

Walking Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death

REFLECTION ON THREE PSALMS

Psalm 6 - lament [NASB]

- O LORD, do not rebuke me in thine anger,
 - Nor chasten me in Thy wrath.
 - 2 Be gracious to me, O LORD. For I am pining away;
 - Heal me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed;
 - 3 And my soul is greatly dismayed;
 - But Thou, O LORD — how long?
 - 4 Return, O LORD, rescue my soul;
 - Save me because of Thy lovingkindness.
 - 5 For there is no mention of Thee in death;
 - In Sheol who will give Thee thanks?
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Psalm 6 [cont]

- 6 I am weary with my sighing;
 - Every night I make my bed swim,
 - I dissolve my couch with my tears.
 - 7 My eye has wasted away with grief;
 - It has become old because of my adversaries.
 - 8 Depart from me, all you who do iniquity,
 - For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.
 - 9 The LORD has heard my supplication,
 - The LORD receives my prayer.
 - 10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly dismayed;
 - They shall turn back, they shall suddenly be ashamed.
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Psalm 16 - hope

- Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in Thee.
 - 2 I said to the LORD, "Thou art my Lord;
I have no good besides Thee."
 - 3 As for the saints that are in the earth,
They are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight.
 - 4 The sorrows of those who have bartered for another god will be multiplied;
I shall not pour out their libations of blood,
Nor shall I take their names upon my lips.
 - 5 The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
Thou dost support my lot.
 - 6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;
Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.
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Psalm 16 [cont]

- 7 I will bless the LORD who has counseled me;
 - Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.
 - 8 I have set the LORD continually before me;
 - Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
 - 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
 - My flesh also will dwell securely.
 - 10 For Thou wilt not abandon my soul in Sheol;
 - Neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.
 - 11 Thou wilt make known to me the path of life;
 - In Thy presence is fulness of joy;
 - In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.
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Psalm 23 - durability

- The LORD is my shepherd,
 - I shall not want.
 - 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;
 - He leads me beside quiet waters.
 - 3 He restores my soul;
 - He guides me in the paths of righteousness
 - For His name's sake.
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Psalm 23 [cont]

- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 - I fear no evil; for Thou art with me;
 - Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.
 - 5 Thou dost prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 - Thou hast anointed my head with oil;
 - My cup overflows.
 - 6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,
 - And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.
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Conclusion: from Spurgeon and Keller

- Religion brings deliverance from the curse, but not exemption from trial. There are three sources of tears in this life: 1) common to all [pain, illness, losses, disappointment, and death itself], 2) the forces and fires of sin, 3) repentance- for Christ's injured honor and slightedness. [from C Spurgeon, *O Death, Where Is Your Sting?*]
 - Our hope we have in the face of death is : personal- the love we will experience in heaven will be infinitely, inexpressibly greater than anything we have known here, material, new bodies, beatific hope- in perfect communion with Him. He quotes C S Lewis in his *Weight of Glory*- If the lower reaches of the stream of God's glory are so intoxicating, what will it be like to drink from the fountainhead? [from T Keller, *On Death*]
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Death by George Herbert

- DEATH, thou wast once an uncouth hideous thing
 - Nothing but bones,
 - Thy sad effect of sadder grones:

 - For we consider'd thee as at some six
 - Or ten years hence,
 - After the losse of life and sense,
 - Flesh being turn'd to dust, and bones to sticks.

 - We lookt on this side of thee, shooting short;
 Where did we finde
 The shells of fledge souls left behind,
 Dry dust, which shed no tears, but may extort.
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Death [cont]

- But since our Saviour's death did put some blood

- Into thy face;

 Thou art grown fair and full of grace,
 Much in request, much sought for, as a good.

- For we do now behold thee gay and glad,

 As at dooms-day;

 When souls shall wear their new array,
 And all thy bones with beauty shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust

 Half that we have

 Unto an honest faithful grave;

 Making our pillows either down, or dust.
