

# PSALM 16: Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha, the “Garden Tomb,” and the Glory

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## Introduction

On occasions I teach a class on Christian Apologetics. The first assignment I give the students is to read through the entire Book of Acts and note each encounter that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have with the unsaved in the book. The students are to make a list with: (1) the Christians who are doing the witnessing, (2) the unbelievers brought to witness, (3) what the apologetics are that the believers are using, (4) and what the response of the unsaved is to their message.

The two main apologetics used by the Early Church in the Book of Acts are: first, the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; and second, the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Psalm 16 is quoted on two occasions in the Book of Acts in order to demonstrate that the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus was the fulfillment of this psalm, predicted almost a thousand years before it happened. The first time the psalm is quoted is in Acts 2, Peter’s sermon on the day of *Shavuot* (Pentecost). The second time it is quoted is in Acts 13 when the Apostle Paul preached in the synagogue of Psidia Antioch on his first missionary journey.

## Superscription

The superscription of Psalm 16 reads, *michtam le David*. The verbal root for the word “michtam” is to inscribe, to engrave, or write, like on a stele. One gets the impression of an inscription on a victory stele. A stele is an upright stone slab or pillar that has an inscription or some kind of design on it that serves as a monument for propaganda purposes or for veneration.

It is always an archaeologist dream to find written inscriptions. I was very blessed to have been the area supervisor of Burial Cave 25 at Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem where the two oldest Biblical texts were discovered in 1979 (Barkay 2009: 35; Franz 2005). When these silver amulets were discovered, they were rolled up and corroded. It took almost seven years for them to be cleaned, unrolled, and finally deciphered and their significance to be understood.

Inscriptions are how the ancients in the past can communicate with us in the present. We can learn much from these inscriptions. Sometimes they are historical inscriptions, other times religious in nature, still other times they are legal documents or economic texts.

In July 1993, a fragment of a large monumental inscription was discovered at Tel Dan in the northern part of Israel. Hazael, king of Damascus, originally placed this inscription on a stele in front of the city gate as a piece of propaganda in order to boast of his great accomplishment of killing seventy kings, including King Jehoram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah. This important inscription also mentioned “Beit David”, the House of David. This is the first time King

David's name was found outside the Biblical text (Biran and Naveh 1995:18). After the city overthrew their Aramean overlords, the Danites smashed the stele and used the pieces as paving stones for the piazza outside the city gate (Biran and Naveh 1993).

The superscriptions in the book of Psalms hints that some psalms were engraved on stones so everybody could read their content (Psalms 16; 56; 57; 58; 59; 60). I believe Psalm 16 was one such psalm as suggested by the word "michtam," or engraving. Perhaps David took some of the white "Meleke" (royal) limestone that Jerusalem was famous for and erected a stele in front of the tent that housed the Ark of the Covenant. People would gather around and read this psalm and ponder its content.

They would have read ....

*A Michtam of David*

*Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.  
O my soul, you have said to the Lord, "You are my Lord,  
My goodness is nothing apart from You."  
As for the saints who are on the earth,  
"They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."  
Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god;  
Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer.  
Nor take up their names on my lips.  
O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup;  
You maintain my lot.  
The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;  
Yes, I have a good inheritance.*

*I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel;  
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.  
I have set the LORD always before me;  
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.*

*Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;*

*My flesh also will rest in hope.  
For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,  
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

*You will show me the path of life;  
In your presence is fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

The Apostle Peter gave a discourse in Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 2, during the feast of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) in AD 30, probably not to far from the

possible site where this stele was originally located. In the midst of his discourse he quotes this psalm and calls King David a prophet (Acts 2: 30).

The historical setting for the composition of this psalm is unknown. Perhaps the psalm was composed by David after God made a covenant with him in which He stated that a descendent of David, his “seed”, would sit on the throne of David forever (2 Sam. 7; 1 Chron. 17).

When David erected this stele, people would have read it, pondered it and wondered, “Who is this talking about? David composed it, but he is still alive!”

About a millennium later, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, had a Passover Seder with His disciples. After the meal was over, they sang a hymn, and went out of the Upper Room. The hymn they would have sung was Psalm 118, the last of the Great Hallel Psalms. One of the last few lines that they would have sung was, “*The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it*” (118: 22-23).

He left the upper room of the mansion in the Upper City of Jerusalem with eleven of His disciples (Judas had already gone to betray Him). They headed for the Temple Mount because it was open for the pilgrims to pray during the Passover. The full moon shone in all its reflective glory in the crisp, cold air of the night, as they made their way to the Temple Mount. Inside the Temple enclosure, the Lord Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment, that they love one another. In the role of the High Priest, He also prayed for them, that they might be one as He is one with His Father (John 15-17, especially 15: 12 and 17: 20-23).

The Apostle John, in his gospel, tells us they went over the Brook Kidron to the Mount of Olives (18:1). He remembered that walk across the causeway from the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives (*Mishnah Parah* 3:6; Danby 1985: 700). On the slopes of the Mount of Olives they came to a cave, called Gethsemane in the synoptic gospels. The word Gethsemane is made up of two Hebrew words, *gath*, or press, usually used of an olive or wine press; and *shemenim*, a plural word for olive oils. Inside the cave was an olive press that was not in use during the spring season, so pilgrims could stay there in order to get out of the chilly night air (Taylor 1995).

In this cave, the Lord Jesus asked three of His disciples, Peter, James and John, to watch and pray as He went a little further and prayed Himself. He prayed three times, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me,” a reference to His impending death. Yet He also prayed three times, “Nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.”

Ah, now our eyes can focus more clearly on the events that the Prophet David engraved on the stele. The outline for this psalm would be:

- I. Verses 1-6, in Gethsemane, we see His trust
- II. Verses 7 and 8, up to Gabbatha, we see Him unmovable
- III. Verse 9a, at Golgotha, we see His joy
- IV. Verses 9b and 10, in the “Garden Tomb,” we see Him risen
- V. Verse 11, in the Glory, we see Him rejoicing!

The title for this psalm would be: “Psalm 16: Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha, the “Garden Tomb,” and the Glory.”

### **I. In Gethsemane, we see His trust. 16:1-6**

The New Testament does not directly state these six verses were fulfilled by the Lord Jesus. However, there could be an application to His experience in Gethsemane.

The Prophet David, speaking for the Messiah, begins this psalm with a prayer for preservation as He begins His Gethsemane experience: “*Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. O my soul, you have said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord, My goodness in nothing apart from You’*” (16:1-2).

After the Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John apart from the rest of the disciples, He instructed them to sit in one place while He went further away to pray. He became sorrowful and deeply distressed and said to the three, “My soul (*nephesh* in Hebrew) is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.” (Matt. 26: 36-38 // Mark 14: 32-34). He would pray the opening line of this psalm, “*Preserve Me, O God, for in You I put my trust.*”

The Lord Jesus does not directly quote the refrains of Psalm 42/43 but He also takes this psalm and applies it to Himself. The refrain of the psalm is: “Why are you cast down, O my soul (*nephesh*)? And why are you disquieted (grieved) within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance” (Ps. 42:6, 11; 43:5). “Hoping in God” has the idea of trusting in Him. In Gethsemane the Lord Jesus prays that the cup of wrath be passed from Him. His trust is manifested when He says: “Nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.”

The words of the psalmist become the words of the Lord Jesus. He says, “*You [the Father] are My Lord, My [the Lord Jesus] goodness is nothing apart from You.*” He acknowledges His subservience to the Father while upon earth (Phil. 2: 5-11). He was not trying to get out of the Cross because of His goodness. He was the perfect, spotless Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. He could not sin, He would not sin, He did no sin. Again, He could say, “*Nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.*” The Father’s will was for Him to go to the Cross and pay for all the sins of all humanity (1 John 2:2).

The psalmist, as well as the Messiah, delighted in the saints. The saints, or the set apart ones, are all those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. It is stated: “*As for the saints who are on the earth, ‘They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight’*” (16:3). The psalmist contrasts the saints (vs. 3) and the idolaters (vs. 4).

The psalmist, as well as the Lord Jesus, rejects idolatry as well as those who reject Him and His way of salvation. He sings: “*Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips*” (16:4). An idol worshiper is one who worships other gods. In David’s day, the gods were Baal, Dagan, Ishtar, and many others. In the days of the Lord Jesus the gods were Zeus, Asclepius,

Dionysus, the Caesars, and others. What are our gods today? They could be money, a statue of a saint or deity, a car, or even some other religion.

Some may protest, "I don't worship idols." The psalmist adds another description of an idolater. He declares: "their drink offering of blood." In the Mosaic sacrificial system there is only a drink offering of wine, but not of blood. In fact, drinking blood in any form is forbidden by the Mosaic Law (see Deut. 12: 16-28; 15:23. The witch of Endor offers King Saul a blood sacrifice, 1 Sam. 28:24).

A more "spiritual" application to this passage might be to see the idolaters making up a new form of religion. They are adding to the Biblical requirements for atonement. It would be like somebody saying today, "I believe in Jesus, but I also have to be baptized, or join a church, or do good deeds, and add any other works in order to get saved." No, God's way of salvation is always by grace through faith alone in the Lord Jesus and Him alone, plus no works or merits of our own (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Rom. 4:5; Tit. 3:4-7; 1 John 5:13).

The psalmist would not even mention the idolaters by name because they repudiate God's only method of salvation - faith alone in Christ alone. A holy God is appalled by the arrogance of finite human beings that think they could add to His infinite sacrifice, and the perfect, finished work, on Calvary's Cross. Isaiah describes all our human righteousness's as filthy rags, an ancient form of sanitary napkins (Isa. 64:6). The apostle Paul acknowledged his works-righteousness's before God is like a four-letter word for excrement (Phil. 3:8-9).

The psalmist now turns his attention to the inheritance of the Lord Jesus. He sings, "*O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance*" (16:5-6).

The Lord Jesus might today be called a homeless man. On two separate occasions He said, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9: 58). He had friends he could stay with, such as Peter in Capernaum, or Lazarus in Bethany, but He had no mailing address He could call His own, yet the Father provided places for Him to stay and His cup for meals to eat.

The Lord Jesus acknowledges He has a good inheritance. Yet one day in the future, He will inherit the whole earth! "*Ask of Me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possessions.*" (Ps. 2:8). In the coming Kingdom, if you want to write a letter to the Lord Jesus, all you have to do is to address it: King Jesus, Mount Zion, Jerusalem! Don't worry, the Jerusalem Post Office will see to it that He gets it.

## **II. Up to Gabbatha, we see Him unmovable. 16:7, 8**

After Jesus prays in the cave of Gethsemane, He goes to a garden (John 18:1). This is where Judas betrays Him with a kiss. What does Jesus call Judas at this time? I know what I would have called him ... probably a snake or something worse. Yet Jesus is still reaching out to Judas and calls him "Friend!" (Matt. 26:50). It is also here that Peter cuts off the earlobe of the deputy high priest (Mark 14:47; cf. Viviano 1989). Jesus instructs Peter to put away his sword

and He heals the ear of Malchus, the one who was next in line to be the high priest (Matt. 26:52; Luke 22:51; John 18:10, 11).

Jesus is bound and taken by the Temple guards to the High Priest palace on the Western Hill. For the next few hours, He will go through six inquiries and trails. The first inquiry was before Annas (John 18:12-24), the second inquiry was before Caiaphus (Matt. 26:57; Mark 14:53; Luke 22:54-65; John 18:24-28), and the first trail was before the entire Sanhedrien (Matt. 26:57-75; Mark 14:53-15:1; Luke 22:66-71). These events all took place before sunrise. The psalmist says, *"My heart also instructs me in the night season"* (16: 7b). These inquiries and trial are all before the religious establishment.

The last three trials or inquiries were before the Roman authorities. The second trial is before Pontus Pilate at the Praetorium (Luke 23:1-5), the third inquiry is before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:6-12), and the final trial is back before Pilate (Luke 23:13-25). On this occasion, Pilate took Jesus to the Pavement, called in Hebrew, Gabbatha (John 19:13; Benoit 1973). Through all six inquiries and trials, Jesus was accused by false-witnesses of all sorts of things, yet He never answered His accusers. The Prophet Isaiah so accurately predicted seven hundred years before: *"As a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth"* (53:7). The reason He was unmovable through six inquiries and trials leading up to Gabbatha was because He set the LORD always before Him and God was at His right hand (Ps. 16:8).

Peter followed the Lord Jesus for the first two inquiries, and denied he even knew Jesus three times, just as the Lord Jesus prophesied at the Passover Seder. When the rooster crowed the third time, Jesus said nothing, but just looked at Peter and this look caused Peter to break down in bitter tears (Matt. 26:75). These events left such an indelible mark on Peter that he later commented on them in his first epistle. He wrote to Jewish believers in the Lord Jesus to be unmovable just like Jesus was through His inquiries and trials: *"For to this you are called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth" [a quote from Isa. 53:9]; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray [a reference to Isa. 53:5d, 6a], but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls"* (1 Pet. 2:21-25).

### **III. At Golgotha, we see His joy. 16:9a**

After the Lord Jesus went through the six trials and inquiries, the Roman soldiers mocked Him by putting a crown of thorns on His head and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They then took Him outside the city to be crucified. As they left the Gennath Gate (Garden Gate) they crucified Him along the west road, known to the Romans as the Decumanus. [In the area of the meat market of the Old City just off of King David Street (Taylor 2002: 41)].

David prophesied: *"Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices."* This is a paradox concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. How could

His heart be glad and His glory rejoice? From a human perspective, this was a travesty of justice, the greatest injustice, or miscarriage of justice, in all of human history; the Just dying for the unjust; the Sinless, dying for sinners. Here was the spotless, sinless Lamb of God dying on the Cross; but not for His sins, because He had none of His own. He was an innocent victim dying for all the sins of all humanity (1 John 2:2). Yet in the Lord Jesus' heart He sang the song He left the upper room singing, *"This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."* (Psalm 118:24).

This paradox is resolved in Hebrews 12:2: *"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for **the joy that was set before Him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."* The Lord Jesus knew what the cross work would accomplish. He would bring many to faith in Himself and He would be seated at the right hand of God.

#### **IV. In the "Garden Tomb," we see Him raised. 16:9b, 10**

If we asked a theologian to describe the makeup of a human being, many would label us as Trichotomous beings. That's a fancy theological word for saying we are made up of three elements: body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23). The prophet David described what happened at the death and burial of the Lord Jesus. Verses 9b, 10 says of the Lord Jesus, *"My flesh also will rest in hope. You [the LORD] will not leave My soul in Sheol, nor will you allow Your Holy One (Hasedeka) to see corruption."*

After the crucifixion, they placed the body (His flesh) of the Lord Jesus in a borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathea that was in a garden (John 19:41; This is not an endorsement of the Garden Tomb north of Damascus Gate in Jerusalem as the place of the burial of the Lord Jesus. That tomb dates to the Iron Age, 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century BC, thus it was not a newly hewn tomb. For a discussion of the archaeology of this tomb, see Barkay 1986). The body of the Lord Jesus was resting in hope, or full confidence, in the resurrection. The words of the Patriarch Job many have been going through David's mind when Job penned these words. *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God"* (19: 25, 26). Job had the hope, or joyful assurance and anticipation, of the resurrection of his body because his Redeemer lives.

When the Lord Jesus commanded the stone to be removed from the tomb of His friend, Lazarus, his sister Martha protested, "Lord, he stinketh!" (John 11:39 KJV) Martha knew it was the fourth day after he died and the flesh would have begun to decompose after the third day. Unlike Job and Lazarus, the Lord Jesus did not see corruption because He rose triumphantly from the dead on the third day. That is why David sang His flesh rested.

While the body was resting in the tomb, the soul of the Lord Jesus was in Sheol. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Sheol is the place of the departed soul and spirit. In the New Testament, the Greek word for Sheol is Hades (cf. Ps. 16: 10 with Acts 2: 27).

The Lord Jesus gave us a detailed description of what Hades was like in the account found in Luke 16: 19-31. Some mistaken this account for a parable,

but it is a real story about a well-to-do rich man and a beggar named Lazarus from Jericho. This Lazarus is not to be confused with the Lazarus mentioned in John 11. Lazarus of Bethany was well-to-do as demonstrated by his arcosolia tomb.

In Luke 16, Jesus tells us that Lazarus died and was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, located in Hades (16: 22). The rich man goes to a torment compartment in Hades, yet he could see Lazarus afar off (16: 23). He pleads with Abraham for just a drop of water on the tip of his tongue (16: 24). Abraham points out that there is a great gulf fixed between them, so a person can not pass from one compartment to the other (16: 26). The rich man pleads with Abraham to send Lazarus back to his father's house to warn his five brothers about this place of torment (16: 27-28). Abraham reminds him that they have the words of Moses and the prophets (16: 29). The rich man mistakenly thought that if somebody went back from the dead, his brothers would repent (16: 30). Abraham said to him, *"If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead"* (16: 31). The Lord Jesus Christ bodily rose from the dead, yet sadly, people did not turn to Him as their Messiah and put their trust in Him for their eternal salvation!

Luke 16 is a very instructive account. It tells us that Hades has two compartments: Abraham's bosom for those who have believed in God and His method of salvation – grace through faith alone in the coming Christ, and Him alone; and a place of torment for those who have rejected Him. Once people die, their fate is sealed and they cannot cross from one side to the other side.

David tells us that Jesus (His soul) went to Sheol. Peter, in his first epistle, says, *"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him"* (1 Pet. 3:18-22). Interestingly, some of the elements in this passage come from Psalm 16 and Peter's sermon in Acts 2.

The Apostle Paul also refers to the descent of the Lord Jesus into Hades when he writes to the church at Ephesus. *"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: 'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.'* [Quoted from Psalm 68:18]. *(Now this, 'He ascended'- what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fulfill all things.)"* (4:7-10).

After the Lord Jesus died on the cross, they took His body and laid it in the tomb. His soul and spirit went to Hades. At the resurrection His soul and spirit fashioned an eternal body of glory when He came out of the tomb. He then appeared for forty days on the earth. At His ascension, He lead the Old

Testament saints who were in Abraham's bosom, the blissful compartment in Hades, into the third heavens where Paradise is now (2 Cor. 12: 2, 4). On the cross, the Lord Jesus promised the repentant thief, "Today you shall be with Me in Paradise." Paradise should be seen as a synonymous term for Abraham's bosom.

In Psalm 16: 10, David returns our thoughts to the body of the Lord Jesus. He says, "*Nor will You [the Father] allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*" After three days, the body begins to decompose. This did not happen with the body of the Lord Jesus.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, gives a bold address fifty days after the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. In the middle of his sermon he turns the audience's attention to Jesus of Nazareth. He proclaimed of Jesus, "*Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God [note: this was God's plan], you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him. [He then quotes Psalm 16: 8-11, and goes on to say] Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day*" (Acts 2: 22-29).

It is well attested in the literary sources that David's tomb still existed in the days of Peter. The history of this tomb complex is fascinating. Josephus, the First Century AD Jewish historian, wrote about the tomb on four occasions relating three events. First, he recounted the burial of David by his son Solomon and mentioned that a vast amount of wealth was placed in the tomb. Second, he told the story of the high priest Hyrcanus taking three thousand talents of silver from the tomb in order to bribe the Seleucid king, Antiochus the Pious, with three hundred talents of silver in order for him to lift the siege of Jerusalem. The rest of the money was used to hire a mercenary force. Third, he recorded the exploits of Herod the Great. Needing money, he broke into the tomb and took ornaments of gold and other valuables. Greed got the better of him and he returned a second time, this time determined to find the coffin of David and Solomon. He went in with a handful of trusted friends and two bodyguards. Both bodyguards were zapped with flames of fire. That was enough to put the fear of the Lord into Herod and he built a lavish marble entrance to the tomb (*Antiquities of the Jews* 7: 392-394; LCL 5:569, 571; 13: 249; LCL 7:353; 16: 179-183; LCL 8:281, 283; *Jewish Wars* 1: 61; LCL 2:31).

The Roman historian, Dio Cassius (AD 160-230), related that during the Bar Kokhba Revolt (ca. AD 135), "the tomb of Solomon, which the Jews regard as an object of veneration, fell to pieces of itself and collapsed" (*Roman History* 69.14.2; LCL 8:451). Thus, more than a hundred years after the death of the Lord Jesus, the tomb of King David and his house, ceased to exist.

Peter goes on in his sermon, "*Therefore, [David] being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, [the Davidic Covenant – 2 Sam. 7:4-17; 1 Chron. 17:3-15] he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ [Messiah], that His soul was not left in*

*Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses” (Acts 2:30-32).*

What Peter is saying is this: “David was not writing about himself. Look down the hill to the lower part of the City of David and see the fancy entrance Herod constructed for David’s tomb. If you think this is talking about David, go down and pay your shekel entrance fee and see the bones of David for yourself. His flesh has decayed! By contrast, go to the newly hewn tomb of Joseph of Arimathea and see that it is empty, the Lord Jesus is not there, He has bodily risen from the dead!”

No, King David died and his body saw corruption. On the other hand, the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and was seen by many witnesses before He ascended to the right hand of the Father (1 Cor. 15: 5-9). Paul points out to the believers in Corinth the importance of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 15: 15-19).

#### **V. In the Glory, we see Him rejoicing. 16:11**

David concludes this psalm by stating: *“You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*

There is fullness of joy because of what the cross work on Calvary accomplished. It brought many sons to glory! (Heb. 2:10). Mr. T. Ernest Wilson, a retired missionary, now with the Lord, commented on the reference to the Father’s right hand in verse 11. “Here the position of our Lord in verse 8 is reversed. There Jehovah is at His right hand in communion and counsel during the time of His pathway of faith here below; now in the glory He is at the Father’s right hand, the place of power, priesthood and pleasure” (1978: 90).

I attended the funeral of a friend, Kevin Rhodes. One of the speakers made an interesting comment. He said that, “Kevin is the one who is in the land of the living. We are the ones in the land of the dying.” Folks, we are the ones who are dying, we’re falling apart. Oh yes, with the miracles of modern medicine, we can get replacement parts: hip replacements, knee replacements, heart transplants, kidney transplants, blood transfusions, and other substitutions. T. Ernest Wilson tells the story of visiting his doctor once and being told by the doctor, “We are all like automobiles. The older we get, the harder it is to get spare parts for the car.” Eventually we will run out of replacement parts and we will die. That is the fact of life!

Kevin is in Heaven, gazing on the One who loved him and gave Himself for Kevin’s sins, the One who sits on the Throne of Grace at the Father’s right hand. That One is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Person being prophesied about in this psalm. How did the Lord Jesus get there? He bodily rose from the dead after dying on the cross to pay for all our sins.

#### **Applications**

This psalm should encourage believers in the Lord Jesus because we have a book that predicts the future long before it happens. No other religious

book claims to predict the future. The Bible is history written before it happens and can be trusted.

The second encouragement for the believer is the fact of the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Because He bodily rose from the dead, we are assured of our own resurrection and a home in heaven for all eternity. His resurrection proves that sin has been paid for and believers are forgiven all their sins. His resurrection also proves that death has been conquered and His children should have no fear of death. Even though we may walk through the “valley of death” we fear no evil because He is with us. Finally, His resurrection proves that Satan has been defeated and he has no power over believers in the Lord Jesus.

For the unbeliever, those who have never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, two questions need to be asked. First, are you following after other gods, other than the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in human flesh? Second, are you following other ways of salvation? God’s way of salvation was clearly stated by the Lord Jesus at the Last Supper. He said, “*I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one comes to the Father except by Me*” (John 14:6). Yes, that is very narrow minded, but He also said that “broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it” (Matt. 7:13). On the other hand, to one of the leaders in Israel He said, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16). Have you trusted the Lord Jesus and Him alone for your salvation? Or, are you still on that broad road that leads to an eternal Hell?

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