



Lent reflection for April 1, 2025

Click [here](#) to listen to the podcast!

Psalm 61: 1-8

Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.
From the end of the earth I call to you,
when my heart is faint.
Lead me to the rock
that is higher than I;
for you are my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.

Let me abide in your tent for ever,
find refuge under the shelter of your wings. *Selah*
For you, O God, have heard my vows;
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.
Prolong the life of the king;
may his years endure to all generations!
May he be enthroned for ever before God;
appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!

So I will always sing praises to your name,
as I pay my vows day after day.

Today's reflection if from Stacy Mosher:

King David wrote this psalm after fleeing for his life during an attempted coup by his son, Absalom.

David had a complicated relationship with Absalom, as described in 2 Samuel 13-14. Absalom had gone into exile for a time, but more recently he'd reconciled with David through the intervention of Joab, the commander-in-chief of David's army. Joab was a courageous and mighty warrior, and for the most part he was deeply loyal to King David, who was his uncle. But he was also an arrogant schemer who

ensured that the king's orders aligned with his personal interests – and if they didn't, he'd find a way around them.

Absalom was not satisfied with being restored to princely status. He was a handsome man, renowned for his splendid head of hair, and he knew what to say to get people on his side, so he soon won over enough of the men of Israel to launch a rebellion against his father.

When David learned about Absalom's plans, he fled from Jerusalem and crossed the Jordan River into the wilderness. We can only imagine David's feelings of despair. His own people had turned against him, led by his beloved son, and he had to rely on the support of foreigners.

It is at this point, commentators believe, that David wrote Psalm 61, praying for God to lift him to the place of safety that he could not reach on his own, and for God to preserve his life and fulfil the prophesy that his descendants would rule for generations. As commander Joab led David's forces to victory against the insurrection, Absalom's flowing hair became trapped in the branches of an oak tree, and his mule ran off, leaving him dangling there. David had instructed his generals to deal gently with Absalom, but Joab decided to solve the problem once and for all, and he thrust three javelins into Absalom's heart.

That was the end of Absalom, but also of Joab, because David no longer trusted him. Later, in his old age, David chose his son Solomon to succeed him as king, but Joab gave his allegiance to David's older son, Adonijah. On David's dying instructions, Solomon had Joab put to death, and he was buried in the wilderness. The Bible doesn't record either Absalom or Joab praying and seeking God's guidance, but David's prayer became a beautiful psalm that was passed down through the generations. He prayed not just for a place of physical safety, but a spiritual refuge where he could feel secure in the love of God. The only way to reach that place is by God lifting us there through faith.

We may not always know the best way to deal with the challenges we face – should we be as cunning as serpents or as gentle as doves? Jesus told his followers to be both. Ultimately, our only true safety is in the refuge of faith.



Stacy Mosher is a native of Michigan who came to NYC in 1999 after 17 years in Hong Kong. She is a translator of Chinese to English, living with her husband, Mou-wah Yim, and cat, Jazzy, in Sunset Park. Their 23-year-old child, Dao-an, currently lives in Canada.