

The Resurrection

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[0 : 00] what the Old Testament has to say about Jesus, looking this morning at the theme of the resurrection. Now, last week I drew your attention to Luke 24, 44, where Jesus said, These are the words that I spoke to you when I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

And last week we did look at one of the prophets, Isaiah 53. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities.

Upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. But today, we turn to a psalm, and the psalm is 16, and in particular, verses 9 to 11.

Where the psalmist, in this case David, says, My heart is glad and my soul rejoices. My body also dwells secure. You do not give me up to Sheol, or let the godly one see the pit.

You show me the path of life, and in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand pleasures forevermore. So this is what older people used to call a messianic psalm.

[1 : 29] That is, it's a psalm that speaks about the coming of the Messiah. There are others. Psalm 110 is one, as is Psalm 22.

But in order to understand what the psalms are about, we have to try and understand the context in which they were written. And as far as the psalms of David are concerned, there are actually four different periods.

The first period is that when David was a shepherd boy, and obviously Psalm 23 fits in there. Then there was the time when David was a member of the royal court of Saul.

Psalms 140 and 141 fit in there. Then there was a time when he was on the run, having been sought down by Saul, who wanted to kill him.

And this psalm fits in here. The final period is when David was established as king over the United Kingdom of Israel and Judah. But that's somewhat outside of what we're looking at this morning.

[2 : 39] So Psalm 16 speaks to this period when David was on the run. And you read about this in 1 Samuel 23.

And it said that they arose and went to Zith ahead of Saul. That's they being the people of David. And David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon and in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. And Saul and his men went to seek him. And David was told, therefore he went down to the rock which is in the wilderness of Maon. And when Saul heard that, he pursued after David in that wilderness.

So David is depressed. He's concerned for his own life. And he said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hands of Saul.

And so he prays for survival. And that's what this psalm is about. It's about survival. Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

[3 : 58] I say to the Lord, you are my Lord. I have no goodness apart from you. And one of the things that he confesses in this psalm is not only the fact that the Lord is with him, and that's important for us, we also get depressed for one reason or another.

But he also produces his faith in the belief that his security does not lie in his bank balance, doesn't lie in external blessings.

His security lies in God. The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup.

You hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places. Yes, I have a goodly heritage. So this psalm gives him hope.

But the challenge of the possibility of death is still there. And it is now that the Spirit of God, by inspiration, gives him this to say.

[5 : 18] Therefore, my heart is glad and my soul rejoices. My body also dwells secure.

You do not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the pit. You have shown me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy and at your right hand pleasures forevermore. Security. Hope. That's what this world needs. Hope. Hope for tomorrow. We sang of it earlier on. Because he lives, I can face tomorrow. In an Old Testament setting, that is what David is saying. And he says this, You do not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the pit. This is a Hebrew word that's transliterated just letter for letter.

[6 : 28] Sheol. And it means the abode of the dead. The good and the bad are there. There's no connotation yet of punishment such as the word hell does in our English understanding of it.

This place, Sheol, was the place of a shadowy existence where it was believed fellowship with God and knowledge of God could not be known.

You will find this time and time again in the Psalms but also in the book of Job. In chapter 14, verse 20, Job is speaking and he's speaking about himself.

You prevail forever against him, actually himself. And the possibility is he will pass away.

You change his countenance. You stop looking on him. You send him away. And the place that Job sees him going to is this shadowy existence where there is no hope, no fellowship with God, no knowledge of God.

[7 : 49] But in this Psalm, David is given by inspiration to see that there is a life beyond the grave.

And it is this that causes him to rejoice. You show me the path of life in your presence. There is fullness of joy. And in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Not only a truth that David is able to appreciate, but a truth that speaks in prophecy about the resurrection of Christ.

So let's turn secondly to the fact of the resurrection. Mark 16, verses 5 and 6. And entering the tomb, the woman saw a young man sitting on the right side dressed in a white robe.

And they were amazed. And he said to them, Do not be amazed. You see, Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen.

[8 : 57] He is not here. See the place where they laid him. So who are the people that turn up on this first Easter Sunday?

Verse 1 tells us, When the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalena and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices that they might go and anoint him.

And the first question that comes to me as I read that statement afresh this morning is this. Where are the men?

Mary Magdalena, she is from Magdala, a Galilean. She was one of the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee. When he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalena from whom he had cast seven demons.

In other words, she was a subject of part of his deliverance ministry. She wanted to be there first to worship the Lord who had done so much for her.

[10 : 16] Also present was Mary, the mother of James and Joses who were known in the early church. This may be the same as the mother of James, the son of Alphaeus.

Salome is further expanded in Matthew 27 to be the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee. And so they arrived.

Very early on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. This phrase, when the sun had risen, very important to Jewish people because it's a matter of critical importance to find out when the first light comes about because when the first light comes about is when the Passover can be celebrated.

So it's an important statement. It's right at the beginning of the day. They wanted to attend to their act of worship as soon as it was physically possible for them to do so.

And as they go, they say to one another, who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb? This is something they remember vividly and recount it to the gospel writers.

[11 : 46] Who will roll away the stone? But the job had already been done. Looking up, they saw the stone was rolled back, it was very large.

The stone, Pilate had ordered that it was to be sealed. Pilate said to them, this is to the chief priests, you have a guard of soldiers.

Now the guard of soldiers were in fact not Roman soldiers, they're the temple police. Go and make it secure as you can. stone, so they went and made the sepulchral secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

And the idea is, in the minds of the chief priests, we don't want his disciples coming around and stealing the body and declaring that he's risen from the dead. so what we're going to do, we're going to seal this stone and put an end to this nonsense. The word of the angel is, do not be amazed.

[13:00] You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified, he is risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him.

The place where they laid him can be identified as the garden tomb in Jerusalem and you can still see it today. It had a forecourt at one point and the entrance was very small and low so you would have had to stoop down to look inside it or even to enter.

The chamber itself is six or seven feet square and is of the same height. And the place where the body was placed was on a shelf carved into the rock.

Here it was where Jesus had risen from the dead. No person saw this happening but the angels did and they are the link between the fact of the resurrection and the women who go to see it.

He has risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him. This is the fact of the resurrection.

[14:23] Nobody needs to be amazed at this. This is a fulfillment of what David prophesied 1,000 years before Christ was born.

finally, the preaching of the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15 verses 3 and 4. I deliver to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

Now in 1 Corinthians 15, this is dealt with at great length. But he says, all of this happened in accordance with the scriptures.

scriptures. That phrase occurs twice relating to the death of Jesus, such a scripture that we saw last week in Isaiah 53, and also in connection with the resurrection of Jesus as we see today in Psalm 16.

Now when the apostle writes 1 Corinthians, he doesn't define what scriptures he's talking about. But in his great letter to the Romans, he starts off by saying this, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he had promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures.

[16:06] So Paul is talking about what the prophets have to say. So where does David come into this reckoning? We find that the answer to that question is given by Peter in his majestic sermon on the day of Pentecost, where he concentrated on the resurrection of Jesus.

I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of Christ.

So in that scripture David is not just identified as the sweet psalmist of Israel, but he's also identified as being a prophet. it. And this is what he's got to say.

Because if we ask what verses that Peter is talking about, he's talking about the identical verses which I am considering this morning. So therefore in Acts 2 verses 25 to 28 he says David says concerning him.

Now David has written the psalm but he's clearly saying this is not something that applies to me. This is something that applies to the one that is to come.

[17:42] I saw the Lord always before me for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced.

Moreover my flesh will dwell in hope. You will not allow your abandon my soul to Hades nor let your holy one see corruption. He has made known to me the way of life.

You will make me full of gladness with your presence. So Peter is saying David did not say this about himself but he did say it about the resurrection of Jesus.

And on that sermon on Acts 2 you read it for yourself and Peter is hammering home the truth. that this Jesus that you nailed and crucified this very Jesus has been raised from the dead and we are witnesses of that.

How could he become a witness if he never saw it? And the answer to the question is very simple. it's because God revealed this to Peter in a great truth by the appearance of Jesus Christ to him after he had been raised from the dead.

[19:14] Today Jesus Christ appears to you and me in the reception of his word.

And if you receive the word of the gospel believing that Christ died for your sins and had risen again you will become a witness to the resurrection.

When Paul finishes this majestic chapter he quotes Hosea the prophet when the perishable puts on imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality then shall come to pass the saying that is written death is sawed up in victory.

O death where is your victory? O death where is your sting? Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So the Old Testament looks forward. It speaks of the resurrection of Christ. It speaks of his triumphant victory not over sin not only over the devil but of death itself now what does that mean to us?

[20 : 42] It means this because I live I can face tomorrow. It gives you hope.

It gives you hope so that when you've been there experiencing the death of a loved one you have you have the guarantee in the gospel that you will see that loved one again not in this life but in the one that's to come and there is a one that's to come and it's a glorious life.

So Paul says this this is how you're to react to it. Therefore my beloved brethren be steadfast immovable always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

That's how it leaves us with a sense of awe a sense of majesty a sense of rejoicing a sense of hope.

May God grant it this day and always. Having preached on the resurrection there is only one hymn that we can sing to finish Thine be the glory risen conquering son.