



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Lessons from the Life of David

Psalm 16:1

“David and the Resurrection”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We’re turning to Psalm 16 for our Scripture reading and reading the entire Psalm. We are in the midst of a series of studies of themes from the Life of David and have studied, specifically, the Davidic promises. And if you read this psalm carefully with that in mind, you’ll recognize that David’s knowledge of the Davidic promises underlies this psalm in the sense that the confidence that he has and the confidence that he has in the resurrection is derived, ultimately, from the words that God spoke to him that he would have a house, he would have a throne, and he would have a kingdom that would endure forever. And we have talked about those promises that finally run out in someone who has eternal life, for the promises are eternal. Verse 1.

“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 [This is marvelous inferential conjunction, therefore, someone has called it the sublime “therefore”.] 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 [Or better, the Hebrew text has “in.”] In Your right hand are pleasures, forevermore.”

And the sense of that little preposition, *ba*, in the Hebrew text which more often than not means in, is simply “In God’s right hand are pleasures, forevermore;” that is, they are there for bestowal upon his saints. It’s a marvelous sentiment upon which to conclude the psalm.

May the Lord bless this reading of it and let’s bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for this marvelous day that Thou hast given to us; the day that the Christian church has historically set aside for special meditation and thanksgiving for the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for his representative atoning work in which he went to the Cross at Calvary for himself as the redeemer and for us who are the redeemed. And as our representative bore our sins, bore the penalty of them to the full, and by Thy grace was placed in a grave and then on the first day of the week, arose from it in significant testimony to the fact that the penalty had been paid, and that Thou hast been pleased in what the Son of God has done for us.

We are so grateful, Lord, that when he died we died. And when he rose from the dead, he rose for the saints who were to be brought to the knowledge of himself; and who have been brought to the knowledge of himself before New Testament times. And so on this, the Lord’s Day, we recognize him as a living Savior, who lives and at the

present moment is engaged in the task of securing all of the blessings for which he has died, and we are among them. And so, Lord, we give Thee thanks. We are grateful, indeed. We know we do not fully understand all that Thou hast done for us, but we do give Thee thanks. And we pray that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, given by Him, we may understand more fully what it means to be united to the Son of God.

We thank Thee for the Christian Church and we pray Thy blessing upon each body of believers that meet today to minister the word of God, to give thanks with us for the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray, Lord, Thy blessing upon our country, upon our President, give wisdom and guidance to him and to others who are associated in government; not only in Washington but in Texas, in Austin and in Dallas.

And, Father, we are indeed grateful for the privilege of pray; that we can bring our petitions to Thee and know that Thou dost hear them. And we pray for those unable to be here for various reasons, and especially for those who are sick, we commit them to Thee. For some who are bereaving, we pray for them. And for others who have difficult questions that face them, who have asked us for our prays, we pray Lord for them and we ask that Thou wilt give answers that will bring glory to Thy name and will ease the problems and tensions of life in those who have requested the prayers.

We pray for Believers Chapel and its ministries, for its elders and deacons, its members and friends and the visitors who are with us here today. May our reflection upon the word of God exalt our Savior Jesus Christ.

And we pray in His Name. Amen.

[Message] The subject for today as you will note from the bulletin is, “David and the Resurrection.” Reading through Psalm 16 and then reflecting upon the major thrust of the psalm, one generally comes to the conclusion that this is the psalm of a single-minded saint meditating upon the God in whom he trusts. You’ll notice, for example, in the first

verse, he says, “Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.” And then in the 8th verse, “I have set the Lord always before me because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.” Confident of the covenantal promises because he calls himself such, one gathers that he has no depression whatsoever because of the experiences of life because he knows his biblical doctrine that has been unfolded to him.

The occasion of the psalm is a matter of dispute by scholars and students who have delved into its teaching rather deeply. One suggestion which has appealed to me, in the light of our studies particularly, is that David writes this psalm against the background of those great promises that have been given to him in 2 Samuel chapter 7; promises that we studied not too long ago. Among them are these: “I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom; he shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever; I will be his Father and he shall be my Son, if he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men, but my mercy shall not depart from him.” And that expression, my mercy, *chesed*, is the Hebrew expression, is a covenantal term, loving covenantal mercy. And, as a matter of fact, the author when he speaks in the 16th Psalm of the “Holy One,” that particular expression is related to it. And then in verse 3, when he says, “As for the saints,” the Holy Ones, a similar connection may be made; and then, finally, “And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you, your throne shall be established forever.” These are the great unconditional, covenantal, Davidic promises that under gird, perhaps, I think probably, the author of this psalm as he writes it. And so if we bear those promises in mind, I think, we can understand some of the things that he states here.

As God gave those promises to him, he said in the light of the use of that term “eternal” so often, there would come a time when a person would come from the loins of David, who would be the one who would sit upon a throne and eternally sit upon that

throne. In other words, the promises given to historic King David would finally run out in an individual who would have eternal existence.

Now, we know the story of the Bible is to the effect that Jesus of Nazareth, born of the seed of David, has by virtue of his saving work ascended the throne at the right hand of the Father and is the eternal son of David. So it's against that background that David, reflecting upon his life and the promises of God to him, writes this.

The New Testament tells us without equivocation that this psalm was written of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two of the apostles of the New Testament refer to it. Peter refers to it in Acts chapter 2 in verse 25 through verse 32, when he preaches on the Day of Pentecost. And I'm going to read these words, because, I think, it will help us to bear them in mind, as well. In the midst of the sermon, Peter writes.

“For David says concerning him, ‘I foresaw the Lord always before my face. For he is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore, my heart rejoiced and my tongue was glad; moreover, my flesh also will live in hope, for you will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of joy in your presence.’”

Now, Peter expounds upon that text and says.

“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. Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the 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.”

In the 13th chapter, when Paul was preaching in the synagogue in Antioch and Presidia, he, likewise, refers to this text. And, furthermore, makes the same point that Peter does. Speaking of the resurrection in that message, Paul has said.

“And that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption. He has spoken thus, ‘I will give you the sure mercies of David,’ therefore, he also says in another psalm, ‘You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption.’ For David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers and saw corruption; but he, whom God raised up, saw no corruption. Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by him everyone who believes is justified from all things which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

You can see from that that he, in effect, says, the promises have run out in one who lives forever, and that One is Jesus of Nazareth.

Bible students wonder about how much the saints of the Old Testament understood concerning the promises that we are able to understand in the light of the New Testament contribution to understanding. But one can, in thinking about David, reflect upon the steps by which he may have come to understanding such as this. He had a direct revelation, David did, that his throne would be established forever.

The fore in the fore-glancings of prophetic vision, he saw the Holy One in the coming age as its ruler and its head. He saw the Holy One going down into the tomb. Peter says, he was a prophet. He went down to Sheol, not Hell, but Hades the invisible realm of the departed. He saw the Holy One rising again, so we are told here. In other words, the promises enabled him to, as a student of divine revelation, picture what was lying before him. And, finally, it was this sublime, Messianic hope that the prophet David made as the foundation of his hopes for the future, and upon which he built his hopes for

the future. He also understood that that which was true of the head of the body of the redeemed is, therefore, true of all of the members of the body of the redeemed; for the head acts for the members. Being joined to the head, they experience the things that he experiences. The Apostle Paul, of course, in his great teachings concerning the union of believers with Christ, expatiates upon this and makes that point over and over again.

Sometimes people say, “Are you saying that everybody in Israel had faith like this in Old Testament times?” No, I’m not saying that. “Are you saying that this was the average belief of those in Israel?” No, I’m not saying that either, anymore than when I look out over this audience here and I recognize in the midst of this audience, several excellent Bible students that I, therefore, assume that everyone in this audience understands exactly what they understand. We know from human experience that there are certain individuals to whom God has given an unfolding of his teaching that is beyond the understanding, at least at that point, of others. There are differing viewpoints, differing understanding, differing appreciation of the teaching of the word of God. Some of us have studied the Scriptures for a long time and we ought to know more than those who are beginning to delve into the Holy Scriptures and learn something of the blessings that are in them. So we don’t say that everybody understood what David said. What we are saying is that David was given by God a magnificent understanding of the things that lay before him. And, therefore, he writes this psalm out of what God had in that marvelous condescension to him had given him.

As a matter of fact, C. S. Lewis wrote a book one time on the psalms in which he made this interesting statement. He said, referring to Keble, he said, Keble said, “Thoughts beyond their thoughts to these high bards were given.” And it is interesting that if you read Plato and some others, you will occasionally find insights that were given to them that are not fully Christian, but they at least appreciate life and what God may be doing more than their contemporaries and anticipate things that are found in the word of God.

David's Psalm 16 is called a *michtam*; the meaning of that word is uncertain, and we'll rather leave it because it is so uncertain. It may mean something like a meditation, or perhaps an inscription. But, nevertheless, it is a psalm of David. It's a typical psalm; that is, it is a psalm in which David speaks out of his own experience, but it's clear from what follows, especially in the last few verses that David by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit moves beyond himself and writes in words that can only, ultimately, refer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible is full of typical teaching for the simple reason that there is one God, and he always deals according to his own stated and stable principles. And so we find in the Old Testament anticipations of things in the New. The things in the Old Testament are historical; they pertain to specific history. But God works in New Testament times in similar ways. And the relationships between them are easy for biblical students to see. And in this case, David's experiences are typical experiences but his writing goes beyond himself, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and he writes, particularly in the last few verses, of the Lord Jesus, himself.

The occasion of the psalm is not stated by David. We only learn incidentally, the experience he may be undergoing. He says, for example, in verse 1, “Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.” We don't know exactly what may have occasioned that comment but it may have been some experience in which he felt a special need to turn to the Lord God. And so out of that experience he writes, “Preserve me for in You I put my trust.”

Now, this as a statement is very important for us as a general principle. I think you could probably realize as you reflect upon it, that this is really the beginning of true piety or true religion, or true understanding of God. “Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.” This is the beginning of a relationship to God. It also is the ground of it. And it is as he states a relationship that is founded upon trust, not merit, trust. “In you I have put my trust.” He doesn't look over his life and say, “I have lived a marvelous life

and I have gained merit before the Lord God by the things that I have done.” There were certain things in David’s life that one might reflect upon and call merit. But, they were not the things upon which David put his hopes. He says, “For in You I put my trust.”

I reflect upon an incident in our Lord’s life that makes the point so beautifully. A certain lawyer came to him. And the lawyer said to him, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Now, I know on the resurrection day, some of you might think it’s not the time to talk about a lawyer. I read this past week that a tragedy is a bus load of lawyers going over a cliff with one empty seat. [Laughter] But this is a different kind of lawyer. This is a biblical lawyer, he’s an individual who understands biblical things and he comes to the Lord and he says, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” he had heard, no doubt, that the Lord Jesus was heretical; that he had been disparaging the law of Moses as if to suggest that one did not gain eternal life by keeping the commandments of the Lord. And our Lord must have surprised him with his answer; for to the lawyer he says, “What’s written in the law? How readest thou?”

And in the response, he repeated the well-known words so familiar to every Jew, enjoining love of God and love of man. And then after the surprise had grown into a bit of astonishment and the lawyer had replied, the Lord Jesus said to him, “You’ve answered right, this do and thou shalt live. Now the lawyer had come and said, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” And he had phrased it in this way. I’m going to retranslate the original text. “Having done what?” That is, having done as a great act. “Having done what, shall I inherit eternal life?” And Jesus reaches the conclusion of the discussion and says, “This be doing.” The difference between some great act of piety and the constant everlasting keeping of the Law of Moses. Our Lord, of course, was designing by the response to bring this man to the sense of inability to keep the law, for no man can keep the law and no man can please God by his works. And so the lawyer in typical legal fashion throws a red herring across the discussion by saying, “But who is my neighbor?” And that gives the occasion for our Lord to tell that marvelous parable of the Good

Samaritan. And in the course of the discussion, the Good Samaritan makes the point that the Savior is one whom, but for his ruin and misery, the sinners would despise and repel just like the priest and the Levite who come and would not have anything to do with him. And the Savior is the Samaritan, the one who is the foreigner, who comes and deals with the sinner as the Lord Jesus does. In other words, everything ultimately is grounded in the compassion of the Lord God.

So “Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.” My friend, there is no hope of eternal life ever in things that we do. Trying to keep the law, substituting for that religion and piety by attending church meetings such as you are doing now, observing the ordinances of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism, being born in the right religious family, carrying out the right duties in the midst of our society, being a church person, being an educated person, being a cultured person, being a law abiding person, already have your income tax return ready and it’s honestly prepared, it’s exactly what you think you owe. No, that’s not the way to eternal life, the psalmist says, “Preserve me, O God, for in You I have put my trust.” He knows he could never keep the law of God; his salvation rests, ultimately, in what God has done through the one who rises from the dead.

There’s a single mindedness about this man that is certainly remarkable and it fits with what we know of David, throughout many of the months of his life, particularly of his early life. He says of him, “O my soul, you have said to the Lord, “You are my Lord.” “You are my sovereign master,” is the force of the term that is used there.

When I was a young preacher, I remember being in a meeting with an older preacher, whom I came to know very well. He’s now with the Lord. He lived to be about ninety-five years of age. And I think the reason he did was because the Lord liked to sustain him; he was such a marvelous Christian man, teacher, preacher, and missionary. He said a young girl once came to him when he was talking about the Lord Jesus and how we are bond slaves of him like the Apostle Paul. And she said to him, “I can’t understand the philosophy of life which rejoiced in being a bond slave.” And he added,

“She was not married.” [Laughter] But then he went on to say, “Don’t pity us. We’re enjoying it. To be a bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, what could be more wonderful than that?” So, our author says, “You are my Lord,” you are my sovereign master, you are my Adonai. And he goes on to say, “I have no goodness apart from You.” That is, nothing in my life measures up except that which I have in you. That’s the meaning of his trust. “My goodness is nothing apart from You.”

This is an allusion to the opening of the passage in which the Ten Commandments is set forth; where the Lord says, “You shall have no other gods before Me.” And so, he’s expressing that thought. “My goodness is nothing apart from You.”

We have some faint reflections of this in saints down through the years. You can think of the things you’ve read about Christian saints, for example, George Whitfield, the great evangelist, “O Lord, give me souls or take my soul. Henry Martin, the missionary to the Far East, in India, knelt on the coral strands of India’s beaches when he came there and he said, “Here let me burn out for God.” And David Brainerd, missionary to North American Indians in the eighteenth century, “Lord, to Thee I dedicate myself, O, accept me and let me be Thine forever. Lord, I desire nothing else, I desire nothing more.” I think David Brainerd when one reads his life and that’s all underlined in his life, might well have said, “My goodness, he’s nothing apart from you.” And Raymond Lull, the thirteenth century missionary to the Muslims, “To Thee O Lord I offer myself, my wife, my children, and all that I possess.” And Count von Zinzendorf, “I have one passion, it is He and He alone.”

As for the saints, David says, “Who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.” Saints! That’s a word that suggests dignity, not so much morality as dignity. One set apart by the Lord God for the carrying out of his tasks.

It’s so marvelous; you know, you don’t have to be dead, having performed two miracles to be a saint. A saint is a person who has believed in Jesus Christ. And so you can call me Saint Lewis, if you like. People might think you’ve mixed me up with the

city. But, nevertheless, those who believe in Christ are rightly called saints. They are set apart and they are set apart though they are still sinners, though they are still from time to time displeasing to the Lord. But, nevertheless, their trust as David’s trust is in the Lord and he has given them in marvelous goodness a righteousness and a holiness, positionally, that is pleasing to Him.

Now, the psalmist after his saying these things that characterize his one compelling, moving hope, talks about the apostates and he rebukes them. He says, “Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god.” This, incidentally, is an allusion to the fall in the Garden of Eden for one of the first things that God said and particularly did he say it when he was giving the judgment upon Eve, he said, “To the woman I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception.” So David alludes to that when he says, “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.”

God-centeredness describes him, and the god-centeredness is the God of divine revelation in the word of God. We have all kinds of gods today and this has special meaning for them. What kind of a society do we live in, in which we have still here and there the philosophy that god is dead, and that Elvis is alive? [Laughter] Can you imagine that? This is the kind of society in which we live. It is a society that does not know God. And so we have materialism, we have the gods of philosophy, positivism, existentialism, nihilism, and we could go down the list. We have psychology and its peculiar views with relativism and various other types of things that are contrary to the teaching of the word of God. They’re “isms” someone has said. “Most of the ‘isms’ are ‘was-isms’ before long. And most of these are fast becoming was-isms.

But, nevertheless, they are with us and they trouble us. And many of us, who do not keep the word of God before us, forget the divine revelation in the discussions of life and lose the opportunity to give a testimony to our Lord and also lose the enjoyment of the faith that is really ours.

Well, after those verses in which he has rebuked the apostates, in the midst of them, he does say some significant things. He said, “O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; you maintain my lot.” Not the false gods. “The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good inheritance.”

Now, with that as the theme, the remainder of this psalm deals with the review of his blessings in God. The goodly heritage is, ultimately, just God, for all of these things are ours when we have the Lord God. This is really what it is to have God, all of these thing.

Now, we'll just notice a few of them. Notice the 7th verse, “I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel.” He guides me. The first evidence of his guidance is when he guided me to turn to Jesus Christ and believe in him, the first evidence in which he moved my will to choose him. But this particular statement is one that is very existential. Notice, he says, “My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.” Anyone who has lain awake at night and reflected upon the things in his life knows what David is talking about. He says the Lord has given him counsel; but on the human side, “My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.” I've had to reflect on the things that are in my life. And that heart searching often drives away sleep. There's nothing easy about being guided by the Lord but the fundamental direction comes from him but we interact with that and, ultimately, are brought to his mind. He says, “I have set the Lord always before me because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.” This is the security that God provides for us. Could this be said, incidentally, of any man? It's almost as if he's getting ready to talk about our Lord, isn't it. “I have set the Lord always before me.” The only person who always did that was our Lord, but David, perhaps reflecting upon how in his experience at this point, the Lord is generally always before him, comments upon the fact that he has him at his right hand, and therefore, he shall not be moved.

We think of the experiences of the New Testament saints like Peter, when seeing the Lord walking upon the water and not knowing who it was, he was troubled and

fearful. But then when the knowledge came to him that it was really the Lord, he asked the Lord to call him out and, you know, it's a bigger miracle than our Lord walking on the water, Peter actually walked on the water. He walked on the water until, perhaps, some thought came into his mind, “I'm really doing this.” And he began to look around at the waves and then fear took hold of his heart and he began to sink. And he cried out, “Lord save me or I'll perish!” And the Lord Jesus reached out his hand and brought him safely in.

You know, even at our highest expressions of faith in the Lord, there is always something that's lacking in this life. About twenty-five years ago I was in Boston and I heard Professor Leon Morris give a message in a church in Boston. And he told a story which has always impressed me; it's a funny story. He told me the story of General Anthony McAuliffe. Now, those of you who are as old as I am will remember the Battle of the Bulge. But you may have forgotten the name of the general of the United States Army that the German officer called upon to surrender in the midst of the Battle of the Bulge. And General McAuliffe gave him his return in one word. “Nuts!” And he became famous for that. So when the war was over, wherever he went, and he was asked to speak at many, many places, they always told that story of how, when the German general, the general was by the name of von Manteuffel, had asked him to surrender in the Battle of the Bulge, that crucial battle. And he had said “nuts” that story was told so often that he became sick of the story and it became know he was sick of the story. And so there was a meeting of some individuals and a woman was in charge, and she told everybody no mention of the Battle of the Bulge and the term “nuts.” The General doesn't like that, so we're not going to tell the story. They went through the whole program and sure enough nobody mentioned the fact that he had replied “nuts.” And at the last of the meeting, the meeting was over, she said to him, “General, we thank you very much for being with us. Good night, General McNuts.” [Laughter] Dr. Morris used

that to illustrate the fact that we can never get rid of all of our sin, no matter how much we may feel that we are walking in the will of God. There is still something there.

Well, the final few verses are verses in which David speaks of the resurrection of the Lord. He, in effect, moves beyond his own experiences now, by the Holy Spirit, as Peter and Paul point out, and speaks of Christ, for this could never be true of anyone else. And it was not true of David, as history bore out. “Therefore my heart is glad; my flesh also will rest in hope.” In fact, you could call these clauses here, seven rays of light, boldly affirming deliverance from death and resurrection. He says in the 10th verse, “For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” “Your Holy One!” “Thy Holy One!” And, finally, in verse 11, “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

It’s very interesting as I mentioned, in the Scripture reading, that we should read that last statement “In Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” It’s almost as if he’s picturing the Lord God as having all of these pleasures and they are in his hand; and so, they are ripe for bestowal. “In Your hand are pleasures forevermore.” And that awaits the saint who believes in the Lord Jesus. God is just waiting to pour out upon him the blessings that are blessings forevermore, the eternal blessings that are found in the word of God.

There is one passage in the Book of Revelation that I think might be something of an exposition of it. And if you have your Bible, you might turn there. It’s Revelation chapter 7 in verse 14 through verse 17. And some of the blessings that are recorded here are blessings that are said to be those of the Gentile multitude that come out of the great tribulation; surely, the same kinds of blessings that you and I shall have when we come to heaven, as well.

And so we read in chapter 7 in verse 14, “And he said to him, ‘Sir,’ in answer to the question, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes and where did they come from?’

‘You know,’ so he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall neither hunger nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.’” What he suggests is a pastoral scene of eternal shepherding. The bleak herbage of the wilderness, the brook-less channels, the falling snows, the angry tempest, the roar of the ravaging wolves are known no more, for the Lamb and the sheep. “The glorious picture is a picture of unbroken sunshine, of gleaming pastures, of pellucid waters of living fountains,” someone has said.

But isn't it strange that there is no shepherd really. It's the Lamb who leads the sheep, a marvelous little touch, reminding us of the fact that He and we are one. He's the Lamb, but he's the Lamb who is the shepherd; and we are the sheep. And so, consequently, these individuals know the joy of continual sustaining, living fountains we will be led to. Notice the plural, fountains, not just one, fountain. There is a kind of infinite progression in the joys and felicities of heaven. We move like sheep from pasture to pasture, from fountain to fountain, and there is variety and diversity, therefore, in the experiences of heaven. He feeds, he leads, he wipes away tears. It'd be no heaven without our Lord, would it? It's the final fulfillment of “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” David has anticipated some of this here when he says, “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the necessary crowning of the life that began by a virgin birth and was continued in the beauty of holiness. Listen to this remarkable statement. It was made by Ernest Renan, you may remember him as an unbelieving man, but a student of the Scriptures who wrote a book called, “The Life of

Jesus.” He said, “He is the incomparable man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of Son of God; and that, with justice.” Imagine an unbeliever in his research, coming to that conclusion that he is truly the Son of God and that with justice and still withholding faith in him.

I want to say just one last word or two about that last verse. I don't know whether you've looked at that and meditated upon it. But I suggest to you that it underlines the fact that it's not enough to admire the Lord Jesus. We are to commune with him along the path of life with joys into eternity. Look, “You will show me the path of life.” “You” the guide will show me the traveler the path of life, that's the way, the path. And it also is the path of life, that's the goal. And one can see the progression. “You will show me the path” that leads to life. And, “In Your presence is fullness of joy and at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” That's the eternal goal and experience of those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. So to have our Lord Jesus is to have one who is our eternal shepherd, who has been raised from the dead and, consequently, guarantees that the experiences of life, which are ours, will be experiences that are blessings forever.

I'd like to close with just a brief account of a story that happened during the Crusades. Philippe Auguste was the King of France. Before he went in to one of his battles, he removed his royal crown, so it is said, placed it on a table in front of his leading soldiers and said to them that this particular crown, which was his crown, should have an inscription, *O plus digne*, “To the most worthy.” And he went on to make his oration, as was customary in those days before a battle. And he said to them that his nobles, his knights, had an opportunity to serve him in a way that would bring glory to the country and to their cause. And he suggested that the individual who fought and was the most worthy would have that crown put upon his head, that crown that said, “O plus digne.” Well, the battle was fought and at the end of it, his nobles came together, they entered into the room where the table was on which the crown had been placed, and one

of the nobles stepped forward and took the crown in his hands and advanced toward the monarch who had fought so beautifully in the battle himself. And he said to the King, *Tu O roi es le plus digne*. “You, O King, are the most worthy.” And with that put the crown back upon the king’s head.

I couldn’t think of anything more wonderful than to have the privilege of taking a crown and putting it upon the head of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with the saints of God and say to him, “You, O Lord, are the most worthy, our Savior, our Redeemer, who has paid the penalty of our sin, who has entered into death for us, who has risen again for our eternal enjoyment of the pleasures of the Lord God.”

If you are here today and you have never believed in him, we remind you of what Jesus Christ has done. We remind you of what is available by virtue of what Christ has accomplished in the shedding of his blood. He has called upon the saints of God to give a universal invitation and we give that universal invitation, “Come unto me,” in our Lord’s words, “and I will give you rest.” Come to Christ! Believe in him! Trust in him!

As Paul told the Philippians jailer, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Don’t leave this auditorium today without the conviction that the Lord Jesus is your Savior as well.

Let’s stand for the Benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the greatness of the Son of God and for the greatness of his work that has been accomplished for us. And we thank Thee for the insight of David the King, given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, brought home to us through the preservation of the word of God. Lord, if it should please Thee let not one person in this auditorium leave without the conviction. The Lord Jesus is my Savior, too.

For his name’s sake. Amen.