

## Theme: Our Security is in God (12/4/26)

Text: Psalm 16; Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalm 16 refers to as 'Miktam of David'. There are five others under the same title in psalm 56-60. The background of these Psalms is clearly stated at the top. Most of them were written when David fled from Saul and seek refuge around and outside the boundary of Israel. These Psalms (Miktam) including today's Psalm 16 are well known as 'golden words' or 'mystery poems' to which we do not know much about. What we do know is that Psalm 16 is about **security in God**. It's about finding **refuge in God**. It is interesting to have this mysterious Psalm in the Bible readings for Easter Season. Because the hidden treasure of this Psalm had been unfolded in Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost.

However, David talks in this Psalm as if he knew how these things would be unfolded. It is quite amazing how this prophecy was fulfilled. But it is far more amazing for the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost to connect the resurrection of Jesus with this Psalm. Simon Peter unfolds this prophecy in front of the eyes of the great crowds in Jerusalem that day. But we'll come to it later on.

Again, the point of this Psalm is quite clear that **God will bring us through life and death to everlasting joy if our refuge is in God alone**. Before we proceed, let me ask you this question which might be helpful to have an answer at the back of your mind as we walk through this psalm together. When you hear the word "refuge", What does it make you think of? What picture in your mind that leads you to? Is it a solid building like a castle or fortress – with locks and guards in every corner? What is the vibe or feel of the word? Is it a word you like to hear or something you would like to see or something you need? Let us see what Psalm 16 can offer as we follow through 3 simple headings:

**i) God is our Refuge (1-4)** <sup>1</sup>*Keep me safe, O God*. This cry or petition shapes the rest of the psalm. In other words, the rest of the psalm carries and upholds this line – a cry for help. What kind of help? Help to be safe, secured and preserved. Isn't this something desperately needed in our world today? A safe and peaceful place? How else do you do when you are in a critical and unsafe circumstances? We can imagine many similar horrible situations in the wars in Europe and the Middle East right now. Many have no chance to escape or find a safe place for cover. Imagine in a similar context, David wrote this Psalm. He found no share in the land of his birth or help from his own people. The only option left was a help from above; <sup>1</sup>*Keep me safe, O God*.

God is the ground of David's hope. He puts his trust in Him and finds refuge in Him alone. He goes on to say, *for in you I take refuge*. David's petition reflects who God is and what God has done in his life. This is a key question for us too, Who God is to you? Your answer for this question will like David reflect on our petitions and shapes our trust and walk with God. Truly, it does not make sense to ask for help from someone who cannot help himself. Or ask someone for something he does not have and cannot produce. David knows the God he put his trust on and the God he found refuge in. In his other psalm: 'Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings' (Ps. 17:8). Imagine the secure and comforting experience of being under God's protection and care.

<sup>2</sup>*I said to the LORD (Yahweh – Great God of Covenant, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), you are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing.* This is an affirmation of faith. Like Thomas' confession after seeing the risen Christ, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). David praises God with great confidence that for him, God is all he needs. And without God, he finds nothing good anywhere else. Remember the young man who ran up to Jesus, fell on his knees and asked, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus answered, "Why do you call me good, for no-one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:17). Friends, we have reliable evidence before us to find refuge on God alone. For without Him it is a waste of time to look elsewhere. David acknowledges God as the ultimate source of all blessings.

David goes on to affirm the supreme goodness of God as he sees His people. <sup>3</sup> *the saints who are in the land, He says, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.* The word 'saints' here are not about holy people (in the Catholic context), but it points to all Christians as Apostle Paul used in most of his letters. David delights on God's people for how they treasure and honour God. As he adores and delights in God and His people now turns his back on those who rebel against God and 'run after other gods.' Jesus Himself and Apostle Paul hate all wickedness, especially the serious crime of idolatry – viewing it as a betrayal of worship due to God alone. Those who follow in their worldly desires or demons over the Creator and His promise of eternal life (1 Cor. 10:20-21; Col. 3:5).

**2. God is our Contentment (5-8)** David returns to verse 2 'You are my Lord, apart from you I have no good thing', and put it in a more positive and affirming way: <sup>5</sup> *Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure.* Imagine attending at a nice display of choicest food for supper and grill salmon and coconut juice your favourites were among them. Why do you waste

your time looking at KFC and cokes? If the Lord is among that kind of display, to David the Lord is his portion. The Lord is his chosen portion. Nothing is more satisfying and sustenance than Him. Listen to prophet Isaiah's great invitation: 'Come all you who are thirsty, come to the water...Why spend money on what is not bread and your labour on what does not satisfy...give ear and come to me; hear me that your soul may live' (Isaiah 55:1). David acknowledges that his situation is divinely appointed. This means that he was there for a purpose – to lead him to something greater, to point him to something eternally satisfying and secure. <sup>6</sup> ... *surely, I have a delightful inheritance*. One of the interesting things we learn in this Psalm is that David never mentioned any of the troubles he was at or had been through. He focusses on seeking security on God alone, the source of all blessing. We must not get it wrong that when we put our trust in God then everything is going well without aches and pains or failures. But we would be able to see the big picture of God's purpose for us in our current situation. God will lead us from there to the richness and the sufficiency of His provisions for all we need in this life and the next.

This is what we see in the next two verses. David turns his petitions into declaration and praise. <sup>7</sup> *I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; because of all of these, <sup>8</sup> I have set the Lord always before me. When he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken*. By setting God always before our eyes and keeping Him at our right hand as the source of our strength there and then is the cause of our stability in the changing circumstance of our world.

David did not ignore or hide his struggles and troubles he had been through, but expresses it in a way which most of us struggle to do – to share them by crying out for help. He did not grumble and dwell on his problem, but focus on the solution and where to find it. Friends, if this is something you struggle with in finding correct and helpful counsels for particular issues of your life, talk to the minister or the elders and return to this psalm again and to God's word for direction. Whatever happens in your life and circumstances right now, remain faithful and stick with God. He knows what is best for you now and beyond. The same experience causes Peter to confess after the crowd turn away from the Lord. When Jesus asked the disciples, – “are you going to leave too?” Peter replied, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the word of eternal life” (John 6:67-68). This leads us to our final point.

**3. God is our eternal Joy (9-11)** The psalm ends with the writer's eyes on eternity and beyond the grave. It looks toward eternal security and the hope of

resurrection. This is why we often hear this Psalm 16 being read on the Easter Season. It is quite encouraging to see people care for their own death – set aside money for the funeral, ground for the grave, design the order of service and write their own eulogy and so on. David's confidence in the Lord never changes. While many are fearful and slow to accept death, David sings praises to God, <sup>9</sup> *Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; [this is what it looks/feels like in the end – joyful!] Why? Because, *my body also will rest secure, how come?* <sup>10</sup> *because you (Lord) will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.**

David knew from God's word (2 Samuel 7:11-16), that he will die, but one of his descendants as Peter unfolds in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost – will sit on his throne forever. David spoke about the resurrection of Christ (the Anointed One) that He was not abandoned to the grave, nor His body see decay, for God raised Him to life (Acts 2:31-32). This is the hope of resurrection foretold and eternal joy for those who secured their place in God's provision and found refuge in Him alone. George Herbert (English poet) said, "Death used to be an executioner, but the Gospel makes him just a gardener." David may have seen this truth when he foretold the resurrection of Jesus – you do not bury a Christian, you plant him. One day to arise in perfected physical glory.

Simple messages to take home from this Psalm: **i)** Seek to find your security on God alone. It is good to have a secure place and house to live, secure bank account and health insurance, but none of these can secure a place for us in heaven. **ii)** Give thanks and be grateful for the beautiful and everlasting inheritance God has secured for you through the resurrection of Jesus. **iii)** Keep God first and before you in every situation, allowing Him to guide your decisions and bring contentment to your soul.

**Prayer:** *Heavenly Father, we praise Your name for Your wonderful gift of salvation, through the death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Give us greater understanding of what the life of 'Christ-in-us' means, and may many come to an understanding of this eternal truth today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*