

Recapitulation in Prophecy, 7

Last Things

By Bob Vincent

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Acts 2:22-36; Psalm 16:8-11
Preached on: Sunday, April 17, 2022

Robert Benn Vincent
80 Hickory Hill Drive
Boyce, LA 71409

Website: www.rbvincent.com
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/rbvincent

Psalm 16 beginning at verse 8 and you'll find that on page 854. "I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave," if you notice at the bottom, the grave there is Sheol. Sheol in Hebrew is translated in Greek by Hades and oftentimes translated with hell. So he says here, "because you will not abandon me to the grave," that is, Sheol, Hades, hell, "nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

The word of the Lord.

May we pray.

Lord, we thank you for Holy Scripture and how things are fulfilled by the original author's life but also ultimately only fulfilled by your eternal Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Bless us, Lord, as we hear your message to us today. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, I want you to look at this text for a moment and what's very interesting is that this is a Psalm, if you turn the page back to page 853, it says, "A miktam," that means it's some kind of contemplation, "of David" (מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד) (Psalm 16:1). And he begins by saying, "Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge." So, we need to understand this Psalm is written by David reflecting his life's experiences. This is a very important truth. We've been talking about recapitulation in prophecy. What does that mean?

It means that what happens in a biblical theme going back in the Old Testament is recapitulated sometimes multiple times but always ultimately when we're thinking about Jesus, in the life of Jesus as we'll see today. So, this is a Psalm written by David, for David, as he meditates on all the

troubles of his life. Do you have troubles in your life? Anybody not have troubles in your life? Would you like to stand? We've all got troubles and so he says in verse 8, "I have set the LORD always before me."

So, David in all his troubles keeps his eyes on the Lord. That is God's proper name, it is Yahweh, and he says, "I've set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken." Then he goes on and he says this, "Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body will rest secure." Now as we begin to think about that for a moment, we say, wait a minute, you know that I myself, in the year 2000 with my pastor son-in-law saw the tomb of David? It's one of the things that the Romans did not destroy in AD 70. I've seen the tomb of David.

So, he says, "You will not abandon me to the grave" (Sheol (הַאֲדָמָה) Hades (ᾍδης), that is, the underworld, and then he says, "nor will you let your Holy One see decay."

Well, obviously David rotted, and you know the Jewish custom of burial was to bury the corpse and allow the meat to be devoured by the elements, and then to take the bones and put them in what is called an ossuary, that is, a bone container, and that way families could be together because you waited for another loved one, and when that person died and decay set in, their bones were put there as well—but not in David's case.

So, he says, "you will not let your Holy One see decay." David saw decay but then he says something very interesting in verse 11, "You have made known to me the path of life." It's interesting that that expression is found not in Hebrew, of course, because Homer, the poet, did not write in Hebrew, but in "The Odyssey," you know, he wrote "The Iliad," that's the Trojan war—Troas where Paul spent a little time—Trojan war, and afterwards because Odysseus had a curse placed on him for his arrogance, he's wandering trying to find his way back to his city. And so, it's interesting, "You have made known to me the path of life."

At one point Odysseus goes into the underworld, Hades of the Greeks, and then he is shown the path of life, he's shown the way out and he, Odysseus, this is Greek mythology, escapes from Hades.

So anyhow, that's kind of an interesting background, "You have made known to me the path of life," he says reflecting on, again, an ancient Greek expression before the time of David and he says:

"You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." And I want to say as a person who has been a believer since

September 4, 1964, I have found a great truth: This life is empty without Christ.

I had a friend whose father was a United Pentecostal minister who got his teenage mother pregnant when she was a guest in his own daughter's home, and then he felt convicted—and so, not knowing the Bible as a United Pentecostal is prone not to know, he divorced his wife and married this teenage pregnant girl, and that baby was my good friend named Ron Davis who lived in Lake Charles. And so, anyhow, Ron was abandoned by his father because his father became convicted that he had sinned in divorcing his first wife, so he turned around, being so biblically unknowledgeable, and divorced his second wife, returned to his first wife, and then was restored to the ministry of the United Pentecostal Church when he started 10 United Pentecostal congregations and donated them to the district of the Oneness Pentecostals. Wow!

So, my friend Ron was a rebel and he traveled all over the United States going to the place where people who rebel used to go, and that is California. And he found no fulfillment, no satisfaction there, and so he decided to hitchhike home as still a teenager but an older teen now.

When he arrived home, he begins to talk to his momma and his momma—in spite of all the things that had happened to her—she did believe in Jesus. She had repented of her sins. She had looked to the Lord Jesus Christ for her salvation, and she had looked to the Lord Jesus Christ for her pleasures in life, and she said to him, “Son, you know there's no pleasure in this life except in God.” Wow!

“Son, you know there's no pleasure in this life except in God.”

And do you know what? God, the Holy Spirit, quickened those words to my friend Ron, and he decided to go to church that Sunday, and he was going to the United Pentecostal Church in Lake Charles, but the parking lot was so full that he drove around the corner and he found an Assembly of God church, and he attended that church. Because the Assemblies of God are Trinitarian, they're orthodox Christians, they hold to the same gospel we hold to and believe in the same God we believe in.

And that day he began to have his heart quickened, he joined that church, that church later left the Assemblies of God and became a Reformed Baptist church. And so, Ron, who was a carpenter by trade, met a friend of mine who had gone down to Lake Charles to do a mission work and he befriended Ron and they got to know each other, and so Ron finally in his pilgrimage reached the zenith of denominations, the Presbyterian Church (joking).

That's an amazing story. There's no pleasure in this life, there's no satisfaction in this life but in God. Wow! What a truth!

So, as we consider this passage of scripture, we want to turn now to page 1,693 and look at Acts 2, page 1,693, because this is when Peter comments on this on the day of Pentecost and how significant it is. Page 1,693 and I'm going to pick it up at verse 22.

Peter is standing up, Peter the coward, Peter the one who tucked his tail and ran away when he was threatened having had an outburst of violence, pulling his sword, chopping off the servant of the high priest, now Peter runs away and tucks his tail and is living in fear, but when the Holy Spirit came on Peter, Peter became a radically different man. Before that Peter was timid, Peter was shy, or Peter was brash, impulsive, and violent, both those things are bad to be.

So, on that day, the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came with power, he begins to explain what has happened and look at what he says. He first has quoted Joel and now his formal address. Look at verse 22, Acts 2, page 1,693.

“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose.”

I remember watching the movie “Ben Hur” when I was a little boy and how upset I was that Jesus was betrayed, but Ben Hur was written by Lew Wallace who was a Union General, and he wrote a story, a novel about Jesus and ultimately he's explaining in his novel why it was important that Jesus was betrayed, why it was important that Jesus was crucified, why it was important that Jesus died, and why it was important that he rose again because General Lew Wallace was a real Christian in spite of being a Yankee. (Anyhow, sorry. No more foolishness, Bob.)

And he said,

“This man,” verse 23, “was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.”

Verse 24, “But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death.” Have you ever thought about death as an agony? And as we thought last night in our Holy Saturday meditation, the agony of Jesus did not end the moment he expired. The moment he expired, his body was taken down

from the cross, it was not buried, he was placed in a carved out, fresh, stone tomb and laid on a block of stone. He never went down in the earth. He was not, as my friend Baxter I mentioned last night, as Baxter's father was immersed in the earth. Jesus was not immersed in the earth. He never was immersed in the earth. He was simply laid out on a cold slab in a tomb above-ground.

Now notice what it says here that God the Father raised God the Son freeing him from the agony of death. The agony of death was not simply the crucifixion of Jesus. That was horrific, of course. They nailed him to a cross.

Can you imagine having beaten him with a cat-o-nine tails and crowned his head with thorns and mocked him and ridiculed him as he lay naked on a cross. They take him down. They place his body on the slab. But what happens when he gave up the ghost, when he yielded up his spirit, his soul?

What happened is that he descended into Sheol (הַשְׁאוֹל), Hades (ᾗδης), the grave, hell. He descended there and the agony of death for Jesus was that he descended to the abode of the righteous and unrighteous dead. What did he do there? He rescued the righteous dead who had died before his resurrection. He rescued them. He rescued them because before the resurrection of Christ, Hades, the grave, Sheol, was a big place with two divisions.

You remember the beggar Lazarus? Do you remember the rich man, how the rich man died and in hell he lifted his eyes and was in torment? And he looks across and he sees Abraham, the father of all believers, and there is poor Lazarus right there at the feast in the paradise of the righteous in Sheol. And he calls out and he says, "Father Abraham, please send Lazarus that he may dip his finger in water and cool my tongue for I'm tormented in this flame." And what does Abraham, the father of the faithful, say? "Son, you have your good stuff in this life and Lazarus did not." And then he adds this, "Besides all that, there is a great gulf fixed so we cannot pass from one place to the other after death." (Luke 16:22-26)

So the agony of death continues as Jesus descends into hell. He was not tortured there, his torture physically came to an end, but what does continue is this, when Jesus said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me," that didn't end when Jesus died on the cross. That sense of separation from God continued as Jesus' spirit, Jesus' soul, Jesus' mind, left his body and descended into hell.

Now he says here, Peter says there, "because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him." You know, death in the Ancient Near East, death was

a monster, death was a monster with a gaping mouth that swallowed people down whole. That's how the ancient peoples of the Near East believed. Of course, the Bible doesn't teach that at all, but that's who death was in Ugaritic mythology. And so, death here is personified or perhaps death really is demonic, but it says death could not keep its hold on him.

Then he says in verse 25, "David said about him," and there's the quote, "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

You know, the Lord was shaken, David was shaken. The Lord was terribly shaken but ultimately Jesus never lost his faith. Jesus never lost his faith, because his faith was in his Father who had made exceeding great and precious promises to him, that are for us in Christ as well. "For as many as may be the promises of God, in Jesus Christ they are yea and in him amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Then he says, "I will not be shaken." Jesus retained his faith completely. When he's being betrayed, he still has his faith unshaken in God the Father and the promises of God. When he's being nailed to the cross, he's still holding on. He still knows the Father. He still knows the Father loves him though he's experiencing abandonment in his human nature, we have to distinguish between the divine nature and the human nature in Jesus. In the divine nature, Jesus is and always has been absolutely equal to God the Father, but in his human nature he became a human being just like us except he never sinned, he didn't have a sinful nature. That's why it is legitimate to refer to the virgin Mary, speaking only of the human nature of Jesus, as the *Mater Dei*, the mother of God. Mary was the mother of God in God's human nature, that is, the God-man, and that's why we can speak of her in the Orthodox Church as the *Theotokos*, the God-bearer.

So, he experiences abandonment by his Father as he hangs on the cross and further abandonment as it continues in Sheol. But he knows, he knows, he knows the Father loves him. He knows that the Father's for him and he knows that the promises of Psalm 16 are for him and those promises will be held true. And so, he says there, verse 26, "Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope." The body lying on the slab, he says, "because you will not abandon me to Sheol."

He's not speaking of the earthly grave in which his body is laying. He's speaking about going into Sheol, going into Hades, going into paradise. When the thief on the cross, the good thief, well, he was a wicked thief, but unlike the other wicked thief, he trusted in Christ in one moment of time

without water baptism, without much theology at all. He knew that Jesus was righteous, and he said, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And Jesus turned to him and said, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Where did he go? He went where Jesus went. Both thieves died that day. One went into the wicked compartment of Sheol, and the other went into the blessed compartment of Sheol with the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Because you will not," verse 27, "abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay." What does that mean?

It means that Jesus did die, he really did die just like all of us will die one day unless he comes soon, and his heart stopped beating, his brain stopped functioning, and he laid on the cold slab. It was cold in that stone tomb. And he lived there, day one, Friday. Day two, sundown Friday, the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath. And day three, beginning of sundown on the Jewish Sabbath which is Saturday night. He was there three days. During those three days, his body did not rot and decay. His body remained intact so that when God the Father raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, his brain began to work again.

Now, you know, Lazarus, his friend, Jesus raised him from the dead and he had been dead for four days and by that time it says that he smelled really terrible, but Jesus did not experience any decay at all.

Now he says, "You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." Now what does that mean for Jesus? It means that he knew, he knew the joy that was awaiting him. That's why the Lord Jesus Christ could go to the cross. That's why the Lord Jesus could experience being abandoned by his Father and continuing that abandonment in hell because he knew he was going to rise again from the dead. He knew it. He knew it. And he knew that when he ascended to heaven 40 days afterwards, he was going to be crowned King of kings, Lord of lords and God of gods. He knew it and he had joy.

You know, part of the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ, of course the ultimate joy for Jesus is he's going to see the face of the Father one more time, but the other joy is this, the other joy is this, the Lord Jesus Christ had joy because he knew he was going to be with you and with all those who have ever put their trust in him (John 17:5, 24).

"You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." Now look at verse 29,

“Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.”

What happened when Jesus ascended to heaven? He sat down at the right hand of God. What is the right hand of God? That’s the throne of David, the throne that really counts is at the right hand of God. When the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, when he ascended to heaven, he sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty and that is the throne of David that really counts.

Then he says this, “Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. And we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,” (and there he quotes the 110th Psalm).

I want you to think with me for just a moment, Jesus was raised from the dead in order to be seated on the throne of his father David which was also the throne at his heavenly Father’s right hand. Now I want you to think about the proof of the resurrection. I’m going to give you three proofs of the resurrection.

The first is personal. A hellion such as I was, a drunkard and a blasphemer for three years in high school, who was so wicked that other students would often move away from the table where I was sitting because I delighted in blasphemous humor and people would sometimes say, “Vincent, I’m going to get away from this table. God’s liable to strike you dead.” But something happened to me on the night of September 4, 1964.

In a very quiet way, I prayed a prayer I had prayed a thousand times but that night I knew that I knew that I knew that God had heard and answered that prayer and he changed me, and in the words of the Presbyterian minister who heard a liberal on the radio and wrote a hymn after that liberal on the radio said, “It doesn’t make any difference if Jesus didn’t rise from the dead,” and that minister, a Presbyterian minister sat down and wrote a song, “He lives. You ask me how I know he lives? He lives within my heart.”

I want to give you two other things.

The second issue is this: never did the Jewish leaders, and that’s who puts Christ on the cross, not the common people, never did the Jewish leaders

ever as they tortured the disciples and later the Romans, the beast, never did they ever ask the disciples, “Where’s his body?”

Why didn’t they ask them that? Do you want to know why? Because they knew he rose from the dead and they committed the sin against the Holy Spirit by denying the greatest miracle of the Holy Spirit of all time and that is when God the Father used the Holy Spirit to raise Jesus from the dead. That’s the great miracle. So, they were tortured, they were tortured. They were ordered, “Don’t talk about this anymore, we can’t stand it!” But they never asked, “Where did you put his body?”

I’m going to give you the third proof and this, for me, is a very compelling proof.

Jesus made a prophecy shortly before he was crucified. When the disciples pointed out to him the beautiful temple that had been rebuilt following the Babylonian captivity and then remodeled by Herod the Great (the half-Edomite king of the Jews, beginning in 19 BC, which helps us date the beginning of Christ’s ministry). Jesus prophesied and he said, “This generation will not pass away until all of this has been fulfilled.”

Let me tell you something, I’ve walked there. The Jewish temple no longer exists. It ceased to exist in the year AD 70, we call that the Common Era if you’re not believing in Christ. I call it the Christian Era, before the Christian era, then the Christian era. It was destroyed in AD 70. Not one stone was left standing on another, that’s what Jesus said would happen in 40 years, a generation.

So, I’ve been there, what’s there? Where the Temple Mount was, is simply the foundation stones that held it up. And who controls that? Well, it’s gone from being wiped out and attempted to be rebuilt during the Bar Kochba revolt in the second century and then finally under the Muslims.

Mohammad’s claim is that his wonderful horse, Al-Buraq, traveled from Mecca to Jerusalem and put a hoofprint on the rock, underneath, the Dome of the Rock, okay? So, because Jerusalem contains the hoofprint of Mohammad’s horse, Al-Buraq, therefore it is the third holiest place in Islam: Mecca, then Medina where Islam really begins as a political movement, that’s when you date it, the Muslim year, and finally Jerusalem.

Now I’m going to tell you something. I will write a \$1,000 check to anyone here or anyone listening to my voice if I’m proven wrong.

It will never be rebuilt again and offer sacrifices. Why? Because once Jesus died on the cross, God the Father ripped the veil of the temple in two from

top to bottom because the temple on that day when Jesus was rejected and when he died on the cross, God the Father damned that house as an abomination in his eyes.

I'll write you a check for \$1,000 the day that that temple is rebuilt, and sacrifices are offered, because what happens when Jesus dies on the cross, he removed absolutely from the Jewish people anyway to have their sins removed. Listen, not all the blood of bulls and goats can remove sin. What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. (Hebrews 7:11-10:18)

So, for Jewish people and Gentile people, there's only one hope and that hope is not a rebuilt temple. \$1,000 check. I can write it. I can write it today. The day that temple is rebuilt, and bloody sacrifices are offered in it, the first person to let me know that and with proof will get a \$1,000 check from me.

If you live in the Ukraine, if you live in Russia, if you live in South Africa, if you live in Europe, if you live in Texarkana or Louisiana, I'll write you a check, and I will Fedex it to you. Why? Because Jesus died on the cross to wash your sins away and my sins away and the sins of the Jewish people, but it's only those who repent of their sins and cast themselves on God's mercy in Christ who will have their sins forgiven. How sad!

How sad! You know, in my office, my study, on one shelf I have the complete Talmud, both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud, and on the other shelf I have the al Hadith—I ordered that from Pakistan and that is what Islam really is about, not just the Koran. And I keep them separate because they always want to fight with each other. The warring descendants of Abraham.

What is this all about on Easter Sunday?

It's this: The final proof that Jesus rose from the dead is he removed once for all time the divinely established means of forgiveness of sins that began at Mount Sinai and is gone. The greatest evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead is the Jewish people who no longer observe the religion of the Old Testament, because they can't observe the religion of the Old Testament.

What they observe is a philosophical system developed by the rabbis about 100-200 years after Jesus, and so Judaism is not the religion of the Old Testament, it's ethical monotheism with lots of rules.

The religion of the Old Testament doesn't exist anymore at all. It doesn't exist at all anymore. Pray for the Jewish people to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ because unless they, as the people of Texarkana, unless they, as the Gentiles, repent of their sins and cast themselves on the death and resurrection of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, they will never ever be saved.

Do you know my Jesus? Do you know him?

Of all the questions I could ever ask you on this Easter Sunday, this is the most important.

I've proven to you that Jesus did rise from the dead. I've proven it to you absolutely. I have by those three proofs.

What will you do with Jesus?

One day he's coming again and when he comes again, you're going to stand before him because God is going to judge the world in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel.

May we pray.

Lord, would you take these words and would you write them on our hearts. I want to pray for anyone here today who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ. Will you haunt them? Oh, it's a lot of fun to celebrate on Easter. I remember eating all my candy on Easter afternoon and being nauseated every Easter night. Oh, it's a lot of fun getting together with family and friends, but I want to pray because I care about the souls of people who hear me both here on Robison Road at Trinity Presbyterian, Texarkana, TX, and on the internet. Haunt them so that they will have a happy hereafter. For Jesus' sake. Amen.