

My, My

Psalm 16

This is a most personal psalm. The word “my” is used over a dozen times (Psalm 16:1,2,3,5,7,8,9,10). We are encouraged to have a personal relationship with the Lord: “my trust,” my Lord,” “my delight,” “my right hand,” “my heart,” etc. If you noticed the word “Michtam” just before verse one, you might as well not try to interpret it. No one seems to agree or understand it. It’s some kind of a title for this song. However, it is worthy to note that every time this word is used (six times: Psalm 16, 56-60) the psalm ends on a happy note.

This is indeed a personal and happy psalm! The request, “Preserve me, O God...” is not borne of disaster or crisis. It is a call and an acknowledgement that God is the one who daily maintains us all through our life. So the psalm ends on the note of “life,” “joy,” and pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).

The Joys of loving God and serving others for Jesus’ sake – Psalm 16:1-4

Spell “JOY” – Jesus, then **O**thers, then **Y**ou. By contrast, note the misery of those who serve idols.

Most newer translations make Psalm 16:2 say that we have no goodness apart from God. That’s certainly true (Psalm 144:2; Matthew 19:16-17; James 1:17). The King James version adds the italicized word “*extendeth*” and makes Psalm 16:2-3 say that our goodness does not benefit God, but rather our goodness should be extended toward the saints of God. Many, many of the old commentators used this connotation in their writings and teachings.

So, let’s draw from these verses that:

- 1) We are to acknowledge no goodness apart from God (Romans 7:18 cp. Philemon 6).
- 2) We cannot help or benefit God by any goodness that we do (*though we can honor and please Him*).
- 3) We should focus on doing good to those who are members of the household of faith, giving them love, honor and respect (I John 5:1-3; Romans 12:10; Galatians 5:13-15; 6:2, 9-10; Philippians 2:1-4).

The Joys of being content and satisfied with God and His blessings – Psalm 16:5-9

Psalm 16:5-6 borrow the language of God giving portions of land to the twelve tribes of Israel. “Lines” were measured and landmark stones were established throughout the land.

Especially note that the Levites were set apart to serve in the Lord’s tabernacle / temple. They did not receive a portion of land (only six cities). Their portion / inheritance was the Lord Himself (Numbers 18:20; Deuteronomy 18:2; 19:14). Consider I Peter 2:9-10.

The Lord is always with us, instructing our inner man (“heart,” “mind” literally means “kidneys” i.e. a very secret place within us” ~ Psalm 16:7). Yet, we must actively “bless the Lord” and “set the Lord” before us if we really want the gladness, joy and rest of which Psalm 16:11 speaks. Consider Philippians 4:4-9; James 4:6-10.

The Joys of Knowing Jesus Christ, the Holy One – Psalm 16:10-11

Psalm 16:10 is quoted twice (Acts 2:25-28; 13:35) showing us the resurrection of Christ. Psalm 16:11 embodies the truth of John 10:1-10, 27-30; 14:1-6, 15-27; 15:11-12; 16:33.