

Psalm 116:1-10

- 1 I love the LORD, because he has heard
my voice and my supplications.
- 2 **Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as long as I live.**
- 3 The snares of death encompassed me;
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
- 4 **Then I called on the name of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray, save my life!”**
- 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
- 6 **The LORD protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me.**
- 7 Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.
- 8 **For you have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling.**
- 9 I walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.
- 10 **I kept my faith, even when I said,
“I am greatly afflicted”**
- 11 I said in my consternation,
“Everyone is a liar.”
- Jesus Christ, Son of God,
who passed through the dark sleep of death,
have mercy on those who call out to you
in distress and anguish and tears
and raise them to your risen life,
for you are alive and reign for ever. Amen.**

Psalm 116 notes

Possible title

The Lord delivers from death

Structure

The Psalm begins with a summary testimony to the Lord's deliverance (vv. 1-2). The desperate plight of the Psalmist and the Lord's rescue is then retold (vv. 3-4), and this reflects the Lord's gracious character (vv. 5-6). This section concludes with the Psalmist encouraging himself or herself to continue being faithful (vv. 7-11)

The situation faced by the Psalmist

As in many of the Psalms, there is no specific indication of the problem other than that it brings the Psalmist near to death.

Later use

Paul makes use of v. 11 in Rom 3:4 in highlighting the contrast between the deceitfulness and unrighteousness of human beings and the truth and faithfulness of God.

Suggested memory verse: v. 9

The land of the dead is dark, gloomy, silent and still. Salvation is the opposite, walking freely in the lands (in the Hebrew it is the emphatic plural) of the living. 'Before the Lord' indicates that godly life is marked by holiness as well as freedom.

Christian reflections

We can see Jesus Christ in this Psalm. He suffered the full terror of death, but through his faith and obedience was saved not just from death, but through death. The Easter story is spectacular proof that all believers can trust in the God who will save us from death and through Christ bring us to fullness of life.

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