

Like many of you, I read (or listen to) the Bible through every year. In addition to that, I read a chapter in Proverbs every day for 10 of those months, and two months each year I read through the book of Psalms, 5 Psalms a day. I was struck again by Psalm 16 – David's personal, soul stunned delight in his God.

A "Michtam" of David. (A "golden" Psalm – fit to be inscribed in letters of gold on a straight pillar to endure)

David was exiled from Israel by Saul's persecution. He was forced, against his will, to live amongst Philistine idolaters, many of whom bitterly remembered his victory over Goliath. It's amazing the number of times the song "David has slain his 10,000's" was brought up against him by Jew and Philistine alike. That "top 40" song was long remembered! At times David despaired. (1 Sam 27:1; 30:6) At other times he exulted in God's deliverance. (Psalm 18) Hence the varied moods of the Psalms. You will notice that in the Psalm, while David primarily uses God's covenant name Yahweh (LORD), he also uses Elohim (God) and Adonai (Lord) as he calls on and confesses Yahweh as his God.

God is our Protection

1 Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.

2 O my soul, you have said to the LORD, "**You are my Lord**, My goodness is nothing apart from You."

3 As for the saints who are on the earth, "They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."

4 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.

David sought his refuge in God alone. As he said in Psalm 121, there was no help for him in the hills is Israel or Philistia. He lifted his eyes above the hills to the Maker of heaven of earth. He cries out to God to preserve his life. He recognizes that God would have to save him by grace, as he had no righteousness of his own to commend him for rescue. David loved and delighted in God's people, and longed to worship with them at God's sanctuary. And as deeply as he loved God's people, so deeply he grieved at the idolatry so prevalent around him. David determined in his heart, no matter how strong the pressure, no matter how common the practice, no matter how difficult the circumstances, he would remain true to the living God. No one would receive his prayers but the God of Israel. Let Israel betray him and seek his life, yet the God of Israel would be his protection.

God is our Portion

5 O LORD, **You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup**; You maintain my lot.

6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance.

Though exiled far from his rightful land allotment, David realized his enduring and delightful inheritance was to be found in God alone. As he thought about how the ancient tribal boundaries were set in the days of Joshua, and then allotted by random lot, he remembered that the Levites "had the Lord as their inheritance." And who but those who have God as their inheritance are able to retain their inheritance? Every earthly inheritance is forfeit at death. The land we greedily claim as our own becomes the land that likewise claims our bodies in the grave. Only those who find in God their inheritance have a sure and lasting inheritance. God gave himself to us as our assigned portion! And this God who is our inheritance will also preserve that inheritance to us, making it secure to us for all eternity. "You maintain my lot!" Glory!

Not only did David see God as His eternal "inheritance", but he found in God his "cup." God was his refreshing drink of immediate need that quenched his thirst in the desert of his exile. We know God is our inheritance, but do we find in Him our cup as well?

Now David returns to his meditation on God as his inheritance. As one would survey his inheritance to check out the survey lines and examine the boundaries and evaluate the value, so David considers the infinite boundaries and infinite value of His incomprehensible God, and cries out.... "the (boundary) lines have fallen (been allotted) unto me in beautiful surroundings. Yes, I have a wonderful inheritance in my God!"

God is our Vision

7 I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

8 ¶ **I have set the LORD always before me**; Because **He is at my right hand** I shall not be moved.

This God who is our Protection and our Portion is also our ever present Counselor and Keeper. David set Yahweh before him – that is, he followed Yahweh, listening to His counsel, and responding in submissive obedience. Because David had Yahweh before him and followed Him in obedience, he found Yahweh as his Guard and Keeper at his right hand. Psalm 121 carries this theme even further, as you see David’s repeated reference to God his “Keeper.” To have the Lord before us also give the idea of keeping Him in sight, before our eyes, before our face. This concept of living before God’s face is a common one throughout the Old Testament. Living “in the sight of the Lord” is our joy and privilege. It is the essence of fearing and loving God. He is our vision, that which enthralls and fills us with inexpressible delight. Circumstances were awful, but the Lord filled David’s vision enabling him to exult in his glorious possession of God Himself.

God is our Pleasure

9 Therefore my *heart* is glad, and my *glory* rejoices; My *flesh* also will rest in hope.

10 For You will not leave my *soul* in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see *corruption*.

11 You will show me the *path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Because God was David’s Protection, Portion, and Vision, David could rejoice in the midst of banishment and exile. He could, heart, soul and body, rejoice and rest with confidence that God would deliver him from the ultimate enemy, death itself. Knowing that God would lift his soul from Hades, his body from the grave, and present him faultless at God’s right hand in heaven, he rested and rejoiced in the face of death itself! Notice the play on “right hand” – The Lord was at David’s right hand (as Keeper) on the journey and now David contemplates being at God’s right hand, that is, in God’s presence forever. David endured the frustration and futility of life with joy, peace and rest knowing that God who was his Portion, would also be his Preserver and his Pleasure forever. This is not to take away the glorious Messianic application of these last three verses, as noted by Peter in Acts 2:24-36. But let us not lose the personal application for ourselves that David found in God his Preserver, God his Portion and God his Pleasure. It is because of Christ Jesus, the fulfillment of this prophecy, that we too enjoy the glory of such an amazing inheritance in the Beloved One! (Eph 1:3-18, 1 Peter 1:4)

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul’s Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven’s joys, O bright Heaven’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Self Check:

1. Do you delight in God’s people? Are they your joy and rejoicing? (vs 3-4) How can you demonstrate that?

2. Do you grieve over the false gods and their worshippers that surround you? What are the common false gods that are the focus of the attentions and pursuits of unbelievers?
3. How could you apply "Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips" in your life and circumstances today?

Think about it:

1. Take a blank piece of paper, write "God is my Inheritance" at the top, and then begin to describe in writing, God as your inheritance.
2. How is "God my portion" better than any earthly inheritance anyone could ever have?
3. Compare your present delight in God with the eventual, everlasting pleasures that are found in His presence.

For further study:

David loves to refer to God as "my...rock, portion, salvation, refuge, strength" and more. David makes it clear that God does not just give these things, but is in Himself these things and more to David. God is personal, real, and present in David's life and experience. Check out the following verses and add to them in your language of adoration of God!

Ps 16:2 Ps 18:2 Ps 22:10 Ps 23:1 Ps 27:1 Ps 28:7 Ps 31:3 Ps 31:4,14 Ps 32:7 Ps 40:17 Ps 44:4 Ps 59:17
Ps 62:7 Ps 63:1 Ps 70:5 Ps 71:3 Ps 71:5, 7 Ps 74:12 Ps 89:26 Ps 94:22 Ps 118:14,28 Ps 119:57, 114

"O God, You are my Rock, my Joy, my King, my Deliverer, my Shepherd, my Inheritance, my Cup, my All. In You I possess all things. Without, all is vain. With you, joy lasts forever. Without you, misery never ends. Deliver me from the vain pursuit of temporary treasures that can neither satisfy the soul, nor stand the tests of time. You and You alone are my Portion, my Pleasure, my God! Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my life. Give me the heart of the ancient Irish hymn writer who knew the secret the knowing Thee as Thou dost desire to be known, and will be known, to all those who seek Thee with all their hearts. In Christ my Inheritance I pray, Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows, spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts. We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.