

A Mitkam of David.

¹ Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

² I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you."

³ As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,
in whom is all my delight.

⁴ The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names on my lips.

⁵ The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

⁶ The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

⁷ I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

⁸ I have set the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure.

¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
or let your holy one see corruption.

¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

I. Introduction

A. Recap from last week:

1. What are the psalms?
 - a. Poems for nation & individual
 - b. “Israel’s hymnbook”? Yes and no. Don’t push too hard.
2. Structure of psalter:
 - a. 5 books (reflecting Pentateuch)
 - b. Movement from lament → praise in both individual psalms and Psalter as whole
 - c. Try to look at psalms in context of whole book
3. Christ in Psalms
 - a. Representative singer: as a human being, as an Israelite, Jesus sang these songs
 - b. Supreme singer: these psalms are true of Jesus to a degree that they aren’t of us
 - c. Returning singer: Jesus is king of the earth, who will return one day to reign “fully”

B. Questions from last two weeks?

C. Going to pick apart the butterfly

1. No apologies! Will help you understand and love Ps 16 and the Lord better.
2. But important not *only* to do this. Make sure also to go back and re-read psalm as a whole, and let it speak to you as a whole poem.

D. In this class, often focusing more heavily on *psalms in context of Psalter* and *Christ in psalms*, since we often don’t have much trouble with immediate application to ourselves.

Read Ps 16

II. Context & Occasion

A. Broader Context (Psalter)

1. Book 1: Confrontation (Psalms 1-41)
 - a. 37 of the 41 psalms = Davidic (“of David”)
 - i. David is king of God’s people, God’s “anointed one”
 - ii. Why is this important?
 - 1) The king is representative of God – he represents God’s rule. God establishes his kingdom through the king. To attack the king is to attack God, b/c of the covenant God made w/David.
 - 2) The king is representative of the people – “As it fares with the messianic king, so it fares with each member of the messianic kingdom” (O. Palmer Robertson, *Flow of the Psalms*, 63).
 - b. 30 of the 41 psalms make specific references to the enemies of the psalmist. Of the remaining eleven, 3 imply the presence of enemies, and 5 refer to death (which is also an enemy of God’s people!). Our psalm today—Ps 16—is one that refers to death.

2. So, we see a sort of establishment of God's kingdom (Israel) by God's anointed one (David) in the face of his enemies. Looking ahead to Christ, God isn't content to let Satan, sin, death have their way. He fights against them (think also of God's curse to the serpent in Genesis 3, where he said, "I will put enmity between your seed and the seed of the woman")—hence, the label *confrontation* for Book 1.

B. Narrower Context (Psalms 15 & 17)

1. Psalms 15 & 16

- a. 15:1, "O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill?"
 - i. Psalm 15 asks, "What kind of man may be with God, enjoy his presence?" But Ps 16 also deals with pleasure in the presence of God.
 - ii. If the man of Ps 15 enjoys the benefits listed in Ps 15, then he must also enjoy the benefits listed in Ps 16. And only the one who is like the man of Ps 15 may enjoy the benefits listed in Ps 16. The two psalms go hand-in-hand. If you have one you have both, and if you don't have one you can't have either.
- b. Description of righteous man
 - i. The righteous man in both psalms has nothing to do with the wicked (cf. Ps 1!).
 - 15:4, "in whose eyes a vile person is despised"
 - 16:4, "The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips."
 - ii. The righteous man in both psalms loves God's people
 - 15:4, "but who honors those who fear the LORD"
 - 16:3, "As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."
- c. Benefits of the righteous man—never shaken
 - 15:5, "He who does these things shall never be moved"
 - 16:8, "Because he [the LORD] is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."
 - i. Similarity: same words (shall not be shaken/moved)
 - ii. Difference: Ps 15 focuses on righteousness of righteous man; Ps 16 focuses on presence of the LORD.

2. Psalms 17 & 16

- i. The presence of the LORD
 - 17:2, "From your presence let my vindication come"
 - 16:11, "In your presence there is fullness of joy"
- ii. Avoiding the wicked
 - 17:4-5, "I have avoided the ways of the violent. My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped"
 - 16:4, "I will not take their names on my lips"
- iii. Seeking refuge; the right hand
 - 17:7, "O Savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries **at your right hand**"
 - 16:1, "Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge"
 - 16:8, "Because [the LORD] is **at my right hand**, I shall not be shaken"; 16:11, "**at your right hand** are pleasures forevermore."
- iv. The portion of the wicked and the portion of the righteous
 - 17:4, "Deliver me ... from men of the world whose portion is in this life"
 - 16:5, "The LORD is my chosen portion"

- v. Resurrection life, being in the presence of the LORD
 - 17:15, “As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness”
 - 16:10-11, resurrection life, being in presence of the LORD

C. Occasion—illness & recovery? Or looking ahead to death & resurrection? Not sure.

III. Content

A. Overview: preservation & pleasure in the LORD

1. Preservation in both body & soul in the LORD: David looks to God for safe-keeping
 - v1, “Preserve me, O God”
 - v8, “Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken”
 - v10, “You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption”
2. Pleasure in the LORD
 - v2, “I have no good apart from you”
 - v5-6, inheritance metaphor—the LORD is his portion
 - v11, notice emphasis on joys/pleasures *in the presence of God*

B. Verse-by-verse

- v1
 - Sets up the “problem”: David needs to be preserved
 - “Preserve” is the same word used repeatedly in Ps 121, “keep”
- v2
 - a. LORD vs Lord: LORD = Yahweh; Lord = master/ruler
 - b. “I have no good apart from you”—what a beautiful confession! It is good to confess this to ourselves and to God regularly.
- v3
 - a. Love for LORD must come with love for saints (cf. 1 Jn 4:20)
 - b. This verse helps us understand what David does and doesn’t mean when he says “I have no good apart from you.”
- v4
 - a. Common theme in the psalms: love for God’s people, hate for God’s enemies
 - b. “The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply”—same words used in Genesis 3:16, when God told Eve, “I will surely multiply your pain” Ominous words!
- vv 5-6: metaphor of land inheritance
 - a. Cf. book of Joshua, where Canaan is divvied up among tribes. The tribe of Levi didn’t receive a physical inheritance, because the LORD told him, “I am your inheritance” (Num 18:20). We are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:5), a kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6)!
 - b. “cup”—also a metaphor of what is allotted to somebody (cf. Ps 23)
 - c. “You are richer than you know.”
- vv 7-8
 - a. How does the LORD counsel David? *The torah*—God’s written word. Cf. Ps 1: the blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, but rather he delights in *the law of the LORD*.

- b. “In the night also my heart instructs me”—cf. Ps 1: “on his law he meditates day and night”; Ps. 119:11, “I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you”
 - c. “I have set the LORD always before me”—picture someone sitting at a table across from you. The LORD is the one who is always set before the eyes of David. The LORD is the one who always gives David counsel.
- vv 9-10
 - a. The answer to David’s plight is the LORD. He will be preserved because he took refuge in God (v1). He will not be shaken because the LORD is at his right hand. His heart is glad, his whole being rejoices, his flesh dwells secure because the LORD. So many spatial metaphors!
 - b. Both soul *and* body are safe.
- v11
 - a. Path of life: this path begins in this life and continues right into the next life.
 - b. Notice that it is the presence of the LORD himself that gives joy and pleasure—in *your presence* there is fullness of joy; *at your right hand* are pleasures forevermore.
 - c. Compare with verse 1—we have no good apart from God, and in the presence of God is *all goodness, fullness of joy, pleasures forevermore*.
 - d. This is true in this life, but ultimately true of resurrection life, when we will be in the full presence of God in the new heavens and earth.

IV. Christ

A. Representative singer

1. These psalms were written and compiled for Israel to sing. Jesus is the true Israel, the true Son of God, and he sang Ps 16 when he walked here on earth.
2. The words of Ps 16 were on the lips of Jesus. We often imagine what David’s situation was like when he wrote a psalm. Imagine when Jesus would have sang Ps 16.
3. v1, “Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.” Jesus prayed to the Father for him to preserve his life. He took refuge in the Father. When he hung on the cross and stared death in the face, even then he hid himself in God, “Into your hands I commit my spirit” (Lk 23:46).
4. v3, Jesus took delight in God’s people
 - a. Jn 17:20-26, Jesus prayed for those who will believe in him
 - b. Jn 10, Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for, knows, and gives his life for his sheep
5. v5-6
 - a. There are many passages where Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit (at his conception, maturation, baptism, transfiguration, etc.)
 - b. Jn 17, Jesus is to return to the Father to have glory that he had before
 - c. Jn 10, “I and the Father are one.”
 - d. Jn 5:20, “The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.”
 - e. Acts 2:33, Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God and received from Father promise of Holy Spirit

B. Supreme Singer

1. This psalm is true of Jesus in way that it isn’t and can’t be true of us apart from him

2. v10—Jesus’ resurrection. Quoted in Acts 2, where Peter says, “David is dead and buried! In Ps 16 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of Christ.”

3. v11—Jesus’ ascension. Acts 2, Peter goes on to say, “David did not ascend to the heavens. Jesus, being exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit ...” So, we read all throughout NT of Jesus ascending into heaven and sitting down at Father’s right hand (Acts 7:55-56; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22; Rev 3:21; Matt 22:44). Jesus sits in heaven itself, where God himself dwells, and there he is in face-to-face fellowship with God. He has fullness of life, fullness of joy, pleasures forevermore in a very real and full sense.

C. Returning Singer

1. Jesus is the returning singer who, when he returns, will raise us up to be with the Lord

2. 1 Cor 15:20-26, 49, “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ... Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven [Christ].”

3. 1 Thess 4:16-17, “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

D. Christ and the broader context of Book 1: Christ is God’s anointed one (Messiah) who confronts the enemies of God—of which the final enemy is death itself. Jesus defeats death, both physical (“my flesh dwells secure ... you will not let your holy one see corruption”) and spiritual (he brings us into the presence of God).

“Jesus Lives, and So Shall I” (Christian F. Gellert)

Jesus lives, and death is now
But my entrance into glory.
Courage, then, my soul, for thou
Hast a crown of life before thee;
Thou shalt find thy hopes were just:
Jesus is the Christian’s trust.

V. Application to Us

A. See how this is true of us only because it’s true of Christ?

B. Christ’s pattern:

Life of trust in God in face of death → death/burial → resurrection → ascension → sits down at right of God

1. Our pattern follows Christ's. Where he goes, we go.

C. "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" (Charles Wesley)

Soar we now where Christ has led,
Foll'wing our exalted Head;
Made like him, like him we rise;
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

D. Eph 2:6, "[God] raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"—we are *already* raised up and seated in heaven with Jesus!

E. Col 3:1-4, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." Singing Ps 16 is a fantastic way to set our minds on things above.

- We hide ourselves with Christ in God ("we take refuge in God")
- We declare "Christ is Lord!" ("you are my Lord")
- We remind ourselves that in X we = blessed w/every spiritual blessing ("no good apart from you")