

Psalm 140 is another Psalm of David. It is another Psalm that recognizes the sovereignty of God. Years ago there was a theological movement that was designed to undermine and downplay the sovereignty of God. But when you go through this book of Psalms you cannot help but see David had a high and holy view of the sovereignty of God. In fact, that was what enabled him to cope with all kinds of things in life.

Psalm 140 is a Davidic psalm and Davidic prayer. When we pray we do assume the sovereignty of God and if we don't we aren't going to see God do much of anything because we won't have the faith that He is sovereign enough to do anything.

It is obvious that this prayer is based on David's knowledge of God. Now before David prayed there were four prerequisites that he met that would enable him to pray:

Prerequisite #1 - David knew that God does maintain the cause of a faithful servant who is afflicted. **140:12a**

Prerequisite #2 - David knew that God would bring about justice for one poor and humble. **140:12b**

Prerequisite #3 - David knew that righteous people always end up giving thanks to God. **140:13a**

Prerequisite #4 - David knew that upright people always live in fellowship with God. **140:13b**

David knew these things about God and he assumes that he is in a good position to pray because he met those prerequisites and he knew God was sovereign and could answer his prayer.

Now the point of the Psalm is this:

DAVID KNEW THAT GOD WAS TOTALLY SOVEREIGN AND HE ALSO KNEW THAT FAITHFUL PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO PRAY FOR GOD TO USE HIS SOVEREIGNTY TO DELIVER AND DESTROY ENEMIES AND TO PRESERVE HIS OWN.

Now this Psalm breaks down into three Selah sections. It has been a while but when you come to the word "selah," it means the writer is stressing that we need to pause and give careful and deliberate thought to what was just said.

SELAH SECTION #1 – David asks God to come to rescue him and preserve him. **140:1-3**

Now it is obvious that this prayer arises from a real situation that featured real people who were evil. Now we may notice from **verse 1** that this prayer is made concerning people who are "evil" and "violent." These were the kind of enemies David had to face in life. He was not dealing with people who loved God and His Word; he was dealing with evil and violent people.

There are three qualities brought out about them:

Quality #1 - They devise evil things in their hearts. **140:2a**

Notice the plural “evil things.” They don’t just do this once. They do this again and again. This is their pattern of life and this is their problem of heart. What is really going on in the inside is that they are not pursuing righteousness, they are devising evil.

Quality #2 - They continually stir up wars. **140:2b**

There are people who are always stirring up trouble and always causing problems. There are contentious people who are not right with God who are involved in stirring up warfare. Make no mistake about this—they are evil.

Quality #3 - They use their speech as poison. **140:3**

Observe the serpent analogy here. This is not coincidental. This kind of speech is Serpentine and Satanic.

People who are evil have no control of their mouths. They are vicious vipers. Their tongues inflict poisonous venom into one right with God. The serpent illustration may refer to the rapid movement of the tongue. A serpent flicks the tongue at a rapid rate and so do evil people. They wound with their words and they try to kill one’s reputation.

When godly people have something to say they will say it to your face. When evil people have something to say they will do it behind your back.

There are three weapons in this context of one who is evil:

- 1) One who is evil has a major heart problem—what he is internally.
- 2) One who is evil has a major mouth and speech problem—what he says verbally.
- 3) One who is evil has a hand problem (**v. 4**)—what he does externally.

David knew people like this. He was praying that God would take notice of these evil people and intervene in his behalf.

The more one is controlled by the Holy Spirit, the more one will control their speech.

SELAH SECTION #2 – David asks God to guard him and preserve him. **140:4-5**

David truly believed in the sovereignty of God. He did not know who all his enemies were and he did not know where all of his enemies were so he asks God to keep track of them. How can you possibly know what enemies are plotting and planning? How can you know what people are saying behind your back? You can’t know, but God does know.

Now David's enemies were wicked and violent.

Now there are two descriptions of how evil enemies and people operate:

Description #1 - Evil enemies have purposed to make one who is faithful stumble. **140:4**

The goal of an enemy is to trip you up. An enemy does not want you succeeding or going forward. Evil people will come at you and they are resolute in trying to cause you to stumble. They are looking for any way to do it.

Description #2 - Evil enemies are proud and they are out to ensnare one faithful. **140:5**

Enemies are not humble, faithful people of God; they are proud and arrogant. There are three ways they try to ensnare you:

(Way #1) - They try to ensnare you in hidden traps. **140:5a**

(Way #2) - They try to ensnare you in spread nets. **140:5b**

(Way #3) - They try to ensnare you by setting snares. **140:5c**

Wicked, evil enemies will actually plan and plot how they can get you. They are real people who get together with a goal of attacking and ruining you. They talk it over and come up with a plan.

What David did was pray about them. He went to God who could spot them and he asked God to guard him and preserve him.

What was really behind these attacks was the fact that David was right with God and they weren't. David had not done one thing to deserve this. For example, Saul hated David and this was not some personality conflict. God was with David and not with Saul and as a result he was consumed by jealousy and went against him.

SELAH SECTION #3 – David asks God to listen to him. **140:6-8**

One who is right with God has a real safety weapon when under attack and that weapon is prayer. The truth is those who are not right with God don't spend a lot of time talking to God; they are too busy talking to other people. Faithful people of God can know this, their adversaries rarely pray and even if they do, they cannot move God to do anything.

There are two observations we want to make about this prayer David makes.

Observation #1 - David's prayer is based on his view of who God is to him personally. **140:6-7**

David knew God intimately and the description of that is seen here. He uses different names for God.

(View #1) - God is "my" God (Elohim). **140:6a**

(View #2) - The LORD (Jehovah) can listen to "my voice and supplications." **140:6b**

(View #3) - The Lord (Adonai) is David's strength. **140:7a**

(View #4) - God has always covered and protected David. **140:7b**

In every battle David ever fought, he had a realization that God's hand was on him and protecting him. He was confident of the presence and protection of God and his confidence was based on what he had seen God do in past times.

Observation #2 - David asks God to listen to him in view of what God could do potentially. **140:8**

David totally and completely believed in the sovereignty of God. He knew what God could potentially do:

(View #1) - God can potentially prevent the wicked from fulfilling their evil desires. **140:8a**

(View #2) - God can potentially prevent the wicked from promoting their evil devices. **140:8b**

The end of **verse 8** is fascinating. One key motive for evil people is self-exaltation. They are not interested in what God's Word says; they are interested in glorifying themselves.

FINAL SECTION #4 – David asks God to destroy the wicked. **140:9-11**

Charles Spurgeon said if you never think or pray this way about an enemy:

- 1) Chances are you are in sneaking agreement with them.
- 2) Chances are you are deficient in your sense of right and wrong.

There are five requests David makes:

Request #1 - David asks God to cover them in their own verbal mischief. **140:9**

Request #2 - David asks God to cause burning coals to fall on them. **140:10a**

This would be a reference to burning coals of judgment. Not coals of purification, not conviction, not consecration, but destruction.

Request #3 - David asks God to cast them into burning fire forever. **140:10b**

Request #4 - David asks God to never permit a slanderer to be established. **140:11a**

Request #5 - David asks God to quickly allow evil to hunt them down. **140:11b**

One might ask how could David pray such a prayer? He knew God and he knew of the justice of God and justice demands remuneration for evil.

In **verses 12-13**, David knew that God would maintain his cause because of the justice of God. When righteous people are afflicted, they have a right to go to God and appeal to His justice. What kind of parent would you be if you heard your child or grandchild cry for help against an evil brute and you just stood there and watched the brute destroy your child or grandchild?

Well, God is a personal God and when someone does something against his faithful people, and His people cry out to Him, He will not sit idly by.