

PSALM 16:1-11

CHAPTER STUDIES ON THE PSALTER

" , He is able to restore the preserved of Israel."

It has been the usual plan of commentators to apply this Psalm to David, to the saints, and to the Lord Jesus. We believe that here "Christ is all," since in verses nine and ten, like the apostles on the mountain, we can see "no one but Jesus."

(Ps. 16:1) Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust. Though pure, the Lord Jesus did not place His confidence in that purity of nature, but as an example to His followers, He looked to the Lord, His God, for preservation. One of the great names of God is "the preserver of men" (Job 7:20), and our gracious Mediator and Representative was watched over and preserved. It had been promised to the Lord Jesus that He would be preserved. "Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee." (Is. 49:7). This promise was fulfilled by providential deliverance and sustaining power; being preserved, He is able to restore the preserved of Israel (Is. 49:6). We are preserved in Christ Jesus, as one with Him; the elect were preserved in His preservation. We may view our Mediator's supplication as the petition of the Great High Priest for all who are in Him. "Holy

Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." (John 17:11). When He says, "keep," He means His members, His mystical body, and all in Him. Yet while we rejoice that the Lord Jesus used this prayer for His members, we must not forget that He employed it for Himself. Jesus had so emptied Himself and so truly taken the form of a servant that, as man, He needed divine keeping just as we do. Frequently on the mountain-top, He cried to Jehovah for strength. Once, in almost the same words, He publicly prayed, "Father, save me from this hour" (John 12:27). If Jesus looked out of Himself for protection, how much more must we, His erring followers!

(Ps. 16:2) O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, In His heart, the Lord Jesus bowed to serve His Heavenly Father. Before Jehovah's throne, His soul vowed allegiance for our sakes. We are like Him when our soul, in the presence of the heart-searching God, declares full consent to the rule and government of the infinite Jehovah by saying, **Thou art my LORD.** To confess this with the lip is little, but for the soul to say it, especially in times of trial, is gracious evidence of spiritual health. To profess it before men is a small matter, but to declare it before Jehovah is far more consequential. This sentence may

also be viewed as words of appropriating faith, laying hold on the Lord by personal covenant and enjoyment. In this sense may it be our daily song.

(Ps. 16:6) Jesus discovered that obedience leads to **pleasant places**. Despite all the sorrows that marred His countenance, He exclaimed, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." (Ps. 40:7,8). It may seem strange that while no other was ever so thoroughly acquainted with grief (Is. 53:3), no other ever experienced so much joy and delight in service. Jesus served faithfully and with great results. "The joy that was set before Him" (Heb. 12:2) must have sent some of its beams of splendor down the rugged places where He endured the cross, despising the shame (Heb. 12:2). This, in some respects, was **pleasant places** to the Redeemer's generous heart. At any rate, Jesus was content with the blood-bought portion that electing love marked as His share with the strong and His portion with the great. Thus, He comforted Himself on earth and now delights Himself in heaven.

For **a goodly heritage**, He asks that His beloved will be with Him and see His glory (John 17:24). All the saints can use the language of this verse; the more they enter its contented, grateful, joyful spirit, the better, and the more glory that goes to their God. Our Lord was poor; He had nowhere to lay His head (Luke 9:58), but when He mentioned His poverty, He never complained. Discontented spirits

are as unlike Jesus as the croaking raven is unlike the cooing dove.

(Ps. 16:7) **my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.** Great generals fight battles in their mind long before the trumpet sounds, and Jesus won our battle on His knees before He gained victory on the Cross. It is a gracious habit, after taking counsel from above, to take counsel within. The wise see more with their eyes shut at night than fools see by day with their eyes open. Those who learn from God and receive the seed will soon find wisdom growing in the garden of their souls. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. 30:21). The night that sinners choose for sinning is the hallowed hour of quiet when believers hear the soft still voices of heaven and the heavenly life within.

(Ps. 16:10) Our Lord Jesus was not disappointed in His hope. He declared His Father's faithfulness, **For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;** and that faithfulness was proven on the resurrection morning. Among the departed and disembodied, Jesus was not left; He believed in the resurrection, and He received it on the third day when His body rose in glorious life. He had said in joyous confidence, **neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.** His body might go into the outer prison of the grave, but He could not enter the inner prison of corruption. He who, in soul and body, was preeminently God's **Holy One** was loosed from death. Death could not hold Him. This is great encouragement to all

the saints; die we must, but rise we also will.
Though we will see corruption, yet we will rise
to everlasting life. Christ's resurrection is the
cause, the earnest, the guarantee, and the
emblem of the rising of all His people. (The
Treasury of David, Charles Haddon Spurgeon,
updated by Mark Wash)

“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,”
(Ps. 16:10). **Why did Jesus have to descend
into Sheol (hell)** (Eph. 4:8-10)?

**What terms are used in the sixteenth
Psalm to predict the resurrection of Christ?**