

MOUNT SINAI MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Psalm 16

Living Hope

Quote

“Hope can see heaven through the thickest clouds.”

Thomas Brooks

No one is ready to live until he is first ready to die. Only in facing the reality of death with a living faith in God is a person prepared to live boldly and courageously for him, even in the face of troubling adversity. This was true in the life of David as recorded in Psalm 16 as he faced another life-threatening trial. This psalm is a song of confident trust in God in which the psalmist was able to live life to the fullest because he was gripped with a living hope in God beyond the grave.

Psalm 16 was written at an unknown time when David was hard-pressed, perhaps when he faced threats to his life in the wilderness or severe opposition to his reign as king. David boldly declared that God had been his portion in life, so he would trust him even in death. No matter what David faced, his trust was anchored in the Lord, and this caused his heart to rejoice. David was gripped by a resolute reliance on God in the face of death. He looked beyond this life to the glories of the resurrection and glorification to come.

This psalm is a *miktam*, the meaning of which is uncertain. Verses 8–11 were quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:25–28), and verse 10b was cited by Paul at Antioch (Acts 13:35–37); both were used in reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

II. Commentary

MAIN IDEA: In the face of mounting adversity, David rejoices in the Lord, recounting the blessings of following him and the glory to come after death.

A David's Prayer (16:1–2)

16:1–2. With a quiet confidence David began by praying, Keep me safe, O God, as he asked for God’s protection. He reached out for the security that God alone can give. The basis of this request is that God was David’s refuge. David had put his trust exclusively in God. Only he could protect David from the dangers of life. In this prayer of trust, David said to the Lord, You are My Lord, expressing total reliance on him. The Lord was the source of all that made life good and enjoyable for him. So David declared, Apart from you I have no good thing. God was his all and all, his security and satisfaction, his one and only good thing.

B David’s Perplexity (16:3–4)

16:3–4. Turning his attention to the believers in the land, David rejoiced that they were the glorious ones, choice in the sight of God. With deep love for the godly citizens of Israel, King David wrote that they were those in whom is all my delight. But in stark contrast with these who, like David, trusted God, there were the ungodly who ran after other gods in a religious syncretism that would only increase their sorrows. With a compromising faith, they had weakened their loyalty to God. Thus, their libations of blood offered in worship were not poured out to God but to these false gods. David would have nothing to do with these gods or the people who worshiped them.

C David’s Pledge (16:5–6)

16:5–6. Reaffirming his exclusive allegiance to the one true God, David prayed, Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup. The worship of other gods was no temptation to him because he had found total security and satisfaction in the Lord. His portion, referring to the inheritance a father leaves his son, and cup, or the goodness a host offers his guest, refer to the full life that he enjoyed in the Lord. His lot in life was secure because the Lord was his God. Spiritually speaking, David’s boundary lines were expansive, allowing for a full provision of divine blessing. His inheritance was the Lord himself and all his overflowing goodness and provision.

D David’s Praise (16:7–11)

16:7–8. Because of God’s abundant favor, David offered praise to the Lord specifically because the Lord counseled him. So perfect was God’s advice that it remained lodged in his heart even at night. He declared, I have set the Lord always

before me. This was a place of undivided focus and exclusive preeminence. God was at his right hand, the position of highest exaltation, as his all-sufficient sustainer. Thus, David would not be shaken by any danger. God was unmovable; so was he.

16:9–10. Even in the face of life-threatening ordeals, David remained glad, and he rejoiced. He knew his body would also rest secure, even in death. With exuberant praise, he exulted, God will not abandon me to the grave. Not even death would separate him from God; he would not see decay by lying in the grave in a meaningless existence. God would forever be his portion.

16:11. Because the Lord was at David's right hand (v. 8), he would one day be at the Lord's right hand, where he would enjoy eternal pleasures. God had made known to him the path of life. This path would ultimately lead to God's presence in heaven where he would experience an overflowing, undiminishing joy.

III. Conclusion

Life in this world may end without warning. Death rarely sends its advance notice. Thus, believers should live every moment of every day as if it were their last. Richard Baxter once said, "Always preach as a dying man to dying men, as if never to preach again."

Only in living as dying men will believers live as God intends. Believers fix their hope on God, who is the only safe refuge from the deadly dangers which threaten the righteous. Like David, the believer must always set the Lord before him, constantly meditating upon his rock-solid character. Only with such a riveted focus upon God will the Lord become the believer's delight. Believers must continually remind themselves that the Lord has brought us to the path of life and he alone can bring joy and eternal pleasures. Therefore, the believer may confidently say with David, "We will not be shaken."