

PSALM 16 - AN EXEGESIS

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Delivered by
Tom Speidel
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PSALM 16

INTRODUCTION

"Commentary Schizophrenia" must be cured, or at least understood, before the message of Psalm 16 can be clearly revealed. By this I mean we need to discuss the dual interpretations offered. Is Psalm 16 a direct, a or rectilinear prophecy of Christ? Is the Son of God speaking through David's pen? Are all the references describing only Christ? Or is Psalm 16 a typical or intermediately fulfilled prophecy of Christ which David wrote from his own life experiences? The commentators are split. For example:

Barnes: "This Psalm expresses a confident expectation of eternal life and happiness, founded on the evidence of true attachment to God. It expresses the deep conviction that one who loves God will not be left in the grave, and will not be suffered to see permanent "corruption", or perish in the grave forever." (p. 123)

Alexander: "A sufferer in imminent danger of death, expresses his strong confidence in God ... The Psalm is appropriate to the whole class of pious sufferers, of which Christ is the most illustrious representative. It is only in Him, therefore, that some parts of it can be said to have received their highest and complete fulfillment." (p. 65)

Stoeckhardt: "...we ascribe not only the words of verses 9-11 to Christ, but all the words of this Psalm as spoken by the Person of our Savior in prophecy.

We have in these words first of all a confession of Christ's attitude toward God. He declares Him all the way through as the holy God. His living and His dying appear as a willing offering to God. Secondly, He asserts that He speaks in behalf of the saints and the excellent ones. Christ here appears then, as man's Substitute. In His perfect obedience He takes the place of the Communion of Saints which is gathered from the ranks of poor sinners. This Psalm is an example and a proof of the active obedience of Christ to God, which we know is imputed to the believer. ...

This Psalm in the main treats of the resurrection of Christ, and in general of the resurrection of saints. (p. 40-41)

Luther: "The sixteenth psalm is prophecy of Christ's passion and resurrection, just as the Apostles have forcibly asserted (Acts 2:25ff and 13:35). It indicates clearly that He would discard as idolatry, etc., the old law with its offering and service to God, and choose saints and people for a beautiful inheritance. It applies to the first, second and third commandment, since it proclaims God's new worship, work, Word, and service as it would come into the world in Christ after the old service to God, and as it is in the first and second petition, etc." (Sem notes from a class presentation, author unknown)

Lillegard: "We come to a more delicate problem when it is asked whether David here describes his own relation to God and his own attitude toward impending death. This question forces itself upon us when we come to the singer's triumphant declaration in v. 10, that his body is not to experience corruption. But also the first part, 1-8a, makes us

doubt that David speaks of himself. For the singer bases his plea for preservation upon a constant and perfect loyalty to Jehovah, which even David could not truthfully ascribe to himself. ...

The N.T. gives its decision in no uncertain terms. In his great Pentecost sermon, Peter interprets vv. 9-11 directly of Christ. He declares that the words of the psalm obviously cannot apply to David, who did die and did see corruption. In fact, he says, David knew when he penned these words that he was not speaking of himself, but of his great descendant and successor on the throne of Israel. Similarly, Paul in his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, quotes the last verses of our psalm as a direct prophecy of Christ. But if the second portion of the psalm is directly Messianic, the same must hold as to the first. It is the same subject who speaks throughout. His assurance of preservation in death is expressly based upon his perfect, unintermitting loyalty to God and loving fellowship with Him. And the entire outline which this godly sufferer gives of his own character can be filled in by no one but Jesus as the Gospels picture Him. From His first words on earth to His last, the characteristic note is loving fidelity to God. It is plain, then, that David spoke this psalm in the person of the Messiah. He was carried out of Himself by the ecstasy of the prophetic Spirit and uttered sayings which he knew to be those of his great anti-type. Christ, the primary author of Scripture, placed His own words upon his tongue. The psalm is thus directly Messianic." (p. 45)

The Author: This paper agrees with Lillegard that Psalm 16 is Christ speaking through its entirety.

2. Outline

Theme: The suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of the Messiah

Epitome: Prayer that God preserve me and I profess my trust in Him (1)

A. I willingly submit to the Lord as absolute ruler (2)

1. He is my only source for happiness (2b)

2. I love the saints, the Church (3)

3. I hate idolators (4)

B. The Lord is My Portion and Counselor

1. Jehovah is my only possession in whom I find full sufficiency and pleasure in doing His will (5-6)

2. I trust His counsel to give me success (7)

3. I am confident He is leading me and supporting me (8)

C. I rejoice in the Lord

1. I physically will be safe and find rest (9)

2. I am sure of My resurrection (10)

3. I will enjoy life in your presence (11)

3. Parallelism - all the verses are synthetic (the second part building on the first part) except verse 5 which is synonymous.

TITLE AND AUTHOR

מִשְׁתָּמ = is of uncertain meaning, but always linked with מִשְׁתָּמ (6x).

* - *Michtam* is used in the heading of Psalms 56-60. If it comes from מִשְׁתָּמ (gold) it could mean either a choice piece, a jewel, a gem. If the root is מִשְׁתָּמ (hide), it could express a secret song, a mystery, a poem with deeper spiritual import.

Some people propose that it comes from כתב (write) where כ and replaced ך and take it to mean an epigram, an "engraving". The LXX has στήλογραφή, "an inscription on a stone slab." (Perhaps we might call it a stone engraving with gold letters about hidden things.)

It is interesting that in the other Psalms called "Michtam", the subject matter is either a time of being attacked and seeking rescue, or a prayer for the wicked to be punished or lament over defeat in battle. Death, rescue, vindication seem the common thread.

7+7 = the "lamed autoris" (G-K #129c) identifies David as the author (Acts 2:25). Some of David's last words declared, "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue" (2 Sam 23:2). Peter wrote "Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, {11} trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow" (1 Pet 1:10-11). Listing David as author doesn't mean he understood all that he wrote. By inspiration he was "carried along" by the Holy Spirit to write words which only Christ could say and which applied directly to Him alone.

V E R S E 1

שׁמְרֵנִי אֱלֹהִים כִּי־חָסִיתִי בָךְ :

"Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge." NIV

שׁמְרֵנִי = Qal impv. m. s. שָׁמַר + 1 c. sg sfx.

שׁמְרֵנִי = exercise great care over; careful attention paid to the obligations of a covenant, laws, etc; take care of; guard (Psa 12:7; Gen 28:15,20)

אֱלֹהִים = the true God expressing His power and might (Isa 9:6 used with גִּבּוֹר)

חָסִיתִי = Qal pft 1 m. sg of חָסָה

חָסִיתִי = seek refuge in or flee from => put trust in, confide in, hope in (Isa 30:2; Psa 57:1)

Commentary This verse sets the tone of the entire Psalm. Christ begins with a prayer and then makes a profession of faith. The Singer is aware of a great peril from which He needs protection. He sees Himself being abandoned by all - men, angels, His human strength, and being attacked by devils and evil people who want to destroy Him. He sees His death as inescapable. He is not asking to be spared from what's ahead. But to accomplish the ordeal will take more than the strength of Atlas. He prays to אֱלֹהִים, the "strong One", to guard with His omnipotence. The words "Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth" (Psa 31:5) come to mind here.

חסה is a characteristic perfect. This trust was not new, but on-going. The Psalmist holds God to His covenant promises. How important it is that we call on God when we are in distress and have His strength keep us faithful. Oh that this was our characteristic action at all times as it is for Christ.

V E R S E 2

: אֶרְתָּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֶתְּךָ טוֹבְתִי בְלֹעֲלֵיךָ
 אֶרְתָּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֶתְּךָ טוֹבְתִי בְלֹעֲלֵיךָ

I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing." NIV

אֶרְתָּ = Qal 1 c. pf (abbreviated form minus ת, G-K 44i, p.121), LXX
 אֶרְתָּ = Qal 2 f. pf (with addition of subject such as "O My Soul" as in Psalm 42:6,12; 43:5), Vulgate, in Dead Sea Scrolls (sem. notes)

לַיהוָה = ל of indirect object vs. reference
 אֱלֹהֵי = יהוה, Ex 34:6-7, God of free and faithful grace

אֱלֹהֵי = the or my Lord; master, absolute ruler who claims unrestricted obedience of all because He is the owner of every person.

טוֹבְתִי = טוֹב "pleasure, happiness", not a moral sense.

בְּלֹעֲ = "to waste away" בְּלֹעֲ ; equivilent to אֶל before a preposition (G-K, 152t, p. 481)

עֲלֵיךָ = prep. עַל "above, beside", + 2 m. sg. sfx
 אֶרְתָּ = not a conj. "because, although"

Commentary No matter which form is taken for אֶרְתָּ, the sense is the clear. "I trust in the omnipotent God. Jehovah is my Lord. I vow complete submission to Him. And what is more, I find no happiness, no hope, no safety, no life except in Him, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. {26} My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psa 73:25-26).

The Christ submits to Jehovah as his Lord by free choice, not by force. He delights in doing what the LORD wants. In fact, He has no happiness unless He is carrying out that will. This verse is an echo of the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God ... You shall have no other gods before me."

V E R S E 3

: לְקַדְוֹשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בְּאֶרֶץ הַפֶּה וְאֲדִירֵי כָל־חַפְצֵי־בָם
 לְקַדְוֹשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בְּאֶרֶץ הַפֶּה וְאֲדִירֵי כָל־חַפְצֵי־בָם

"As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight." NIV

לְקַדְוֹשִׁים + ל = ל of ref. "concerning" (Gen 20:13) or "for the benefit of, on behalf of" (Luther)

= קדושים - those whom God has separated from the evil world and set apart for Himself as His very own, and to whom as such He reveals and gives the right character

הם = 3 m. pl subj pronoun "they";

אדירי = "noble, excellent", what is superior to something else, great, glorious

חפצי = "favor, delight" + 1 c sg. sfx

Commentary In this verse Christ confesses His love for the Church. The picture of the Good Shepherd loving His sheep comes to mind. The content of what Christ "Said to the LORD" in verse 2 continues "for the benefit of the holy ones ..." We have become "saints" and "noble ones" through the blood Jesus shed for us. We are saints by imputed righteousness through faith. We have holiness due to Christ's self-consecration to Jehovah. The glory which on earth gleams intermittently in our lives, and which in the world to come will makes us shine like the sun, is the effect of our psalm Singer's delight in us. It is the reflection of His glorious grace.

[V][E][R][S][E] [4]

יִרְבוּ עֲצוֹבוֹתֵם אַחֲרַי סִהְרוּ בַל־אֲסִיף נִסְכֵיהֶם סָדֵם וּבַל־אֲשֵׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹתַי עַל־שִׁפְתַי :

"The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips." NIV

יִרְבוּ = "become many, become great"; Qal impf רבה,

עֲצוֹבוֹתֵם = "idol", f.pl עצבת + 3 m pl sfx; (G-T p.647)
= "sorrow, toil" (TWBOT, p. 687-8)

סִהְרוּ = "hasten"; Qal pft 3 pl,
- "pay a dowry" in exchange for a wife (Ex 22:16)

אֲסִיף = "pour out"; High impf 1 c sg, נסך,

נִסְכֵיהֶם = "drink offering" + 3 pl. m sfx; such an offering was established in the covenant community as an appropriate form of worship.

אֲשֵׂא = Qal impf 1 c. sg; "lift"; "raise up" => pray to

Commentary The Christ vowed loyalty to the LORD. He shows this now by rejecting all affiliation with idolaters, and in so doing condemns the idols themselves. He contrasts Himself with those who have other gods and pictures their miserable state. These idolaters have exchanged the true living God for a false one (the word "gods" understood after "other"). Jehovah has purchased us to be His bride by His work of redemption. The idolaters refuse this offer of wedlock, and try instead to provide for themselves other masters at great cost and trouble, false

lovers who fail them in their need. The thought of "hastening after" such idols fits with Paul's warning, (1 Tim 6:10) "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

The דם (blood) would seem to come from the custom that heathen worship required human sacrifice (Baal, Molech) or animal sacrifices probably using a blood/water mixture. In Isa 1:15 sins are symbolically represented as blood. Drink-offerings of the world are offered with blood-stained hands and consciences. Following Exodus 23:13 the Christ will not pollute His lips by speaking the idol names. In no way will He give them any credibility or praise. The Devil's game-plan is this: [1] tolerate me; [2] treat me as an equal; [3] I'm in charge.

V E R S E 5

יְהוָה סִנְתְּחֻלְקִי וְכוּסִי אֶתָּה תֹּסִיף גֹּרְלִי

"LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure." NIV

סִנְתְּ [a] "portion, part" (ref to sacrifice 2 Chr 31:3)
 ' [b] identifies the choice parts of the sacrificial animals that were given to the priests and Levites.

חֻלְקִי = "portion" noun + 1 c sg sfx -. The word has legal connotations and carries the idea of "give as a possession". Reference in made to the share of land given out by lot, inheritance.

וְכוּסִי = "cup" + 1 c s sfx; most common drinking goblet referring to what the cup contains - blessing

תֹּסִיף = "grasp, hold fast, support, uphold"; Qal act part. m sg,
 = Lillegard: "to be wide or broad"; Hiph 2 m/f sg impf of תָּסִיף which in Arabic denotes

גֹּרְלִי = "lot, portion"; noun + 1 c sg sfx, by metonymy referring to the article used to determine a choice. It is used for one's circumstances in life in some instances.

Commentary The LORD is the only source of blessings. So the Speaker turns from the darkness of idolatry to sun Himself in the light of His LORD. He says "The LORD (is) My portion." "The LORD said to Aaron, "You will have no inheritance in their land, nor will you have any share among them; I am your share and your inheritance among the Israelites" (Nu 18:20). God supported the temple personnel through the offerings, not from the land. The Savior sees this as the full and complete expression of all that His relationship with God guarantees to Him. The LORD is the cup filled with blessing from which the Savior drinks (Ps 23:5). If תֹּסִיף means "to widen" the words of Psa 2:8 come to mind, "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession."

V E R S E 6

חבלים נפלגו לי בנעמים אף נחלת שפּרה עלי :

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. נ"ן

חבלים = "rope, cords" for binding or a snare; "Line" used to measure out land boundaries

נפלגו = Qal pft 3 m sg, "fall"

נעמים = agreeable, lovely, pleasant

אף = also, in addition to (more emphatic than ו)

נחלת = "heritage, inheritance"; The root meaning refers to giving or receiving property which is part of a permanent possession.

שפּרה = "be pleasing"; Qal pft ptc f. s, (תי- or ת- is f ending)

Commentary The Savior exclaims that His inheritance is very good and He is very pleased with it. His Church is that beautiful inheritance which includes people from all parts of the world. His "land" is not a desert wasteland, but a rich and productive lot. It is precious to Him. The true spiritual inheritance to pass on is service to the Lord [Josh 18:7 The Levites, however, do not get a portion among you, because the priestly service of the LORD is their inheritance.] No matter what happens, the perils will be turned to joy, the mists which surround him will be transformed into sunshine. Not only does it come from above, it is a blessing which rests על upon Him. Luther translated it: "A fine inheritance has become mine." (Lillegard, p. 41)

V E R S E 7

אברך את יהוה אשר יעצני אף לילות יסרוני כליותי :

"I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me." NIV

אברך = "bless, praise", Piel impf 1 c sg,

יעצני = "advise, counsel", Qal pft 3 m sg + 1 c sg sfx

יסרוני = "teach, guide", Piel pft יסר + 1 c sg sfx
= the idea of correction which results in education (discipline, chastisement arises often from the context (Dt 8:2-5)

כליותי = "Kidneys" (the seat of emotion), כליה

Commentary Recognizing blessings naturally gives rise to praise. Praise in this verse goes to Jehovah Who is both giver and gift. The world continually tries to push its ways onto the Savior, but it is Jehovah's counsel which is His guide. Stoeckhardt wrote: "the Petitioner does not only ask, but at once praise God. He takes the acceptance of His prayer for granted and already thanks for this" (p. 37) The Counselor's advice has been absorbed by Christ so that day and night the LORD is His inner most thought and emotions (Jn 14:11; 8:28-29). At night, a time of rest, the Savior ponders the counsel from within Himself, not from the suggestions of the world.

I wonder if the Savior also could be speaking here of the strength and comfort He needs to overcome the trouble and temptation especially on Maundy Thursday evening? Food for thought.

NOTE: The following verses will have Luke's account from Acts 2:25-28 for reference.

V E R S E 8

יָשִׁיתִי יְהוָה לְנֶגְדִי תָמִיד כִּי סִיְמִינִי בְּדֹאמְוִי

"I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken." NIV

25. Προορώμην τὸν κύριον ἐνώπιόν μου διὰ παντός,
ὅτι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἐστὶν ἵνα μὴ σαλευθῶ.

יָשִׁיתִי = "place, put, set up for comparison", Piel pft 1 c sg יָשַׁע
- Προορώμην see before, ahead of (leading me)

יָנַגְלָה - 7 + noun + 1 c sg sfx, "put in a conspicuous, high, prominent place" = before me

תָּמִיד = continuity, διὰ παντός = at all times, through all this

סִיְמִינִי = "at or on the right side (strong side); יָד + יָמִין

דֹּאמְוִי = "cause to stagger, stumble" => insecurity; Niph impf 1 c sg
- σαλευθῶ = "tossing of the sea, quaking of the earth => unrest, uncertainty, vasillation

Commentary Christ always puts the LORD in first place never taking His eyes off Him. At every stop and turn He looks ahead, and there is the LORD leading Him (the comfort of omnipresence). The Savior never trusted in anything else. Because Jehovah was there to support Him (Ps 23:5 - "Your rod and staff comfort me"), Christ was never shaken in His trust, nor did He vasillate in carrying out the work assigned. He had no fear because God was present at all times and His promises always were in effect. The Son was well taken care of by the Father.

V E R S E 9

: כִּנְשׁוּן לִבִּי יִשְׂמַח וְלִשׁוֹנִי יִשְׂמַח וְגַם לִבִּי יִשְׂמַח וְגַם לִבִּי יִשְׂמַח

"Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure," NIV

26. διὰ τοῦτο ἠύφρανθη ἡ καρδία μου, καὶ ἡ γαλλιάσατο ἡ γλῶσσά μου, ἔτι δὲ καὶ ἡ σὰρξ μου κατασκηνώσει ἐπ' ἐλπίδι.

כִּנְשׁוּן + לִבִּי = adv. expressing the realization of something previously spoken

כִּנְשׁוּן = "be glad, joyful"; Qal pft 3 m sg

לִשְׂמַח = "circle around" => vigorous, enthusiastic expression of joy
Qal impf 3 c sg of לִשְׂמַח
ευφραίνω - "be glad" (aor pass)

כְּבוֹדִי = "glory" + 1 c sg sfx;
or from כֶּבֶד = "liver" (Lev 3:4; Prv 7:23)
הַ לִּשְׂמַח מוֹ = "my tongue"

יִשְׂמַח = "stay, dwell, live", Qal impf 3 c sg
(God's dwelling on earth, the tabernacle = יִשְׂמַח
κατασκηνώσει = "dwell" (fut tense). The basic meaning refers to putting down a framework with portable walls. One stops, pitches a tent to rest awhile. The idea of a longer stay seems to be included. This leads to the idea of a secure and lasting dwelling.

בְּטַח + לִבִּי = the root implies "firmness, solidity". => a sense of well-being and security as the result of having someone in whom you can put your confidence.
ἐπ' ἐλπίδι = upon hope

Commentary The result of the Speaker's trust and confidence in the previous verse is praise. He fears nothing to His body and soul. "Therefore" marks the certainty of triumph. The Speaker is invincible even in the pressing presence of danger. "Glory" is synonymous with כְּבוֹד (Psa 57:8; 108:1) and refers to the soul as the glorious noble part of man, the reflection of the divine glory by which man as the image of God is elevated above the animals. Lillegard (p.42) offers this explanation for the use of "tongue" in the LXX and N.T.: "... the tongue is the natural organ through which the soul as the rational element in man finds expression."

The Savior concludes this verse by teaching that body and soul are distinct from each other. His heart and soul are rejoicing because Jehovah will shield his body from destruction (Dt 33:12,29). He has nothing to worry about because the LORD will preserve Him in all trials and temptations. His body rests safely. And even death will not rob Him of joy because He is confident that His body will be raised again. This is the thought of the next verse.

V E R S E 1 0

כִּי לֹא־תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לְשׂוֹלַת וְלֹא־תִתְּנֵנִי חַיֵּי קֳדְשֶׁךָ לְרֵאשִׁית חַהֲלָה:

"because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay." NIV

27. ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ᾗδην, οὐδέ
δώσεις τὸν ὅσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν.

תַּעֲזֹב = "abandon, leave"; Qal impf 2 m sg

נַפְשִׁי = [a] "soul"; [b] what makes a living being; [c] personal pron.

לְשׂוֹלַת + ל = [a] "hell"- place wicked punished (Psa 139:8, Dt 32:22);
[b] "death, grave" (1 Kg 2:6; Gn 37:35)

תִּתְּנֵנִי = "allow, permit" + acc of person (G-K 114m) - תַּנַּן

קֳדְשֶׁךָ = "holy", adj meaning one who is faithful, devout from קָדַם
which carries the idea of the God being loyal to His
covenant obligations so His own reap the blessings of His free
acts of rescue (Ps 23:6)

חַיֵּי קֳדְשֶׁךָ + ל = "see" meaning "to experience"; חָאָר Qal inf const

חַהֲלָה = [a] "pit" from חָלַל, "to sink down"
= [b] "destruction" from חָלַל, "to destroy"
διαφθοράν - corruption

Commentary Our classroom now is Jesus' cross and will move to His grave. The question we must address first is "what is 'sheol'?" Christ experienced on the cross what the unbeliever will suffer in Hell. All our sins were transferred to Jesus to as if they were His own. He felt in His soul God's wrath, God's justice condemning our sin. We hear Jesus' cry, "My God! My God! Why have you abandon me?" Luther speaks of this abandonment: "It does not treat of Christ's bodily suffering, which also was great and heavy, but of His deep spiritual suffering, which ... far surpasses all bodily suffering." (Pieper, Vol 2, p. 311) Jesus suffered ^{the punishments of} in hell. "For as surely as the wages of sin is not merely temporal death, but eternal punishment in hell, and as surely as Christ bore all the punishment of all sinners in the world, it is Scriptural to call Christ's suffering an enduring of the torments of hell. Furthermore, Scripture describes the torment of hell as the condition in which men are rejected from the presence of God, that is to say, in which they are forsaken of God (Mt 8:12; 25:41; 2 Thes 1:9)." (Pieper, *ibid*) God hid from God.

Hell is the eternal residence of the damned. Jesus was an inmate in Hell as He hung on the cross. Three days later He returned to hell with soul and revived body reunited as a free man to proclaim His redemption victory. During the interum "Sheol" also is where His body lay in temporal death. God's "Holy One" is contrasted with "corruption". τὸν ὅσιόν means not polluted. Paul wrote after quoting this verse (Acts 13:36) "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed." This is not the place of the damned. Up front He has the confidence that God will preserve from all decay the body of His "Favorite and Faithful One" when it rests in the grave.

[V][E][R][S][E] [1][1]

תוֹדִיעַנִי אֶרְחַח חַיִּים שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחֹת אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ נְעֻמֹת בְּיַמִּינְךָ נְצַח:

"You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." NIV

28. ἐγνώρισάς μοι ἑσούς ἡσῆς, πληρώσεις με εὐφροσύνης
μετὰ τοῦ προσώπου σου.

f. Heb. 5:8

תוֹדִיעַנִי = "know"; High impf s m sg + 1 c sg sfx
 ἐγνώρισάς - God makes knows his power, will or hidden knowledge which is beyond intellect

אֶרְחַח = "way"

שְׂבַע = "plenty, fullness" from the root "be satisfied, full"

שְׂמֵחֹת = joy

אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ = prep. "with, together with" + "your face, presence"

נְצַח = "perpetuity, forever" from root idea of "endurance"

Commentary It's Easter and Ascension in verse 11! The humble servant is not the glorified King! Christ says through David that the LORD raised Him from the dead. The "spirit" Jesus entrusted to His Father's care has been returned. God had preserved Jesus from death until it was time. Then He kept the Son safe in death. And now He has given life out of death. Death was forced to release its claim and grip on Jesus' body. Death will never separate them again. Forever, the Speaker will stay in the glorious presence of Jehovah. And that brings joy!

Psalm 16 ends at the right hand of God. On His heavenly throne our Speaker enjoys the full glory that belongs to Him as God and Savior. Jesus now walks the path that is life, real life, eternal life. Being able to talk with Jehovah face to face, being surrounded with blessings and nothing but blessings, being totally immune to evil and untouchable by its effects, that's "the way of life". That's heaven. Joy is complete and pleasure will never end.

Christ is speaking of Himself in Psalm 16. He alone can make the claims of the Psalmist. He spoke for our benefit. His words show us what it means to trust in the God above all things - no matter what the path ahead may hold. His Words show us the glory He chooses to share with us, a glory which is to be נְצַח, lasting forever. "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2). Because Christ has done this "the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away" (Isa 35:10).

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