

The Resurrection of Our Lord / April 5, 2026

Psalm 16:10

*“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.”*

You Will Not Abandon My Soul to Sheol

The first thing believers did upon encountering the risen Lord was to go and tell others what they had seen. Joyously the women announced to the disciples, *“We have seen the Lord.”* The first thing the disciples did upon telling others they had seen the Lord was to prove their experience through the witness of the scriptures. In the book of Acts on the day Pentecost, Peter affirmed the resurrection of Jesus in the words of our psalm saying, *“For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let you Holy One see corruption.”* Our faith in all the promises of God, including the greatest, eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus, is founded on the solid rock of God’s holy word. The psalmist sang, *“Your word O Lord is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”* The word is a lamp and light leading us to Jesus, crucified for sins and raised for our eternal salvation.

Jesus, the evening of His resurrection, encountered two disciples walking out of Jerusalem to the nearby village of Emmaus. They were prevented from recognizing Him. They poured out their sorrow to Him that this Jesus, whom they had hoped would be the Messiah, had been crucified, died and buried. They said, *“But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel.”* Instead of lamenting with them, Jesus discoursed with them on the scriptures, which for them was what we call ‘The Old Testament.’ He showed them in the scriptures all the things said about Him and how it was necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, cross and death, before entering His glory. Their hearts burned within them as He opened to them the scriptures, which spoke of Him. They saw Him that evening in the breaking of the bread when their eyes were opened. They continued to see Him in the scriptures, which testify to His dying and rising for the salvation of all who believe. They shared His resurrection and the promise of salvation by sharing the scriptures. The scriptures are a lamp to our feet and a light to our path leading us to Jesus. He will not abandon our souls to Sheol or leave our bodies in the grave. He will call us to rise to share in His resurrection to a new and eternal life.

Some of the most important verses bearing witness to Jesus and His work as the Christ are found in the book of Psalms. Many of the psalms are ascribed to David. And while many psalms were written by David and incorporate features of his life,

the psalms are most importantly about Jesus. In the psalms we see foretold the suffering of Jesus in the struggles of David and the lamentations of the psalmists. In Psalm 22 we see the crucifixion of Jesus foretold and described centuries in advance. David sings, not of himself but of Jesus, saying, *“For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and my feet.”* In Jesus’ cry of abandonment, *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me,”* we see the burden Jesus bore on the cross, experiencing the full weight of human sin in separation from God. Truly He has born our burdens and carried our sorrows.

In the affirmation that God has heard Jesus’ cry in His afflictions, we are assured that God hears us when we call and that for the sake of Jesus, will forgive our sins, heal us of their wounds, lift their condemnation from our heads and give us a share in Christ’s resurrection to eternal life. For Jesus and all who believe in Him as their God and Saviour, David sings, *“He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and He has not hidden His face from Him, but has heard when He cried to Him.”* Jesus cries for our forgiveness, our pardon and our eternal peace with the Father. When Jesus cries the Father hears. In Psalm 16 David prophesies the resurrection of Jesus and of those who belong to Him through faith and the covenant of baptism into His death and resurrection, saying, *“You will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your holy one see corruption.”* Even as the Father did not abandon Jesus’ soul to death and His body to the corruption of the grave, He will take our souls to His presence in death and call our bodies to rise to life in the resurrection of Jesus when He returns as King and Lord of all.

Before the coming of Jesus, His death and resurrection, Psalm 16 must have been a bit of a puzzler even to the faithful in Israel. A psalm of David, it was a prayer for the Lord to preserve David and by extension, the faithful in Israel, in times of trial, persecution and temptation. It spoke to a time when people worshiped idols as gods alongside the Lord, who is the true and only God. It spoke to the temptation to which even the faithful in Israel were vulnerable, to worship other gods alongside the Lord. David sang, *“The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply... The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup... because He is at my right hand I will not be shaken.”* It spoke to the universal fear of death. David found gladness in the fact that because he had set the Lord first and foremost in his heart that he would not be shaken and the Lord would not abandon him to death. The psalm was written with reference to David, but it was about more than David, about more than the faithful in Israel. Ultimately it is about Jesus.

Jesus is the one the Lord did not abandon to Hades or allow His body to see corruption. David's life ended, his body lay in his tomb. On the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted Psalm 16 as he testified to the resurrection of Jesus. He said David couldn't have been referring to Himself when he wrote the verse, *"For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."* Peter said, David *"foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption."* David was speaking of Jesus. In Him, the Holy One of God, believers are made holy through faith in the forgiveness of sins. Because the Lord did not allow Jesus' body to see corruption, He will raise believers from the corruption of the grave to share in His resurrection to a new and eternal life.

The apostles were not learned men in terms of the religion of Israel. They were familiar with the scriptures as the faithful in Israel, raised in the tradition of the synagogue where the scriptures were read every Sabbath. But they were not trained in their interpretation and application as were the pharisees, scribes and teachers of the law. However, when they witnessed Jesus raised from the dead and He opened their minds to understand the scriptures, especially in reference to Him, the first thing they realized was that psalm 16 referred to Jesus and was fulfilled in His dying and rising from the grave. When they saw Jesus in the scriptures and the scriptures in Jesus, they saw Jesus and the scriptures in a new light. We see the risen Jesus in scriptures. When we see the risen Jesus in the scriptures, we see Him risen in our lives as our God and Saviour. He will not abandon our souls to death. He will raise us body and soul from the grave to share in His resurrection to life everlasting.

God did not abandon Jesus' soul to Sheol. According to the scriptures of the New Testament, Jesus descended to Sheol the place of the dead and proclaimed His victory over death. In his first letter St. Peter wrote of Jesus' descent to Sheol saying, *"Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which He proclaimed to the spirits in prison."* Perhaps then He led the faithful in Israel from Sheol to rest more closely to the Father in peace. In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul, citing a verse in Psalm 8, says that when Jesus ascended on high *"He led a host of captives."* Most certainly Jesus showed that He will not abandon those who believe in Him to death.

Instead, as He assured the disciples during the Last Supper, He prepares a place for us so that when our lives in this world come to an end, we rest not in death, but

in the Father's presence in peace. To the repentant thief on the cross He said, *"Today you will be with me in paradise."* God did not let His Holy One see corruption. There was no decay in Jesus' body. When Jesus' spirit reunited with His body, His body was changed so that death and corruption could have no hold on Him. In Revelation, we see Him holding in His hand the keys to death and Hades. In the other hand He holds those who cling to Him in faith and who belong to Him through baptism into His death and resurrection. No one will snatch us from His hand! He will not abandon us to death. He will call us to rise to share in His resurrection.

Our bodies will see decay when our lives come to an end. But Jesus will not abandon our bodies to corruption. He will keep them in His good earth. In the fulness of time when He returns He will raise them to be like His resurrected body, glorious, incorruptible and impervious to death and any of the effects of sin. In Jesus, God considers us His holy ones. For the sake of Jesus' righteousness, God considers us righteous. He sees not the sin and sinfulness that abides in us. He sees Jesus and His righteousness in us and over us. One day, when this life is over and this age is past, God will call us in the Name of Jesus to share in His victory over sin and death and rise to a new and everlasting life.

Before that day He makes known to us the path of life by opening our eyes to see Jesus in the words of the psalmists, Moses, the prophets, apostles and evangelists. He opens our hearts through the word and by the working of the Holy Spirit to receive Him as our Saviour, so we may follow Him as our Lord and God. In Jesus and His resurrection, the Lord brings us into His presence, now through faith, fully at the last, where there will be the fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore. 'You will not abandon your holy ones to Sheol, nor leave them in corruption. In Jesus you make known to us the path of life. At your right hand there are pleasures forevermore.' A blessed Easter. In Jesus' Name. Amen.