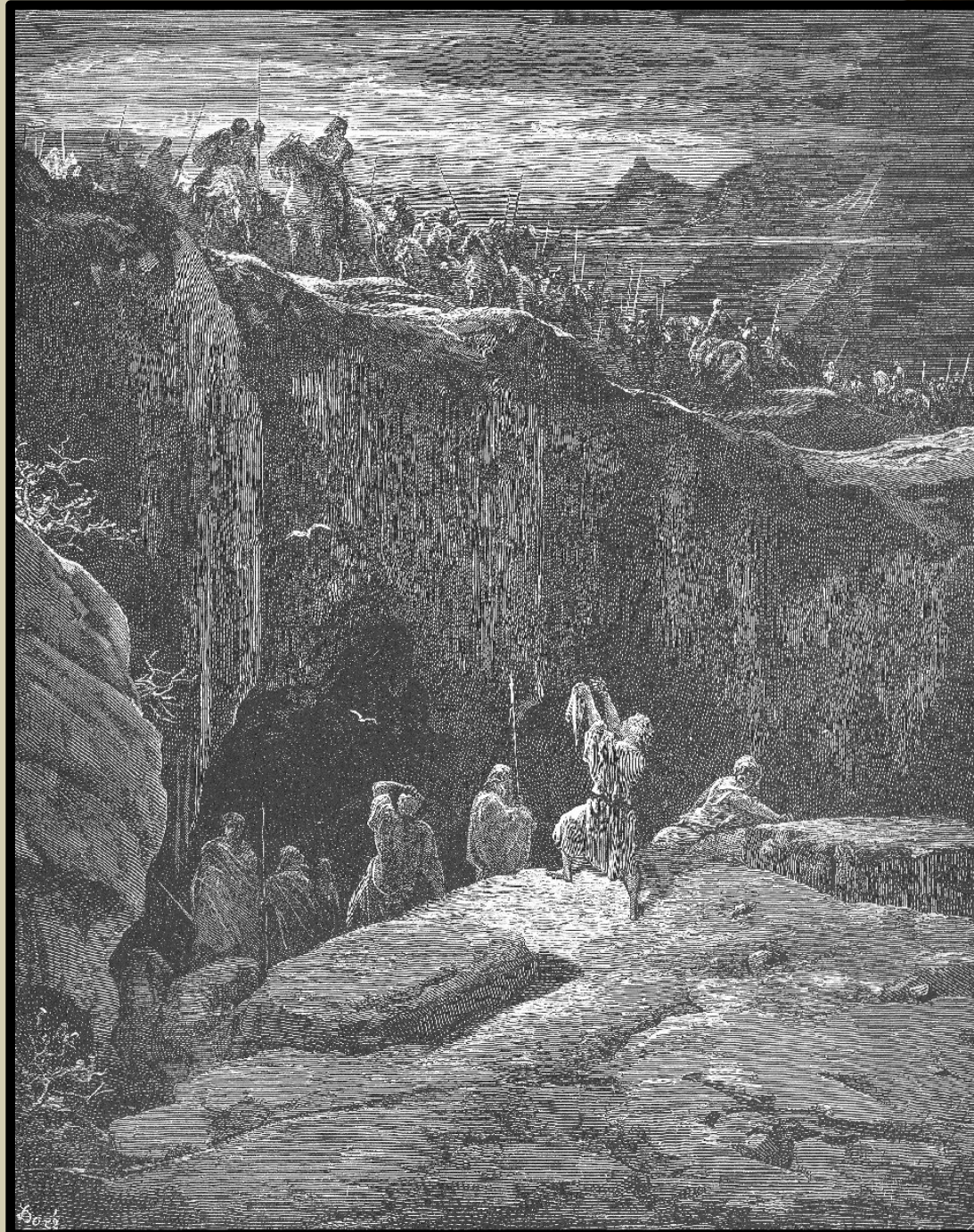
**At some distance
from David ...**

**Though this is drawing
is of a different scene**

**David Shows Saul How
He Spared His Life
Gustave Doré (1832-83)
1 Samuel 24**

**I see Shimei some
distance from David**

**NOT close
throwing stones**



O.T. scholars Keil & Delitzsch

see a hint in Psalm 141 for David fleeing his son Absalom

**Remember that the Psalter, all 150 Psalms
are divided into Five Books ...**

The last Two Books – Book 4 and Book 5 – mostly historical

Others see perhaps

David's pursuit by King Saul

Shimei curses King David
1860 woodcut for
"Die Bibel in Bildern,"
By Julius Schnorr von
Carolsfeld (1794–1872)

2 Samuel 16



Despite the crimes that happen
In our grand FBC Church ...
In our little hamlet of Woodville ...
In an unofficial *guesstimation*

GUESS 85% of those here today
have **NEVER** had their **LIFE THREATENED**

Not talking about **illness** or **accident**

Not about foolhardy **chance-taking**

Talking about someone **PURSUIING**
to take your life!



Furthermore ... in a reach ...

GUESS 99% of those here today
have **NEVER**

Been on the RUN for a MONTH
CHASED by a crew wanting to

Kill You!

Even in WAR that happens **RARELY**



That kind of *HUMAN HUNTING* ...
Is so rare ... the intrigue made

RAMBO

a household name in 1982 film *First Blood*
Vietnam Vet John Rambo hitchhikes home
Brutal sheriff harasses him ...
Rambo loses it and goes berserk

Movie plot made us pity **Rambo's psychotic episode**
voice clip was from Rambo II or III



What a wonderful life so many have

That is ... from *DAVID's perspective*

To have NEVER ... ever ... **been PURSUED**

I am GUESSING ... surely and truly

That 99% of us here today ...

Therefore and because of **America** the **Beautiful**

How very LOVELY it is to be

SAFE ... WARM ... SECURE ...

How very COZY it is to be

FREE ... PROTECTED ... and ... ALIVE!



King David ... could not even **DREAM of us**

David knew **NOTHING** of our lifestyle today

NOTHING ...

David lived 500 years before the Golden Age of Greece and the first democracy ... which did not take

Three millennia before the **GREAT** experiment jelled into a Revolution for Inalienable Rights – 1776

Over 200 more years before Civils Rights came full circle into the 1960s

And **TODAY** we still struggle

How can we RELATE to King David's flight

Pericles, Roman copy after a Greek original from ca. 430 BC.



Declaration of Independence, by John Trumbull

1-2 The Plea – LORD—Hurry to Help

in 1000 B.C. ... King David was hunted

**¹ LORD, I call on You. Hurry to help me.
Listen to my voice when I call on You.**

**² May my prayer be set before You as incense,
the raising of my hands as the evening offering.**

Civil War ... and David is hunted by his own SON—Absalom
Absalom ... means “Father of Peace”

Son to his wife Maachah, daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur

**2 Samuel 14:25: In all Israel there was not a man so highly
praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom.
From the top of his head to the sole of his foot
there was no blemish in him.**



1-2 The Plea – LORD—Hurry to Help

in 1000 B.C. ... King David was hunted

¹ LORD, I call on You. Hurry to help me.

Listen to my voice when I call on You.

We also need to look briefly as Psalm 141's ... ahhh

Fellow **Widow Makers** ...

Four other trees of **Deadly Despair** in the **Enchanted Forest**

Psalms **140, 141, 142, 143** –

ALL SHORT, all sung of dire PURSUIT

Let's CHART out some of the more salient points

some of the more salient points in dire PURSUIT



PSALMS OF PURSUIT

Psalms 140, 141, 142, 143 – all SHORT, all sung of dire PURSUIT

140

¹ Rescue me

² Evil plans

³ Vipers

⁴ Keep me safe

¹⁰ Throw in pits

141

¹ I call to you

¹ Hurry to help

² Guard lips

⁸ I seek refuge

⁸ Don't let
me DIE

142

¹ I cry aloud

¹ For mercy

³ Spirit weak

⁴ No one stands
with me

⁶ Rescue me

143

¹ Listen to my plea

³ Enemy pursued me

³ Crushing me to ground

⁴ My spirit weak
heart overcome

⁷ Answer quickly ...
My spirit fails

⁹ Rescue me ... I come
to you for protection

Look at **Psalm 139** *before ...* God's omnipotence

Psalm 144 *after ...* little on pursuit, more on confidence



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

If as O.T. scholars Keil & Delitzsch see a hint

David is fleeing from Absalom or another ...

Or from whoever, King Saul or the naysayers ...

Maybe 141 reflected on **MANY times David was hunted**

Begging for help ... Then David says ...

**³ LORD, set up a guard for my mouth;
keep watch at the door of my lips.**

It is NOT the first time David asks such for his MOUTH

In another Psalm of David, 39:2

**I was speechless and quiet; I kept silent,
even from speaking good, and my pain intensified.**



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

In still another Psalm of David, 34:13

**Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from deceitful speech.**

Oh, we have much about the tongue in N.T., too

Begging for help ... Then David says in Psalm 141

**³ LORD, set up a guard for my mouth;
keep watch at the door of my lips.**

O.T. scholars Keil & Delitzsch OPENED this for me:

**David, the betrayed one, requires caution in speaking;
and the consciousness of having sinned ... against God ...
stood in the way of any outspoken self-vindication.**



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Of course Spurgeon* has a wise word, too,

David feels that with all his own watchfulness
he may be surprised into sin,

and so he begs the Lord himself to keep him.

When Jehovah sets the watch the city is well guarded....

In times of persecution by ungodly men we are peculiarly liable
to speak hastily, or evasively, and therefore we should be
specially anxious to be preserved....

How condescending is the Lord!

We are ennobled by being door keepers for him,
and yet he deigns to be a door keeper for us.



* *Treasury of David*, Psalm 141, <http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* *continues*

Incline not my heart to any evil thing.

It is equivalent to the petition,

"Lead us not into temptation."...

The Psalmist is here careful of his heart.

He who holds the heart is lord of the man:

but if the tongue and the heart are under God's care

ALL IS SAFE.



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

**With a tongue guarded, David asks YHWH
asks YHWH a unique protection**

**⁴ Do not let my heart turn to any evil thing
or wickedly perform reckless acts
with men who commit sin.**

Do not let me feast on their delicacies.

Oppressed ... on the run ... NOT A CRIMINAL

Not a criminal ... but THE anointed KING

Sweet Psalmist of Israel with a checkered past

In FOUR psalms ... he SANG about his PURSUERS



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Interestingly, vv. 5-7 haven't been preserved well
i.e., the Hebrew of vv. 5-7 is not CLEAR or
consistent making a clear translation difficult

**⁵ Let the righteous one strike me;
it is an act of faithful love; let him rebuke me;
it is oil for my head; let me not refuse it.**

**Even now my prayer is against the
evil acts of the wicked.**

Whhhhaatt? ... Did I hear that right?

Let the “righteous one strike me”?

What an odd turn that is ...

NO WONDER the experts have trouble.



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* weighs in on v. 5 eloquently

He prefers the bitters of gracious company
to the dainties of the ungodly.

He would rather be smitten by the righteous
than feasted by the wicked....

When the ungodly smile upon us their flattery is cruel;
when the righteous smite us their faithfulness is kind.

Sometimes godly men rap hard;
they do not merely hint at evil, but hammer at it

Fools resent reproof; wise men endeavour to profit by it.



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* *continues*

Oil breaks no heads,
and rebuke does no man any harm ...

reproof when fitly taken sweeten and renew the heart.

Many a man has had his head broken at
the feasts of the wicked,

but none at the table of a true hearted reprover.

The oil of flattery is not excellent ... head breaking and
heart breaking attend the anointings of the riotous ...

Gracious men never grow wrathful with candid friends
so as to harbour an ill feeling against them



* TOD: *Treasury of David*, Psalm 141, <http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Once again, the Hebrew of vv. 5-7 is not CLEAR
and hard to make a clear translation difficult

The latter part of v. 5 is hard to grapple with

**Even now my prayer is against the
evil acts of the wicked.**

PRAYER against the wicked ... that is easy!

But we are NOT sure that's an accurate interpretation

Spurgeon* goes after the *PRAYER* itself so neatly:

**Set a bird free from a cage, and it will sing you
its thanks as it speeds forth into the air ...**



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* continues on prayer for “others”

I say it is a natural instinct of the new-born believer to begin to intercede for others,

and this instinct continues with him throughout life.

It is one of the things that he must do,

it is a pleasure to him to do it,

it would be impossible for him utterly to cease from it,

for the indwelling Spirit in his bosom maketh intercession

for the saints according to the will of God.

And, brethren, as it is an instinct of the heaven born nature,

so it is a law of the elect household.



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

After the prayer against evil deeds,
Goes on in these hard-to-translate vv. 5-7

⁶ When their rulers will be
thrown off the sides of a cliff,
the people will listen to my words,
for they are pleasing.

⁷ As when one plows and breaks up the soil,
turning up rocks,
so our bones have been scattered
at the mouth of Sheol.

vv. 6-7 are similar in most translations

Yet, experts agree: **meaning is not clear or easy.**



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

In Chronicles 25:12, King Amaziah of Judah

Men of Judah captured another 10,000 alive
and took them to the top of a rock and
threw them down from the top of the rock,
and they were all dashed to pieces.

Amaziah reigned over Judah 796–792 B.C.

His son Uzziah reigned with dad for a long time,
then reigned himself for 52 more years – a good King

Uzziah did the priests' work and God gave him leprosy

Uzziah had leprosy the rest of his life ...

Rough ... very rough back then ...



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

What is striking is the word “pleasing”

⁶ When their rulers ... off the sides of a cliff,
the people will listen to my words,
for they are PLEASING.

What does that mean?

Off the cliff ... hear words ... and they are *PLEASED*?

PLEASED perhaps at the “orders” ... who knows?

And the next is as HARD to connect:

⁷ As when one plows and breaks up the soil,
turning up rocks, so our bones have been scattered
at the *mouth of Sheol*.

KJV – cleave
WOOD upon
the ground

The experts agree: *meaning is not clear or easy.*



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Sheol is place of unrighteous dead

Sheol appears 66x in O.T. – all about Death

KJV translated **Sheol** as “Hell” or “Grave” or “Pit”

NIV often translates **Sheol** as “Death”

Sheol is unseen world ...

translated in Greek O.T., LXX, as **Hades**

Job 26:6, **Sheol is naked before God, and Abaddon has no covering.**

Psalms 6:5, **For there is no remembrance of You in death;
who can thank You in Sheol?**

Sheol is place of **pain & distress** in Ps. 116:3;

weakness in Isa. 14:10; **helplessness** in Ps. 88:4;

hopelessness in Isa. 38:10; **destruction** Isa. 38:17



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Yet, in the context of Psalm 141

What does verse 7 ... MEAN?

⁷ As when one plows and breaks up the soil,
turning up rocks, so our bones have been
scattered at the mouth of **Sheol**.

Keil and Delitsch say:

BONES do not lie there in order that they may
continue lying, but that they may rise up anew,
as the seed that is sown sprouts up out of the upturned
earth.... We here discern the hope of a resurrection....
As in the figure of a husbandman.

We all DO DIE ... our BONES dry out to DUST



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

**KJV ⁷ Our bones are scattered at the
grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and
cleaveth **WOOD** upon the earth.**

Spurgeon* sees something else ... precious even

**There seemed to be no life, no cohesion, no form,
order, or headship among the godly party in Israel ...**

**David himself was like one of these dried bones ...
no vitality or union among the holy seed;
but their cause lay at death's door.**

As when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.
They were like wood divided and thrown apart:



* *Treasury of David*, Psalm 141, <http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* continues

not as one piece of timber ...

but all cut to pieces, and thoroughly divided.

Leaving out the word "wood", which is supplied by the translators, the figure relates to cleaving upon the earth, which probably means ploughing

But may signify any other form of chopping and splitting, such as felling a forest, tearing up bushes, or otherwise causing confusion and division.

How often have good men thought ... of God!



* *Treasury of David*, Psalm 141, <http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* continues

Wherever they have looked, death, division,
and destruction have stared them in the face.

Cut and cloven, hopelessly sundered! ...

Split up and split for the fire!

Such the cause of God and truth has seemed to be.

"Upon the earth" ... field of the church was ploughed,
burrowed, and scarified ... a wood chopper's yard,
where everything was doomed to be broken up.

We have seen churches in such a state....



3-7 The Requests – LORD—Watch Door of My Lips

Spurgeon* continues

**What a mercy that there is always a place
above the earth to which we can look!**

**There lives One who will give a resurrection to his
cause, and a reunion to his divided people.**

He will bring up the dead bones from the grave's mouth

Divided House against itself cannot stand ...

We cannot serve Two Masters ...

Do NOT let me die! ... If I live ... If I LIVE ...

If I survive ... If I make it out of this Satan Abyss ...



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

However we may die ... David looks above

⁸ But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

I seek refuge in You; DO NOT LET ME DIE.

Don't think we see the last sentence anywhere else

That has to say something to you and me

**⁹ Protect me from the trap they have set for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.**

**¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass safely by.**

In those last two verse, there is the HEART of this

Prayerful, begging Psalm in the midst of PURSUIT



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

I am not sure ... *I'm very INSECURE here*

I do not think we should see a HAPPY TUNE

⁸ But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

I seek refuge in You; DO NOT LET ME DIE.

Don't think we see the last sentence anywhere else

KJV, “Leave not my soul destitute.”

NIV, “Do not give me over to death.”

HCSB, “Do not let me DIE.”

That has to say something to you and me

BUT WHAT? None of us have been PURSUED



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

I'm very INSECURE here

I do not see a HAPPY TUNE

⁸ But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

I seek refuge in You; **DO NOT LET ME DIE.**

NONE of us have been tracked ... hunted like a deer

Oh, some of us have faced DEATH ...

Though not HUNTED ... many of us have faced death

Some of us ... in our family or our person ... ILLNESS

Facing Surgery – Oh, God, **“DO NOT LET ME DIE!”**

Facing our mortality ... the possibility of our END

BEFORE our work on earth is done!



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

Think and FEEL this ...

Look at this verse CLOSELY ...

⁸ But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

I seek refuge in You; DO NOT LET ME DIE.

David did NOT say, “I look to you.”

It is in the third person ... almost as though

“his eyes” looked, but David’s HEART was FAINT

David SOUGHT refuge ... *but afraid to DIE*

Oh, what dire words are these?

Very similar in tone and temper to any of us

Who may have faced our Mortal End



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

David was not physically ill ... *he was hunted*

**⁹ Protect me from the trap they have set for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.**

**¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass safely by.**

We look back ... God answered David's prayer

This was a Vesper Service prayer ... used in the
Evening Services at the close of the day

David wrote it **AFTER** the Rescue ... **AFTER** being Saved.

I dare say ... if you and I have **FACED** death
it is a good and healthy exercise to ...



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

It is good for our soul to REMEMBER those days
Good for our soul to REMEMBER our days of FEAR
Good for us to RECALL the days of HAUNTING
GOOD for us to NEVER FORGET the

Valley of the Shadow of Death

**⁹ Protect me from the trap they have set for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.**

**¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass safely by.**

And in that TRAP ... to hope for a redemptive end.

Even WALK by those evil ones fallen into their own trap.



8-10 The Promise – LORD—Protect Me from the Trap

If this Psalm 141 be a masterpiece of help ...

Even though we may never be in the dire straights
as David for being innocent and *hunted like deer*

It may STILL give us comfort ... like empathy

Still give us strength ... as one VOICING our very heart

Think with me back a time of YOUR FEAR ...

Back a time when you FELT your MORTAL LIFE was threatened

If you be threatened by the Surgeon's knife ... or robber's gun

See if these words ... do not now give comfort ...

See if these words ... do not resonate as brother *SOLDIER*



Psalm 141 – a Prayer for Survival

- ¹ Lord, I call on You; hurry to help me.
Listen to my voice when I call on You.
- ² May my prayer be set before You as incense,
the raising of my hands as the evening offering.
- ³ Lord, set up a guard for my mouth;
keep watch at the door of my lips.
- ⁴ Do not let my heart turn to any evil thing
or wickedly perform reckless acts with men who commit sin.
Do not let me feast on their delicacies.
- ⁵ Let the righteous one strike me—it is an act of faithful love;
Let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let me not refuse it.



Psalm 141 – a Prayer for Survival

Even now my prayer is against the
evil acts of the wicked.

⁶ When their rulers will be thrown off
the sides of a cliff, the people will
listen to my words, for they are pleasing.

⁷ As when one plows and breaks up the soil,
turning up rocks, so our bones have been
scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

⁸ But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

I seek refuge in You;

DO NOT LET ME DIE.



Psalm 141 – a Prayer for Survival

⁹ Protect me from the trap they have set for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.

¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I pass safely by.



May we, too ... *please ... dear GOD*

On the day we face our mortality ... no matter how dreadful



May we, too ...

Safely Pass By



FBC Woodville
Sunday School Class
Michael G. Maness
see
PreciousHeart.net/SS

