

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

UNDER THE EXALTED CHRIST, THE GOSPEL BEGINS TO SPREAD

THE ACTS

† THE BOOK OF ACTS

OF THE APOSTLES

An overview of the Book of Acts, by Given O. Blakely

ACTS 5:31-32

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Lesson #9

COMMENTARY ON: 2:33-36

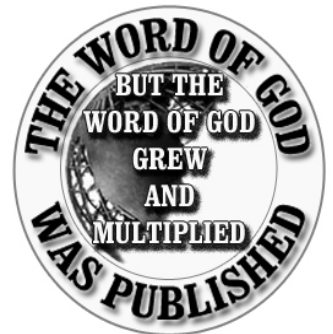
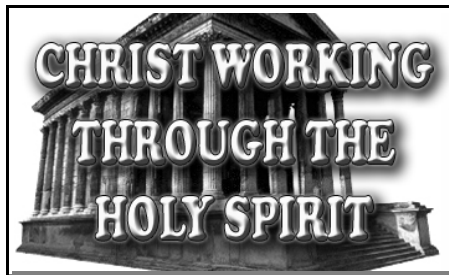
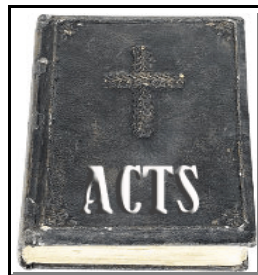
THE PREACHING OF JESUS - HIS RESURRECTION

Peter continues his insightful, powerful, and inspired declaration of "Jesus of Nazareth," a Man who was clearly and publicly approved by God in the midst of the people who had *taken, crucified, and killed* Him. Because their deeds were provoked by the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," heaven did not interfere with what they did. Because their personal judgment was wrong, and because a living Christ was required to both author and finish salvation, God reversed their verdict, raising Jesus from the dead. Death could not hold Jesus, for He who is "the Life" is superior to death. Also, death could not hold Him because death is a consequence of sin, and Jesus had "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The consequence of sin cannot maintain its power over the One who took away the sin of the world.

ACTS 17:26-27

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."

"... and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)



Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO BUILDING THE FAITH AND ENHANCING THE HOPE OF THOSE WHO ARE WORKING OUT THEIR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

The Book of Acts

Lesson Number 9

TRANSLATION LEGEND: AMPLIFIED or AMP = Amplified Bible, (1965), ASV = American Standard Version (1901), BBE = Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA = Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV = English Revised Version (1885), ESV = English Standard Version (2001), IE = International English, ISV = International Standard Version (1967), JPS = Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV = King James Version (1611), LIVING = Living Bible (1971), MONTGOMERY = Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD = Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB = New American Bible (2002), NASB = New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU = New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB = New International Bible, NIV = New International Version (1984), NJB = New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV = New King James Version (1979), NLT = New Living Translation (1996), NRSV = New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS = J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT = BISHOP'S New Testament (1595), RSV = Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK = JPS Tanakh (1985), Webster = The Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH = Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS = William's New Testament (1937), TNK = JPS Tanakh (1985), TYNDALE = Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE = Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT = Young's Literal Translation (1862).

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = UBS Lexicon, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon



THE INSPIRED RECORD OF HOW THE EXALTED CHRIST, BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, WORKED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES AND HOLY MEN TO SPREAD THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD.

----- Lexicon and Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

THE PREACHING OF JESUS: HIS RESURRECTION

“ 2:25 For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did My heart rejoice, and My tongue was glad; moreover also My flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to Me the ways of life; thou shalt make Me full of joy with Thy countenance. 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.” (Acts 2:25-32)

INTRODUCTION

Peter continues his insightful, powerful, and inspired declaration of “Jesus of Nazareth,” a Man who was clearly and publicly approved by God in the midst of the people who had *taken, crucified, and killed* Him. Because their deeds were provoked by the “*determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,*” heaven did not interfere with what they did. Because their personal judgment

was wrong, and because a living Christ was required to both author and finish salvation, God reversed their verdict, raising Jesus from the dead. Death could not hold Christ, for He who is “*the Life*” is superior to death. Also, death could not hold Him because death is a consequence of sin, and Jesus had “*put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*” The consequence of sin cannot maintain its

power over the One who took away the sin of the world.

Peter will establish that a dead Christ is of no value. While the death of Christ is essential to our salvation, so is His resurrection. **His death established the basis for the remission of sins and our reconciliation to God.** In His death, God was able to fully and satisfactorily

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

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judged sin. Sin had to be handled judiciously – judged and condemned by God. **This was required because, as God Himself revealed, He cannot acquit the wicked, or clear the guilty.** That is, He cannot dismiss sin with a word, or simply begin treating sinners as though they had never sinned at all.

THE DIVINE NATURE DECLARED

God revealed this aspect of Himself to Moses, when He declared His own name, showing forth His glory. *“Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. . .”* (Ex 34:7). Moses confessed this back to God when pleading for the people: *“The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty. . .”* (Num 14:18). Nahum was also given to see this aspect of the Divine nature. *“The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked. . .”* (Nahum 1:3).

God’s nature will not allow Him to pass over sin, dismissing it from His mind because of His mercy. *“Mercy and truth”* must meet together, and *“righteousness and peace”* must kiss each other (Psa 85:10). **Salvation must not require that God abandon His own nature, clearing the guilty when He says He cannot do such a thing, and acquitting the wicked when He says He will “not at all” do this.** There must be a

way found in which God can remit sins without violating His own nature. Praise God, a way was found, and the resurrection of Christ proves it.

Romans 3:25

The salvation of man, while being a revelation of the love of God, is actually founded upon the righteousness of God. We are not left to conjecture about this matter. In a remarkable statement of the cause behind the remission of sins the Spirit affirms, *“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God”* (Rom 3:24-25). Other versions read, *“to demonstrate His righteousness,”*^{NKJV} *“to demonstrate His justice,”*^{NIV} *“to show His righteousness,”*^{NRSV} *“to make clear His righteousness,”*^{BBE} *“the manifestation of His righteousness,”*^{MRD} and *“to prove His righteousness.”*^{NAB}

In this passage the Spirit reminds us of the sins that were committed in the past – by the people of God – *“sins that are past.”* **On the surface, it appeared as though God has passed over them, clearing the guilty and acquitting the wicked.** If this is the case, then God has violated His own nature, or *denied Himself* – and that is something He *“cannot”* do (2 Tim 2:13). The point is that God viewed the sins of the ancients **in the prospect of His Son taking sin away.** When Jesus died, the effectiveness of His death reached backward, severing sin’s association with those, who were trusting in God, upon the basis of their faith. The Spirit states it this way: *“And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance”* (Heb

9:15).

The remission of sins – even the sins of believers before Christ – was a display of God’s righteousness. He was righteous in being forbearing, and not cutting the people off, and He was righteous in finally clearing their record upon the basis of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:3

The judgment of sin took place in the body of Jesus. The Spirit states the case this way: *“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”* (Rom 8:3). That is, God condemned sin in the flesh of His Son Jesus. The New International Version thoroughly misrepresents the case here reading, *“condemned sin in sinful man.”* Another version also corrupts the text: *“That way God condemned sin in our corrupt nature.”*^{GWN} **The thought declared by the Spirit is that God condemned, or judged, sin in Christ’s body, for it was “in His body on the tree” that Jesus bore our sins** (1 Pet 2:24). The sin that was found in men was condemned in a Man – *“THE MAN Christ Jesus.”*

Jesus was *“made sin for us,”* and was also *“made a curse for us”* (2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13). Thus God dealt with sin justly, which allowed Him to be *“the just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus”* (Rom 3:26). **An unjust salvation is no salvation at all. It was not enough for God to justify fallen humanity. He had to do it in a just and righteous manner, for He “cannot deny Himself”** (2 Tim 2:13). Following Jesus’ death, no one must be able to condemn or lay anything to the charge of God’s elect (Rom 8:33-34). If there is anything unjust about salvation, it will not be able to stand. If there is some characteristic of God that is blurred

An unjust salvation is no salvation at all. It was not enough for God to justify fallen humanity. He had to do it in a just and righteous manner, for He “cannot deny Himself”

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THE NECESSITY OF A RESURRECTED CHRIST		
SIN	THE NEW COVENANT	
DEATH	RESURRECTION	HIGH PRIESTHOOD
DEVIL		THE DAY OF SALVATION
SALVATION IS ADMINISTERED BY A LIVING CHRIST		

or violated by the death of Christ, then it will not be effective.

This is why the resurrection of Christ is integral to the FOUNDATION of our salvation. In His resurrection the death of Christ is validated, and His Sonship is confirmed. In it the deeds of the men who crucified and killed Jesus are shown to be unrighteous, their hearts impure and hard, their eyes blinded. **Also, the NEED for salvation is substantiated by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead.** And over and above all of this, God was shown to be impeccably and uncompromisingly righteous in His *“great salvation.”* It is no wonder that those who neglect this salvation are offered no way of escape from the judgment of the Almighty (Heb 2:3). **A salvation of this magnitude and effectiveness cannot be treated casually.** A God that has gone to this extent to *“save His people from their sins”* cannot be afforded a secondary, or even lesser, place in the lives of men. Those who allow *“other things”* (Mk 4:19) to upstage their commitment to the Lord do so at the expense of their own salvation. They are exchanging their souls for something that is worthless (Matt 16:26).

In Christ’s death, the Son of God dealt effectively with sin. He removed it in its totality, taking it away from the face of God. This opened the way for the remission of sins and the cleansing of the conscience. It also cleared the path for justification, in which a person is *“made righteous”* through the judicious and holy act of Divine imputation (Rom 5:19; 4:22-25). In His death Jesus also destroyed the devil, thereby removing the power of sin. Now, men could be freed from enslavement to sin (Rom 6:17,18).

In Christ’s burial, it was confirmed that Jesus really did die. He

“made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death” (Isa 53:9), there He was thoroughly identified with fallen humanity. The curse of God had been effectively administered (Gal 3:13), and the soul of Jesus was separated from His body. Preceding His burial, the spirit of Jesus separated from His body, leaving it lifeless, *“for the body without the spirit is dead”* (James 2:26). This too was an voluntary act of Jesus, as on the cross He committed His spirit to the Father (Lk 23:46). In His burial the fact that He was not destroyed was confirmed in the unseen world where He *“preached the Gospel also to them that are dead”* (1 Pet 3:18; 4:6).

CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

The resurrection of Jesus confirmed that God was satisfied with His death, and would require no more *“sacrifice for sins”* (Isa 53:11). It also declared that Jesus was not only the Son of God, but that He was *“the Son of God with power”* (Rom 1:4). For this, and other reasons Peter will elaborate on Jesus being raised from the dead. He will proclaim that the people before him have to do with a **living Jesus** – one who has been exalted to the right hand of God.

The people standing before Peter considered Jesus to be dead – even as His disciples once thought, prior to His

appearances to them. Very early on the first day of the week, women came to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus **thinking He was dead** (Mk 16:2). Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, and **she thought Jesus was dead**. When she saw that His body was no longer there, she thought someone had taken it away (John 20:15). Cleopas and his companion pondered the happenings related to Christ’s death, and concluded that **He was still dead**, and all of their hopes had been dashed to the ground (Lk 24:19-21). Even *“the eleven”* apostles **thought Jesus was dead**, and did not believe the testimony of the women who said He was alive (Mk 16:14; Lk 13:9-11). You might say they believed in a “historical Jesus.”

THE HISTORICAL JESUS

It is true that some make much of “the historical Jesus.” By this they mean that He was a real person in real time, and that what He did upon the earth was real, not metaphorical. Although *“Jesus of Nazareth”* was, from this point of view, a historical person, we are not saved by such a Christ. **It is wrong to present Jesus as though He was not presently active.** The Lord Himself revealed, *“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death”* (Rev 1:18).

It is a living Christ that is presently seated at the right hand of God (Mk 16:19). He who lives is mediating the New Covenant (Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). We are not being shepherded by a record of Jesus, but by the *“Good Shepherd”* Himself (John 10:11,14). One who is alive intercedes for us (Heb 7:25). A living Savior sends us grace and peace (Rom 1:7; 1 Tim 1:2). The One who is teaching us is alive (Eph 4:20-21; 1 John 5:20).

The resurrection of Christ is the

JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER OF HIM THAT BELIEVETH		
SIN REMOVED	A REAL DEATH	GOD SATISFIED
SATAN DESTROYED	MINISTRY TO DEAD	SONSHIP CONFIRMED
CONFIRMATION	CONFIRMATION	CONFIRMATION
DEATH	BURIAL	RESURRECTION

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link between His effective death and the administration of the New Covenant. There could be no “day of salvation” or “accepted time” without a risen Savior. The One who laid down His life had to take it up again, else His death was in vain, as well as all of His earthly ministry, gracious words, and marvelous works.

Although I desire to be gracious on this matter, the nature and direction

of modern preaching does not confirm the necessity of a risen Savior. It does not appear that this has been burned into the conscience of men. There is far too much talk about men, and too little about Jesus. When the love of God is mentioned, it is often wholly unrelated to the righteousness of God and the confirming resurrection of Christ. But I will not linger on this morose thought. **Instead, let us consider how the Holy Spirit moved a holy man to speak about**

Christ’s resurrection. He will anchor his words in the firm ground of Scripture, and will show us unseen things about Jesus being raised from the dead. Prior to this Peter had affirmed of Jesus, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24). Now Peter will expound that glorious reality. As we should expect, his exposition will be with great power and effectiveness.

DAVID SPEAKS CONCERNING CHRIST

“ 2:25 For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved.”

Prior to this day, Peter had associated the events related to Christ’s

rehearsal of a few of them will serve to substantiate this point.

- ⇨ “God loves everyone the same.”
- ⇨ “God’s love is unconditional.”

- ⇨ “Mid-tribulation”
- ⇨ “The baptism of the Holy Ghost.”
- ⇨ “Full gospel.”
- ⇨ “Healing is in the atonement.”
- ⇨ “God wants to bless everyone.”
- ⇨ “Praise and worship.”
- ⇨ “Soul sleeping.”
- ⇨ “Jesus will come again to reign.”
- ⇨ “The thousand year reign of Christ.”
- ⇨ “Christ will reign a thousand years in Jerusalem.”
- ⇨ “Once saved, always saved.”
- ⇨ “The plan of salvation.”
- ⇨ “Believer’s baptism.”
- ⇨ “Water baptism.”
- ⇨ “The free will of man.”
- ⇨ “The sinner’s prayer.”
- ⇨ “The Lordship of Christ.”
- ⇨ “Make Jesus the Lord of your life.”

There is not a valid word pertaining to the salvation of God that is not stated in Scripture, or “contained in the Scripture” (1 Pet 2:6). While this may seem to be very obvious, it is staggering to consider how many statements are made by men concerning some aspect of redemption that are not affirmed in Scripture.

death with Scripture. At that time he had referred to statements made by David, nearly eight hundred years before Jesus (Acts 1:16 [PROPHECIES Psa 41:9; 55:12-15]; Acts 1:18 [PROPHECIES Matt 27:9-10; Zech 11:12-13]; Acts 1:20 [PROPHECIES Psa 69:25; 109:8-15].

Now Peter again turns to the Scriptures to support what he is saying. **There is not a valid word pertaining to the salvation of God that is not stated in Scripture, or “contained in the Scripture”** (1 Pet 2:6). While this may seem to be very obvious, it is staggering to consider how many statements are made by men concerning some aspect of redemption that are **not** affirmed in Scripture. A brief

- ⇨ “Nothing you do can affect what God thinks of you.”
- ⇨ “Born again Christian.”
- ⇨ “Carnal Christian.”
- ⇨ “New Testament Church.”
- ⇨ “New Testament Christian.”
- ⇨ “Eternal security.”
- ⇨ “Seven year tribulation.”
- ⇨ “Pre-tribulation”
- ⇨ “Post-tribulation”

These are only representative of a host of expressions that are nearly beyond number. They all represent vast bodies of theological thought – thought that is related to the salvation of God and

its appropriation. Some may affirm that there are aspects of truth in some of these sayings, and that it is good to use them as long we tell the people what we mean. Is this really true? Does it represent a pattern of thought that has been revealed by the Spirit of God? **I would rather say that they are all nothing more than theological bags “with holes”** (Hag 1:6). They are like “*broken cisterns that can hold no eater*” (Jer 2:13). **The truth of God is too large to fit into them.** If someone imagines that they have, after all, stuffed the truth of God into such sayings, they will find it is like “*new wine*” that will cause these frail theological “*bottles*” to break (Lk 5:37).

Who is the person willing to affirm that God has left it up to men to formulate statements that depict His Christ and His salvation? Is it possible that the truth of God is in any sense nothing more than a conclusion of men – for that is precisely the nature of all of the statements I have placed before you.

I will proceed no further in this matter, for we have an actual example of the nature of “*acceptable words*” in the text before us. Peter will resort to the Scriptures in his exposition of resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

DAVID SPOKE CONCERNING CHRIST

“*For David speaketh concerning Him . . .*” Other versions read, “*For David says of Him,*”^{NASB} “*This is what David meant when he said about Jesus,*”^{GWN} “*For David says about Him,*”^{NET} “*King David said this about Him,*”^{NLT} “*For David saith in regard to Him,*”^{YLT} “*King David quoted Jesus as saying,*”^{LIVING} “*This is what David said about Jesus,*”^{IE} “*For David says in reference to Him,*”^{WEYMOUTH} and, “*When David speaks about Him he says,*”^{PHILLIPS}

Here is an excellent example of “*the testimony of Jesus*” being “*the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev 19:10). It clarifies the saying of Jesus Himself, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are **they which testify of Me***” (John 5:39). Peter also referred to the encapsulation of Scripture when he wrote, “*Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace*

*that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time **the Spirit of Christ** which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand **the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow***” (1 Pet 1:10-11). **Christ Jesus Himself is the Sum and Substance of Scripture.** He is the Theme of Scripture, and the Life-line that holds it all together. The day Jesus Christ is seen in Scripture is the day it comes alive to its reader.

Peter attributes the 16th Psalm to David. Paul does the same (Acts 13:35-36). **The idea here is that David prophesied what Jesus would say.** He is, from one point of view, quoting Jesus eight hundred years before He came unto the world. He is expressing “*the mind of Christ*” – how Jesus thought. The words of this section of the Psalm are declared by Peter to have been said by Jesus Himself. Whether they were audibly said,

However, Peter, being moved by the Holy Spirit, says he was really speaking about Jesus. That is, **these are words attributed to Jesus.** The words “*David speaketh concerning Him,*” do not mean that David was talking ABOUT Jesus like a sort of commentator, **but that the Spirit, speaking through David, was divulging what the Lord Jesus would say.** While David may have experienced some measure of the fulfillment of these words, it was very small. Strictly speaking, the Psalm was not intended to be a testimony of David (although some of the things were no doubt experienced by him), but a prophecy of Christ. This prophecy refers to the resurrection of Christ, as Peter will strongly affirm.

I FORESAW THE LORD ALWAYS

“*. . . I foresaw the Lord always before my face . . .*” Other versions read, “*I was always beholding the Lord in my presence,*”^{NASB} “*I saw the Lord always*

The idea here is that David prophesied what Jesus would say. He is, from one point of view, quoting Jesus eight hundred years before He came unto the world. He is expressing “the mind of Christ” – how Jesus thought.

or were expressed in the heart and mind alone is not the point.

The Holy Spirit had revealed this to David because David was “*a man after His own heart*” (1 Sam 13:14). The Lord could entrust gems of redemptive truth to David, knowing he would declare them for succeeding generations. In this regard David was much like Abraham, the father of all who believe (Rom 4:11). God said of father Abraham, “*For I know him, **that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him***” (Gen 18:19).

The text of reference is Psalm 16:8-11. It may appear on the surface as though David is speaking only of himself.

before me,”^{NIV} “*I beheld the Lord always before my face,*”^{ASV} “*I saw the Lord before my face at all times,*”^{BBE} “*I foresaw the Lord continually before me,*”^{DARBY} “*I always see the Lord in front of me,*”^{GWN} “*I was always beholding the Lord in my presence,*”^{NAS} “*I kept the Lord before my sight always,*”^{NJB} “*I see the Lord is always with me,*”^{NLT} “*I know the Lord is always with me,*”^{LIVING} “*I constantly fixed my eyes upon the Lord,*”^{WEYMOUTH} and “*I always kept my eyes upon the Lord.*”^{WILLIAMS}

The word “*foresaw*” does **not** mean “*saw ahead of time.*” Here the idea is to keep in one’s own constant view – as in “*foremost.*” That is, **Christ’s view of God was His primary, foremost, and preeminent view.** Even while upon the earth, He walked within a constant awareness of God.

To what period of time does this Psalm refer? There is doubtless a sense in which it referred to the life and ministry of Jesus who said, “**And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him**”(John 8:29). However, is that the experience of which this Psalm speaks?

HE IS ON MY RIGHT HAND

“... for He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved.” Other versions read, “for he is at My right hand, that I should not be shaken.”^{NASB} “I cannot be moved because He is by My side,”^{GWN} “with Him at My right hand I shall not be disturbed.”^{NAB} “God’s mighty power supports Me,”^{LIVING} “because He is at My right hand to keep Me secure,”^{IE} and “for He is at My right hand that I

may not be shaken or overthrown or cast down [from My secure and happy state].”
AMPLIFIED

The idea here is that of **Divine fellowship**. The Son is speaking of the closeness of the Father to Him, and of the sustaining power of that Presence. This phraseology is used elsewhere in the Psalms to denote the keen awareness of the Lord’s presence. “**Nevertheless I am continually with Thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand**” (Psa 73:23). “**My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever**” (Psa 73:26). “**The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand**” (Psa 121:5).

Jesus is **not** here speaking of His time with the Father “**before the world**

was” (John 17:5), for there was no need for the Lord to be sustained at that time, nor was He in any danger of being moved or shaken. Nor does this refer to Christ’s earthly ministry when God was, indeed, with Him. As He acknowledged on the eve of His betrayal, “**the Father is with Me**”(John 16:32).

I am going to affirm, and establish, that this is referring to the experience of Jesus **after** He died and **before** He rose from the dead.

This text establishes the absurdity of the soul-sleeping doctrine, and confirms **Christ’s anticipation of His resurrection after He died, awaiting “the third day.”** It is one of those rare glimpses into the netherworld, and solicits our attention.

HEART, TONGUE, AND FLESH

“²⁶ **Therefore did My heart rejoice, and My tongue was glad; moreover also My flesh shall rest in hope.**”

This is the language of consciousness after death, and it is very detailed. It speaks of awareness, rejoicing, gladness, and anticipation.

“Therefore did My heart rejoice . . .” Other versions read, “Therefore My heart rejoiced.”^{NKJV} “Therefore My heart was glad.”^{NASB} “Therefore My heart doth rejoice.”^{MRD} “Therefore My heart has been glad.”^{NAB} “No wonder My heart is glad.”^{NLT} “because of this My heart cheered.”^{YLT} “No wonder My heart is

Me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psa 16:11).

Here is a view of death that was not enjoyed by the ancients. Prior to Christ, death was largely associated with inactivity and hopelessness. This we read, “**For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?**” (Psa 6:5). And again, “**Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest**” (Eccl 9:10). And yet again, “**Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee? Selah. Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?**” (Psa 88:10-12). Isaiah wrote, “**For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known Thy truth**”(Isa 38:18-19).

However, these expressions are

Here is a view of death that was not enjoyed by the ancients. Prior to Christ, death was largely associated with inactivity and hopelessness.

Peter affirms that all of this has to do with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. As we should expect, this will be a sort of optimum view, for it is speaking of the experience of the Lord of glory.

THEREFORE DID MY HEART REJOICE

filled with joy.”^{LIVING} “**For this reason My heart is glad**.”^{WEYMOUTH} “**That is why my heart is glad**.”^{ISV} and “**So my heart is glad**.”^{WILLIAMS}

This is the result of the Lord Jesus keeping God always before His face. As He considered the Father, His heart began to rejoice, because, as it is also written 16th Psalm, “**Thou wilt show**

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

not the ultimate view of death. They are the apparent view, and teach us that if we are to live for the Lord, we must do so now. However, they are not the ultimate view, for Christ has *“hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”* (2 Tim 1:10). Now, more is known about human experience after death, even though some mystery remains concerning it.

What does it mean for one’s heart to rejoice? This is rejoicing in its most precise expression. **It is a rejoicing that proceeds from perception and understanding.** It is connected with the knowledge of what the Lord will do.

MY TONGUE WAS GLAD

“... and My tongue was glad . . .” Other versions read, “my tongue exulted,”^{NASB} “my tongue rejoices,”^{NIV} “my tongue rejoiced,”^{NRSV} “my tongue full of joy,”^{BBE} “and my glory exult,”^{MRD} “my tongue delighted,”^{NJB} “my tongue shouts His praises,”^{LIVING} “my mouth spoke with joy,”^{IE} and “my tongue exulted exceedingly.”^{AMPLIFIED}

Here is the expression of a spirit that has been separated from the body. That spirit is not content to remain without a body. Paul expressed this frame of mind, ascribing it to all of the elect, who prefer being *“absent from the and present with the Lord.”* Speaking of that period after death and prior to resurrection he writes, *“For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life”* (2 Cor 5:4). Prior to the resurrection, death had not yet been *“swallowed up in victory”* (1 Cor 15:54). However, while the body of Jesus was buried, His tongue was *“glad,”* rejoicing in the prospect of being raised from the dead. His spirit would not remain in Hades, and His body would not remain in the grave. **The thought of this set the Lord’s Christ to rejoicing!**

By saying *“My tongue,”* the text does not suggest that Jesus, while His body remained in the tomb, was occupying a body as He did upon the earth. This is language that accommodates itself to the frailty of human understanding. The idea is that Jesus’ joy was expressed – put into words

and addressed to God Himself.

Whatever Jesus employed to preach *“unto the spirits in prison”* (1 Pet 3:19) – *“them that are dead”* (1 Pet 4:6) – was also employed in this expression of gladness.

MY FLESH SHALL REST IN HOPE

“... moreover also My flesh shall rest in hope.” Other versions read, *“moreover My flesh also will abide in hope,”*^{NASB} *“My body also will live in hope,”*^{NIV} *“moreover My flesh will live in hope,”*^{NRSV} *“moreover My flesh will dwell in hope,”*^{RSV} *“My body also rests securely,”*

cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant” (Job 14:7-9). Later he reasoned further on the matter. *“And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me”* (Job 19:26-27).

From the standpoint of God’s people, our flesh resting in hope is

However, in our text, Jesus is not anticipating the general resurrection of the dead. He is looking forward to His own resurrection, which was a pledge of the general resurrection that would take place when He comes “the second time,” at “the last trump”

^{GWN} *“I know all will be well with Me in death,”*^{LIVING} *“Yes even My body will live in hope,”*^{IE} *“even My body still rests secure in hope,”*^{ISV} *“My very body also shall pitch its tent in hope,”*^{MONTGOMERY} and *“My flesh also will dwell in hope [will encamp, pitch its tent, and dwell in hope in anticipation of the resurrection].”*^{AMPLIFIED}

Here Jesus is depicted as contemplating the resurrection of His body from the grave. Remember, Peter is associating this passage with Christ’s resurrection, not with His thoughts while He remained in the body on the earth.

Prior to Christ, some sensitive souls were made aware of the coming resurrection.

The Reasoning of Job

Although there was no Scripture at the time of Job, he thought upon a tree that had been cut down, yet sprouted again *“at the scent of water.”* In a marvelous display of holy reasoning he said, *“For there is hope of a tree, if it be*

another way of saying, *“the hope and resurrection of the dead”* (Acts 23:6). Again it is written, *“And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that **there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust**”* (Acts 24:15). Seeing this matter very faintly, Solomon was still able to make out the rough outline of the resurrection: *“The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death”* (Prov 14:32). With the eagle eye of faith, Isaiah foresaw the resurrection of the dead. *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead”* (Isa 26:19).

However, in our text, Jesus is not anticipating the general resurrection of the dead. He is looking forward to His own resurrection, which was a pledge of the general resurrection that would take place when He comes *“the second time,”* at *“the last trump”* (1 Cor 15:52). In His resurrection, Jesus was the *“firstfruits of*

them that slept" (1 Cor 15:20). Christ was raised first, and "afterward they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor 15:23).

Thus Jesus is portrayed as saying His flesh would "rest in hope," knowing that He would be raised from the dead, because it was not possible that He should be held within the grasp of death (Acts 2:24).

Israelites into the hands of the Philistines (1 Sam 28:11-19).

⇒ **Lazarus:** (1) Was in the bosom of Abraham. (2) Was seen by someone in the fires of torment. (3) Was being comforted (Lk 16:23-25).

⇒ **A certain rich man:** (1) Lifted up his eyes in Hades, being in torment. (2)

took place. That confirms consciousness and alertness exist after death, else he could not have spoken in this manner. (1) Was caught up into paradise. (2) Heard unspeakable words that are not lawful for a man to utter. (3) Recalled the experience when God raised him up (1 Cor 12:3-4).

⇒ **Departed Spirits from Noah's day:** (1) Had the capacity to hear words from Jesus, who preached to them (1 Pet 3:19-20; 4:6).

⇒ **Martyrs:** (1) Were seen under the heavenly altar. (2) They had some sense of things happening on the earth. (3) Asked how long it would be until their blood was avenged on them dwelling on the earth. (4) White robes were given to them. (5) They were told to rest for a while.

Thus David spoke of Jesus' experience after He died and before He rose again from the dead. During that three-day interim the following took place.

Glimpses of Life After Death

Scripture provides us several examples of personalities of personalities after they left this world.

⇒ **Abraham:** (1) Knew of the status of some men living long after he had died. (2) Was aware of circumstances attending life out of the body. (3) Knew of Moses and the Prophets, who lives more than five centuries after he died. (4) Had understanding about what was required to convince men of the necessity of repentance (Luke 16:24-31).

⇒ **Samuel:** (1) Knew the Lord had departed from Saul. (2) Knew the kingdom of Israel had been given to David. (3) Knew why the Lord had taken the kingdom from Saul. (4) Knew the Lord would deliver Saul into the hand of the Philistines. (5) Knew the Lord would deliver the

Saw Abraham, and Lazarus in his bosom. (3) Asked for some relief from his suffering. (4) Was aware of those remaining alive in the earth. (5) Petitioned Abraham to send a messenger to his five brothers, lest they also come to the place of torment (Lk 16:23-28).

⇒ **Moses:** (1) Appeared in glory with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. (2) Talked with Jesus about the death He would accomplish in Jerusalem (Lk 9:30-31).

⇒ **Elijah:** (1) Appeared in glory with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. (2) Talked with Jesus about the death He would accomplish in Jerusalem (Lk 9:30-31).

⇒ **Paul:** He did not know whether he was dead or alive when these things

CONCLUSION

Thus David spoke of Jesus' experience after He died and before He rose again from the dead. During that three-day interim the following took place.

⇒ He saw the Lord before His face at all times.

⇒ He was aware that He would not be moved.

⇒ His heart rejoiced.

⇒ His tongue was glad.

⇒ His flesh rested in hope.

Peter will now explain WHY these conditions existed, confirming that we are speaking about things related to His death – **not His life.**

SOUL AND BODY

"²⁷ Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

With the care that comes from

being led by the Holy Spirit, Peter opens up why Jesus spoke as He did – rejoicing in his heart and articulating it with His tongue, or in words.

THOU WILT NOT LEAVE MY SOUL IN HELL

"Because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell . . ." Other versions read, "For you will not leave my soul in

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

Hades,"^{NKJV} *Because Thou wilt not abandon My soul to Hades,*^{NASB} *"because you will not abandon me to the grave,"*^{NIV} *"Because Thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,"*^{ASV} *"For you will not let my soul be in hell,"*^{BBE} *"because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,"*^{NAB} *"For you will not leave my soul among the dead,"*^{NLT} *"because You won't abandon my soul in death,"*^{IE} *"Thou wilt not leave me un the Unseen World forsaken,"*^{WEYMOUTH} and *"For You will not abandon my soul, leaving it helpless in Hades (the state of departed spirits)."*
AMPLIFIED

We are now entering a subject concerning which we have only limited information. However, enough has been revealed for us to have an intelligent grasp of the general facts in the case.

Did Jesus Go to the Lake of Fire

Our first task is to define what is meant by "hell" – "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell." There are some who affirm that Jesus went to the "hell" into which the devil and his angels have been cast. It is averred that Jesus went there to get the keys of death and hell from the devil. However, there is nothing in Scripture that even suggests such a thing. The doctrine of men that brings this teaching to us states that "the keys" originally belonged to Adam – although nothing in Scripture associates Adam with these "keys." When he sinned, they say, Adam gave the keys to Satan, who retained them in his grasp until Jesus came. It is affirmed that this is what is meant by the words stating that Satan "had the power of death" (Heb 2:14). Although "keys" are not mentioned here, this man-made doctrine says that Jesus wrested them from the hand of the devil, keeping them for Himself. These are the "keys," they say, to which the glorified Christ referred when He said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev 1:18).

The flaw in the reasoning is found in the fact that Jesus not only raised the dead during His earthly ministry (Matt 11:5; Mk 5:41; Lk 7:13-15; John 11:43-44), He also gave power to His disciples to raise the dead (Matt 10:8). This all took place **before** He died, and suggests that He already had the keys, being able

to loose death from whomsoever He willed. There was no need for Jesus to "go to hell" to obtain these keys.

Secondly, Jesus is not said to have tasted hell for every man. It is rather pointedly stated, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; **that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man**" (Heb 2:9). Here death refers

punctuation in this verse is wrong. They say Jesus had a mind to the distant future, and did not mean the day He died. Thus they read, "I say to thee today, Thou shalt be with Me in paradise" – that is, will eventually be with Jesus in paradise. In the day Jesus spoke, therefore, they say that both Jesus and the thief fell asleep, entering an unconscious and idle state. Jesus was raised three days later, and the thief is still asleep, his spirit remaining in his

Christ's meaning is not that the gates of hell, or hades, will not prevail against the church – although they will not – but that they will not prevail against the Foundation. That is, He would rise from the dead, for "the gates of hell," or "hades," refer to the ability of death to keep its victims within its grasp.

to being separated from God – cut off from Him. **This took place when He was forsaken by God upon the cross**, and constituted the bitterness of the cup that He was given to drink (Matt 27:46). This is when Jesus was "cursed" (Gal 3:13), "smitten of God," "wounded," "bruised," and chastised for the sins of the world (Isa 53:4-5). That was His ultimate suffering. It did, indeed, foreshadow the agonies of hell, but was not the domain for which Satan is known.

The absurdity of the doctrine is also highlighted by the fact that Jesus said where He was going when He died – and it was not hell. He said to the penitent thief, "Verily, I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with Me **in paradise**" (Lk 23:43). If Jesus went to the lake-of-fire "hell," He would have to pass the uncrossable gulf between the place of comfort and the place of suffering. He would either have had to do this en route to "paradise," taking the thief with Him, or leave the thief in "paradise," and then cross over into "hell" to get the keys. Such thinking requires an extraordinary amount of imagination – the kind that needs to be cast down (2 Cor 10:4-5).

Those who embrace the soul-sleeping nonsense argue that the

lifeless body until the day of the resurrection. Perhaps there is some remote chance that Jesus also raised the thief at that time, although that would mean that He alone was **not** the "firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor 15:20). The penitent thief would also have been raised at that time. Indeed, false doctrines do tie all kinds of knots that ravel rather than unravel the truth.

Soul In Hell

The Authorized Version often uses the word "hell" as a synonym for "hades," or the abode of the dead. In Moses and the Prophets, "hell" is often translated from the word "Sheol" – "hades or the world of the dead" (2 Sam 22:6; Psa 18:5; 116:3).

Referring to the abode of the dead, Jesus said the "gates of hell" would not prevail against the fact and foundation of His Sonship (Matt 16:18). It would not keep Jesus within the confines of its "gates." Other versions properly render the word "hell" as "hades." This does not refer to the lake of fire, or the present base of operation for the devil. It is the same use of the word employed by David: "For Thou wilt not leave my soul **in hell**" (Psa 16:10). This refers to the resurrection from the abode

THE PROCESS OF DYING

1. Shadow of "death" (Matt 4:16).
2. Deliver to "death" (Matt 10:21).
3. The "death" of Christ (Rom 5:10).
4. "Death" entered the world" (Rom 5:12).
5. The second "death" (Rev 21:8).

ABODE FOR RIGHTEOUS SPIRITS

1. Abraham's bosom (Lk 16:22)
2. Paradise (Lk 23:43; 2 Cor 12:4)
3. Under the altar (Rev 6:9)
4. Present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8)

ABODE FOR UNRIGHTEOUS SPIRITS

1. Hell ^{KJV} (Lk 16:23; 2 Pet 2:4)
2. Hades ^{NKJV} (Lk 16:23)
3. Tartarus ^{GREEK} (2 Pet 2:4)

of the dead, as confirmed by Peter's exposition of this verse (Acts 2:27-32).

Christ's meaning is not that the gates of hell, or hades, will not prevail against the church – although they will not – but that they will not prevail against the Foundation. **That is, He would rise from the dead, for "the gates of hell," or "hades," refer to the ability of death to keep its victims within its grasp.** Death, however, could not keep its hold on Christ Jesus – the Jesus Peter had just confessed (Acts 2:24). Christ is affirming He will rise from the dead to build His church. In a secondary sense, this also applies to the church, which will also be raised from the dead to assume the stewardship of "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" (Dan 7:27).

In this sense, Revelation also associates "hell" with death, not punishment. "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was **Death**, and **Hell** (Hades) followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to **kill** with sword, and with hunger, and with **death**, and with the beasts of the earth" (Rev 6:8).

Because man is a complex being, death is a complex experience. Man is a tripartite being, having three parts: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess 5:23). The spirit and the soul are the unseen part of man, and are most difficult to distinguish from one another. However, the Word of God is able to probe the inward parts of

man, "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit" (Heb 4:12).

The process, or experience, of dying is often referred to as "death." It is even personified in Revelation 6:8: "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was **Death**, and **Hell** followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." Notice that "Hell" followed "Death." The word used here is "Hades," and is so translated in other versions. In the experience of death, there is a separation of the seen and unseen parts of man. The unseen part is sometimes referred to as the "spirit" (Lk 23:46; Lk 8:55), and sometimes as the "soul" (Gen 35:18; 1 Kgs 17:22). At "death," this unseen part leaves the body, or is separated from it. The grave is the residence for the body, and "hades," or the "hell" of our text, is the abode for the unseen part of man.

Because there are no exact English words for these domains, it is difficult to translate them. "Hades," for example, is a transliteration of the Greek word *ᾗδης* (Ha-des). It is not a translation, for there is no precise English word that parallels this Greek word.

Hades is a domain in which both righteous and wicked spirits remain until the resurrection of the dead. At that time, both the graves and Hades will yield up their dead. This is the meaning of the phrase, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and **death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them:** and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev 20:13). It is at this point that there will be a

uniting of the body and spirit at the resurrection.

Jesus provided us with a picture of Hades, the abode of the departed spirits, in his account of the death of the rich man and Lazarus. It was in "Hades" that the rich men lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham "afar off." Abraham was also in "Hades," but was not suffering. He was on the other side of a vast and uncrossable gulf (Lk 16:26).

There is one other word translated "hell," and it refers to the place where the fallen angels are presently reserved. The text referring to this reads, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but **cast them down to hell**, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet 2:4). Here, the word "Hell" is not taken from "Hades," nor is it taken from the word "Gehenna," which is the lake of fire. The Greek word used here is quite different; it is *ταρταρώσας* (tar-tar-oos-as). Some versions read, "threw them down into **Tartarus**," ^{CSB} "the **infernal regions**," ^{MRD} "the chains of Tartarus," ^{NAB} "the **underworld**," ^{NJB} "having cast them down into **Tartarus**," ^{YLT} "hurling them down into **Tartarus**," ^{WEYMOUTH/WILLIAMS} and "cast them down to **Tartarus**." ^{MONTGOMERY}

Lexically, the word "Tartarus" means, "the name of a subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead," ^{THAYER} "regarded by the Greeks as a place of torment and punishment below Hades," ^{FRIEBERG} and "thought of as a place of divine punishment lower than Hades." ^{GINGRICH} Again, there is no appropriate English word into which this can be translated. The closest English word is "Hell."

The point here is that these unseen abodes are all characterized by

UNITED IN THE RESURRECTION			
[HADES (HELL)]		[DEATH]	
PARADISE	TARTARUS	GRAVE	
[THE SPIRIT]		[THE BODY]	
SEPARATION AT DEATH -- Thanatos			

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

consciousness. They are not a place of calm repose. In the case of wicked angels, they have no bodies as men do, but are spirits.

When Jesus said, ***“Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,”*** He was saying He would not remain in the abode of the dead. This was part of the experience of Him *“tasting death,”* but was never intended to be an extended period (Heb 2:9). The ***“Prince of life”*** cannot remain in the abode of the dead! It is not that He was suffering or in pain at that time. That is not the portion of His *“cup”* that He dreaded (Matt 26:39; John 18:11). His sufferings occurred while He was dying, not after He was dead!

Just as the Throne room of God

THOU WILT NOT SUFFER THINE HOLY ONE TO SEE CORRUPTION

“ . . . neither wilt thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.” Other versions read, *“nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay.”*^{NASB} *“nor will You let Your Holy One see decay.”*^{NIV} *“or let Your Holy One experience corruption.”*^{NRSV} *“Neither wilt thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption,”*^{ASV} *“and you will not give up Your Holy One to destruction.”*^{BBE} *“nor wilt thou give Thy gracious one to see corruption,”*^{DARBY} *“or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave,”*^{NLT} *“or let the body of Your Holy Son to decay,”*^{LIVING} *“You will not allow the body of Your Holy One to decay in the grave.”*^{WEYMOUTH} and *“nor let Your Holy One know decay or see destruction [of the body after death].”*^{AMPLIFIED}

(John 11:39). Joseph’s body rotted in the grave, leaving only his *“bones”* (Ex 13:19). The holy prophet Elisha died and was buried. His body also decomposed, leaving only his *“bones”* (2 Kgs 13:21). **But no decay touched the body of Jesus.** Although a consequence of sin, it was not necessary for the body of Jesus to experience decay.

There is a reason behind this. The resurrection is not a mere rejuvenation of flesh, but the putting on of incorruption (1 Cor 15:53-54). Although the new body will emerge from the graves, it will be a different kind of body, not subject to corruption (1 Cor 15:35-44). This circumstance did not require that Jesus’ body pass through the stages of corruption. **Redemption depended more upon what happened to His body *“on the tree”* than in the grave** (1 Pet 2:24). The Divine cursing that Jesus experienced did not take place **after** He died, in the grave, or in the **abode of the dead**. It took place on the cross. Thus, it is written, *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”* (Gal 3:13). Jesus was cursed while He was on the cross, when He was bearing our sins in His body ***“on the tree”*** (1 Pet 2:24). To say Jesus “went to Hell” would require that He be cursed **after** He died and **after** peace was made (Col 1:20). This is another reason why those who say Jesus went to the place of punishment – “Hell” – are wrong. Such a view betrays a fundamental ignorance of what was required to save man, the nature of the Divine curse, and the extent to which Jesus tasted of death. Such views ought to be zealously discarded, for they misrepresent God, Christ, and the salvation that is *“with eternal glory.”* They are like clouds without water and trees without fruit. They obscure the truth, blind the eyes, and tend toward spiritual bondage.

This is a technical point with God, but it is necessary for us to see it. There are some aspects of death that Jesus did not “taste.” They were not necessary to the accomplishment of our reconciliation to God and deliverance from sin.

(Rev 4:2-9) is superior to the abode of the dead, so Jesus anticipated being delivered from the lower realms and elevated to the high ones. **It was not the contemplation of His return to His disciples that brought Him joy, but the prospect of ascending *“up where He was before”*** (John 6:62), and enjoying *“the glory”* He had with the Father *“before the world was”* (John 17:5).

The *“gates of hell,”* or *“the gates of hades,”* would swing open for the Lord Jesus, and He Himself would rise from the dead. David told of the Savior’s joyful anticipation of that event.

This is a technical point with God, but it is necessary for us to see it. **There are some aspects of death that Jesus did not “taste.”** They were **not** necessary to the accomplishment of our reconciliation to God and deliverance from sin. The putting away of sin did not require them. Two of them are listed here. (1) He was not left in Hades until the general resurrection. (2) His body did not experience decay, or corruption. This latter point is the subject of this phrase.

When Lazarus died, his body decayed, and putrefaction set in – even though he would be raised from the dead

KNOWLEDGE AND JOY

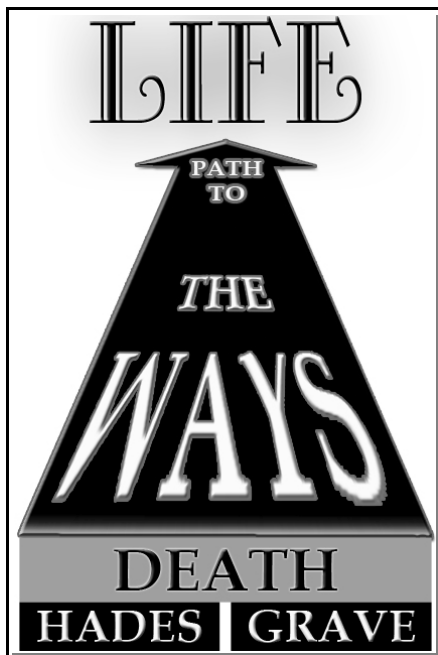
“²⁸ Thou hast made known to Me the ways of life; thou shalt make Me full of joy with Thy countenance.”

Remember, this Psalm provides some insight into the experience of Jesus **after** He died and **before** He was raised. If the soul-sleeping theory is right, then

Jesus was separated from the Father for three days. God forsook Him for three days, and there was no communion between Them. I consider such a

postulate impossible to prove. **The judgment of God upon Christ was associated with His death, not His burial!** WHILE He was upon the cross, there was a period of three hours – from the sixth to the ninth hour (12:00 PM - 3:00 PM). It is written, *“And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour”* (Luke 23:44). It was around the ninth hour that Jesus cried out concerning being forsaken by God. *“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”* (Matt 27:46). Jesus was **“made sin” on the cross** (2 Cor 5:21). He was **“cursed” on the cross** (Gal 3:13). That is where He bore our sins (1 Pet 2:24). There is where the reconciliation occurred (Eph 2:16). There is where the peace was made (Col 1:20). There is where the record against us was taken out of the way (Col 2:14). **Not in the tomb, but on the cross!** Later, after He was raised from the dead, Jesus would enter into heaven *“by His own blood . . . having obtained eternal redemption for us”* (Heb 9:7).

THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE



“Thou hast made known to Me the ways of life . . .” Other versions read, *“You have made known to Me the paths*

of life.”^{NIV} *“You have made Me see the ways of life,”*^{BBE} *“You have revealed the paths of life to Me,”*^{DARBY} *“You make the path of life known to Me,”*^{GENEVA} *“You have taught Me the way of life,”*^{NJB} *“You will give Me back My life,”*^{LIVING} and *“You taught Me how to live.”*^{IE}

“The ways of life” are the ways **leading to life** – the way from death to life. Again, Peter confirms that the Psalm is a depiction of **the resurrection of Christ**. In particular, it is a behind-the-scenes view of the Savior’s frame of mind while He was *“absent from the body”* in Hades. **Never before had any person blazed a trail from death to life.** There had been some few people who had been raised from the dead, but they, through the power of God, were **called** back by someone outside of themselves. We have a record of several resurrections.

- ⇨ The son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:17-23).
- ⇨ The Shunnamite’s son (2 Kgs 4:32-37).
- ⇨ A dead young man who, when he was cast into a sepulcher, touched Elisha’s bones (2 Kgs 13:21).
- ⇨ The son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:12-15).
- ⇨ Jairus’ daughter (Lk 8:49-55).
- ⇨ Lazarus (John 11:43-44).
- ⇨ Dorcas (Acts 9:37-40).
- ⇨ Eutychus (Acts 20:9-12).

None of these people navigated **their way back to earth from the abode of the dead.** Jesus, however, had received a commandment to take His life back (John 10:17-18). How will the Savior make the transition **from death to life**, and from Hades back to the world? **This Psalm affirms that the Father would show Him the way back.** Care must be taken not to assume more in this text than is obvious to faith. It does not suggest that Jesus was ignorant or in a hopeless state. It does confirm that **the resurrection of Jesus from the dead involved the activity and direction of the Father.** Therefore it is written that *“God raised”* Jesus (Acts 2:32; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30,37).

God did not do this by the imposition of His power, but by means of His fellowship and oneness with the Son. It seems to me that the work here described transcends both the language and the minds of men. Thus it is stated in a manner that is familiar to those who walk in the light as He is in the light. Because of His holy nature, God had forsaken Jesus when He was dying. **However, He joined with Him in His resurrection, showing Him “the path” to life, and doing so while He was in the region of the dead.** Jesus, then, was **not** asleep, and is never said to have been.

In confirmation of this, the 16th Psalm reads, *“Thou wilt show Me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore”* (Psa 16:11).

THOU SHALL MAKE ME FULL OF JOY

“. . . thou shalt make Me full of joy with Thy countenance.” Other versions read, *“You will make Me full of joy in Your presence,”*^{NKJV} *“Thou wilt make Me full of gladness with Thy presence,”*^{NASB} *“You will fill Me with joy in Your presence,”*^{NIV} *“You will make Me full of gladness with Your presence,”*^{NRSV} *“Thou shalt make Me full of gladness with Thy countenance,”*^{ASV} *“I will be full of joy when I see Your face,”*^{BBE} *“In Your presence there is complete joy,”*^{GWN} *“and give Me wonderful joy in Your presence,”*^{LIVING} *“You came near Me, and I felt great joy,”*^{IE} *“You will fill Me with delight in Your presence,”*^{WILLIAMS} and *“You will enrapture Me [diffusing My soul with joy] with and in Your presence.”*^{AMPLIFIED}

This is the experience to which Paul referred when He said *“Christ was raised up from the dead **by the glory of the Father**”* (Rom 6:4). It is as though the glory of God came into that tomb like it did into the Tabernacle and Temple. **When God’s glory invaded the region of the dead, death lost all of its power, and path to life was clear.** The presence of the Father filled the Christ with great joy. This was the glory that He laid aside to enter into the world. It was the glory withheld from Him while He bore our sins in His body on the tree.

Here is the ultimate experience: coming near to the Lord, and being in

His presence, beholding His countenance. Jesus experienced the most joy when He was relishing the presence of the Father. That neutralized whatever was involved in being in the region of the dead. That compensated for being in a bodiless state, confined, from one point of view, to a distant condition.

We ought to learn from this that

our most debilitating circumstances are decidedly reduced when we know the Lord is with us. There are times when we, in measure, experience what Paul did when the Lord “stood by” him (Acts 23:11). Somehow that compensated for the difficulties he was experiencing at the time when he was about to be “pulled in pieces” by a frenzied crowd of hostile Jews (Acts 23:10).

The 16th Psalm says, “*in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*” (Psa 16:11). It may appear as though it is speaking only of being where the Father is – in His presence. **In this text, however, it is speaking of the Father being where Jesus was, gladdening Him with His countenance and refreshing Him with His presence.**

DAVID WAS NOT SPEAKING ABOUT HIMSELF

“²⁹ Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.”

Peter continues with this seemingly technical point, insightfully and powerfully affirming that Jesus is “risen indeed” (Lk 24:34). He will now confirm how unreasonable it was to think David was testifying of his own experience. Even though David did not say, “I am speaking about the coming Messiah,” the people should have been able to conclude that this is what he was saying. Some of them had, after all, represented themselves as thinking men. They had said, “*These men are full of new wine*” (Acts 2:13). Peter has already shown them how foolish they were in thinking such a thing (Acts 2:15). Now he will move them to consider something that they had not yet associated with the Christ.

LET ME SPEAK FREELY TO YOU

“*Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David . . .*” Other versions read, “*Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David,*”^{NASB} “*Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David,*”^{NRSV} “*My brothers, I may say to you openly that David,*”^{BBE} “*Brethren, let it be allowed to speak with freedom to you concerning the patriarch David,*”^{DARBY} “*Men and brethren, I may boldly speak unto you of the Patriarch David,*”^{GENEVA} “*Men, brethren, I may speak to you explicitly of the patriarch David,*”^{MRD} “*Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself,*”^{NJB}

“*Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself,*”^{NLT} “*Men, brethren! it is permitted to speak with freedom unto you concerning the patriarch David,*”^{YLT} “*My Jewish brothers, I can tell you plainly about David, our ancestor,*”^{IE} “*As to the patriarch David, I need hardly remind you, brethren,*”^{WEYMOUTH} and “*Men and brother-Jews, I can surely speak freely to you about the patriarch David.*”^{PHILLIPS}

From one point, what Peter is saying is very obvious. Yet, like blind men do, the people had not considered what Peter declares is very plain. Men – particularly religious men – have a tendency of “*dotting about questions and strifes of words*” (1 Tim 6:4), neglecting powerful realities that are before them. **Sometimes it is necessary to bring very obvious things before the people, and cause them to look closely at them.** Take, for example, the women who had come to the tomb of Jesus to anoint His body. They were confronted with an angel who told them not to be afraid. He reminded them, “*He is not here, for He is risen, as He said.*” As if that was not enough he continued, “*Come, see the place where the Lord lay*” (Matt 28:6). From one point of view, the facts were very clear. Jesus had said He was going to rise from the dead (Matt 16:21), and He was not there. **However the classroom in which the facts are seen is not enough.**

There must be a *perception* of the facts before they can wield their power upon the heart and mind. Men delight in entertainment and novelty, but God is in neither one.

The Patriarch David

Now, it is as though Peter said, “Let me tell you what is obvious about the patriarch David.”

What is the meaning of the word “*Patriarch*”? Some versions read “*our ancestor.*”^{NRSV/IE} Abraham is also called a “*patriarch*” (Heb 7:4). The twelve sons of Jacob are also called “*the twelve patriarchs*” (Acts 7:8-9). The word is a transliteration of the Greek word *πατριάρχου* (pat-ri-archs-ou). Lexically, it means “*founder of a tribe, progenitor,*”^{THAYER} “*chief father . . . chief of a family,*”^{FRIBERG} and “*father of a nation.*”^{GINGRICH} Thus, a “*patriarch*” is more than an important person, or someone who is positioned in a certain lineage. **This word had to do with being the first of a certain order.**

As used here, David is seen as the one through whom the Messiah came. That is precisely why the Messiah is called “*the Son of David.*” This was confessed to be true during Christ’s ministry among men. It was acknowledged by two blind men, all the people, a woman of Canaan, multitudes, the Pharisees, and the scribes (Matt 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9; ; 22:42; Mk 12:35).

DAVID
SOLOMON
ROBOAM
ABIA
ASA
JOSAPHAT
JORAM
OZIAS
JOATHAM
ACHAZ
EZEKIAS
MANASSES
JOSIAS
JECHONIAS
SALATHIEL
ZOROBABEL
ABIHUD
ELIAKIM
AZOR
SADOC
ACHIM
ELIUD
ELEAZAR
MATTHAN
JACOB
JOSEPH HUSBAND OF MARY

David was not only a type of Christ, he was the first of a kingly lineage through which Jesus came. As the head of that kingly lineage, David is called “the patriarch.”

This particularly relates to Christ’s authority and kingship. The prophets said He would sit on “*the throne of David*” (Isa 9:7). It is written that He would be given “*the key of the house of David*” (Isa 22:22). His salvation is referred to as “*the sure mercies of David*” (Isa 55:3). He is “*the branch*” that was raised up unto **David** (Jer 23:5; 33:15). The Messiah is even referred to as “*David their King*” (Jer 30:9; Hos 3:5), and “*My servant David*” (Ezek 34:23-24). This is, then, a key association!

David was not only a type of Christ, he was the first of a kingly lineage through which Jesus came. As the head of that kingly lineage, David is called “*the patriarch*.” Peter will elaborate on this more extensively as this word continues.

HE IS BOTH DEAD AND BURIED

“ . . . that he is both dead and buried . . . ” Other versions read, “*that he both died and was buried,*”^{NASB} “*came to his death, and was put in the earth,*”^{BBE} “*he is both dead and buried,*”^{GENEVA} “*he died, and also was buried,*”^{MRD} “*not only died and was buried,*”^{MONTGOMERY} and “*There is no doubt that he died and was buried.*”^{PHILLIPS}

The point Peter is making is this: the word David wrote in the 16th Psalm could not have been about himself. There are some Psalms that have a dual application, the partial one being found in the writer, and the complete fulfillment in Christ Jesus (Psa 18:43; 47:5-9; 65:2-4; 69:1-4; 75:2; 93:2-3; 102:24; 109:25; 118:19,21). However, the

Psalm now being declared by Peter is **not** in that category. It applies exclusively to the Christ, as Peter will now affirm.

HIS SEPULCHER IS WITH US

“ . . . and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.” Other versions read, “*His tomb is with us to this day,*”^{NKJV} “*his resting-place is with us today,*”^{BBE} “*and his monument is amongst us unto this day,*”^{DARBY} “*his tomb is in our midst to this day,*”^{NAB} “*his tomb is still here among us,*”^{NLT} “*His grave is still here with us today,*”^{IE} and “*we still have his tomb among us.*”^{WEYMOUTH}

The point is that the body of David was still in “*his tomb*.” **Further, if his body was in his tomb, his spirit was still in Hades – the abode of the dead.** He was still under the dominion of death. This confirms that David could not possibly have been speaking about himself, for **his** present condition **contradicted** the Psalm. He had been **left** in Hades, and his body **did** see corruption. He had, in fact, just as Joshua and David, gone “*the way of all the earth*” (Josh 23:14; 1 Kgs 2:2).

THE PROPHET SPOKE ABOUT CHRIST

³⁰ **Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.”**

Peter now affirms that David was **not** speaking as a mere man. He was **not** recounting his own personal experiences.

BEING A PROPHET

“*Therefore being a prophet . . .*” Other versions read, “*And so, because he was a prophet,*”^{NASB} “*But he was a prophet,*”^{NIV} “*Since he was a prophet,*”^{NRSV} “*Whereas therefore he was a prophet,*”^{DOUAY} “*David was a prophet,*”^{GWN} “*Therefore, seeing he was a prophet,*”^{PNT} “*a prophet, therefore, being,*”^{YLT} “*Being a prophet, however,*”^{WEYMOUTH} and “*But while he was alive he was a prophet.*”^{PHILLIPS}

Phillips’ translation captures a

facet of this text that is most intriguing. In the 16th Psalm we have Jesus speaking **after** He died – **after** He had left the world for a season. The Psalm represents Jesus as speaking prophetically: “*My flesh shall rest in hope . . . Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell . . . neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption . . . Thou shalt make Me full of joy with Thy countenance.*” David, however, only prophesied **while he was alive**.

Peter leaves no doubt about this matter. David is speaking as a prophet. He is not speaking of himself, or out from himself. God is, in fact, saying something about the Christ through David, and doing so far in advance of the appearance of the Messiah.

Being a faithful prophet, David prophesied “*according to the proportion of faith*” (Rom 12:6). That is, he spoke what

he saw, or understood. He spoke “*as the oracles of God*” (1 Pet 4:11), uttering the mind of the Lord, and doing so with understanding. We are again reminded that “*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev 19:10).

KNOWING THAT GOD HAD SWORN WITH AN OATH TO HIM

“ . . . and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him . . . ” Other versions read, “*And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath,*”^{NASB} “*that God had promised him on oath,*”^{NIV} “*and having in mind the oath which God had given to him,*”^{BBE} “*and knew that God had sworn him an oath,*”^{NJB} “*and knowing that with an oath God did swear to him,*”^{YLT} “*and knew God had promised with an unbreakable oath,*”^{LIVING} “*God vowed to David,*”^{IE} “*and knowing that God had solemnly sworn to him,*”^{WEYMOUTH} “*and knowing that God had sealed to him with*

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

an oath,^{”AMPLIFIED} and “He knew that God had given him a most solemn promise.”
PHILLIPS

David engages his mind – his memory and his contemplative powers – as he prophesies. He prophesies “knowing” what God had promised to him, not while in a trace.

The prophecy (a promise of God) of reference is found in the seventh chapter of Second Samuel. Because this is such a pivotal prophecy, we will do well to consider it in some depth.

“And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that **He will make thee an house.** And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, **I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son.** If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. **And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever**” (2 Sam 7:11-16).

Another account of this occasion is found in the book of First Chronicles.

“And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, **that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son:** and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee: but **I will settle him in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.** According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David” (1 Chr 17:11-15).

In his Psalms, David refers to this

promise.

“I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, **thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.** Selah” (Psa 89:3-4).

“Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David My servant: with My holy oil have I anointed him: With whom My hand shall be established: Mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him: and in

89:19-37).

“**The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David: He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.** If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore. For the LORD hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for his habitation. This is My rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. **There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for Mine anointed.** His enemies will I clothe with shame: **but upon himself shall his crown flourish**” (Psa 132:11-18).

David engages his mind – his memory and his contemplative powers – as he prophesies. He prophesies “knowing” what God had promised to him, not while in a trace.

My name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. **Also I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.** My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and **My covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.** If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. **Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me.** It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah” (Psa

There are several key factors to note in this prophecy.

- ⇒ God would make a house for David.
- ⇒ David’s seed would build a house for God’s name.
- ⇒ God would establish the throne of David’s kingdom forever.
- ⇒ God would be a Father to David’s seed, and the seed would be His son.
- ⇒ David’s house and kingdom would be established forever.
- ⇒ God would settle David’s seed in His house and kingdom forever.
- ⇒ God’s hand would be established with David.
- ⇒ David’s horn would be exalted.
- ⇒ God would make his firstborn higher

than the kings of the earth.

- ⇒ God covenant would stand fast with him.
- ⇒ His seed would endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.
- ⇒ David's seed would endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Him.
- ⇒ God swore in truth and would not turn from it, that of the fruit of David's body He would raise up one to sit on his throne.
- ⇒ He would make the horn of David to bud.
- ⇒ The crown of the seed would flourish.

Observations

First, there is a part of this prophecy that does **not** refer to Christ

statements of the sixteenth Psalm. **Prophecy, then, was actually joined with understanding, and also gave birth to additional prophecies through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

It is important to note the role of the mind in prophesying. Even when prophecies were intended for later generations, **the minds of the prophets were involved.** Peter says of those who spoke of Christ's sufferings and glory, *"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: **searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow**"* (1 Pet 1:10-11). Rather than speaking or writing while in some kind of subconscious trace, these prophets knew what they were prophesying. They knew it concerned the coming Christ. They probed what they

kingly nature was revealed, as well as the eternal and uninterrupted nature of His beneficent kingdom.

OF THE FRUIT OF HIS LOINS

"... that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh,..." Other versions read, *"that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh,"* NKJV *"one of his descendants,"* NASB *"that of the fruit of his body,"* BBE *"one of David's descendants,"* GWN *"of the fruit of thy bowels,"* MRD and *"one of David's own descendants."* NLT

The coming Messiah would come from David's progeny – from his natural offspring. Although David had several sons, the Messianic lineage would be traced through only one of them – Solomon. All through the lineage of Jesus this was the case. Abraham had seven sons beside Isaac: Ishmael, Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah (Gen 16:16; 25:2). However, the Messiah came through Isaac. Isaac began Jacob and Esau, but the Messianic lineage came through Jacob (Mal 1:2). Jacob had twelve sons, but the Christ came from only one of them – Judah (Heb 7:14). Judah had five sons, but the Messiah came through Pharez (Matt 1:3).

I say these things only to point out that David had to understand which of his sons would provide the lineage for the coming Christ. He understood the prophecies delivered through him to have a secondary reference to Solomon, who did build a house for God, even as the Messiah would also do. I understand this to be the purpose for the dual nature of the prophecy. Solomon was the secondary reference, and the building of the Temple was a secondary building, **in order that the lineage itself might be better understood.**

TO SIT ON HIS THRONE

"... He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." Other versions read, *"He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,"* NKJV *"to sit . . . upon his throne,"* NASB *"he would place . . . on his throne,"* NIV *"He would put . . . on his throne,"* NRSV *"he would set one upon his throne,"* ASV *"would take his place as king,"* BBE *"one should sit upon his throne,"* DOUAY *"I will seat [one] on thy throne,"* MRD *"succeed him on the throne,"* NJB *"that Christ . . . should sit on his*

In the prophecy itself, there is no direct reference to the Messiah. This is an association that comes with understanding. It is clear from the Psalms of David that he came to grasp the significance of the promise. In fact, Peter says it was David's understanding of this promise that prompted the statements of the sixteenth Psalm.

Himself. *"If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."*

Second, there is a sense in which much of promise pertained to Solomon, who would build the Temple. *"He shall build an house for My name."*

In the prophecy itself, there is no direct reference to the Messiah. **This is an association that comes with understanding.** It is clear from the Psalms of David that he came to grasp the significance of the promise. In fact, Peter says it was David's understanding of this promise that prompted the

expressed, *"trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow."* NIV What is even more, the Lord answered their earnest inquiries, making known that *"not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven; things which angels desire to look into"* (1 Pet 1:12).

Thus, while many of the particulars about the promised Messiah were not made known to David, His

seat,^{”PNT} “would [be the Messiah and] sit on David’s throne,”^{”LIVING} “would sit upon David’s throne,”^{”IE} and “He would set one on his throne.”^{”MONTGOMERY}

The throne of reference was not an earthly throne, for Jesus would later make clear that His kingdom “is not of this world” (John 18:36). That being the case, its throne could not possibly be established in this world. Further, the purpose for Christ’s rule was not the establishment of a worldly empire. A higher purpose is being served by Jesus’ kingdom than worldly prominence.

Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would sit upon David’s throne. “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no

end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isa 9:7). Thus, we have a Messiah coming from the seed of David, and sitting upon the throne of David.

Peter is now going to relate all of this to “Jesus of Nazareth.” He has clearly stated that David was not speaking about himself when he wrote of not being left in Hades, and his body not being subject to corruption. He was actually speaking of the Messiah, for the present circumstances confirmed he could not have been speaking about himself. His body was still in the grave.

In Peter’s inspired exposition, he will speak of Jesus sitting on David’s throne quite differently than many historical and modern self-professed theologians. He will not speak of Christ’s

second coming. He will not speak of Jesus setting up His kingdom in Jerusalem. He will not speak of an earthly empire. Men have made these associations, but they cannot associate them with Peter’s exposition.

Lest this appear to be a mere gloss of the text, let me remind you that Peter is now speaking of Jesus being “raised up to sit” on David’s “throne.” “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne” (Acts 2:30). He is relating this to the prophecy of One not being left in Hades, and His body not seeing corruption. He is referring to One coming back from the dead, not to One coming back to earth from heaven!

This is highly disruptive to much eschatology – humanly conceived eschatology.

THE RESURRECTION AND ENTHRONEMENT

^{”31} He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.”

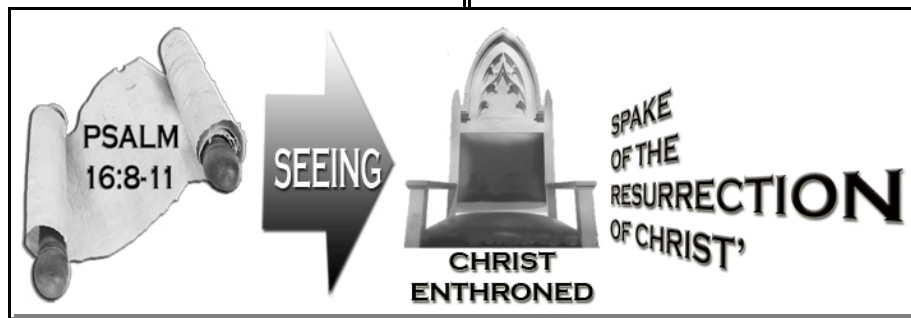
Peter leaves no doubt concerning the reason and focus of David’s prophecy. He will not tie that prophecy to the book of Daniel, or to a Messianic kingdom upon earth – and he is “filled with the

who knows the truth about Christ.

HE SEEING THIS BEFORE

“He seeing this before . . .” Other versions read, “he, foreseeing this,”^{”NKJV} “he looked ahead,”^{”NASB} “Seeing what was ahead,”^{”NIV} “he foresaw,”^{”RSV} “He, having knowledge of the future,”^{”BBE} “Seeing this in advance,”^{”CSB} “He knowing this before,”^{”GENEVA} “David knew,”^{”GWN} “he spoke with foreknowledge,”^{”NJB} “having foreseen,”^{”YLT}

And what is it that David saw before – that is, saw before it actually came to pass. What is the sight that prompted him to speak as he did? It was the enthronement of his own Seed upon his throne. It was the fulfillment of God’s promise to make him a house (2 Sam 7:27), and to have it governed by the King on a throne that is established forever (1 Chron 17:11-14). This is what David saw “before.”



Spirit.” He will not associate it with the overthrow of the antichrist, or with a magnificent kingdom in Jerusalem. This word is how an inspired man speaks,

“David was looking far into the future and predicting,”^{”LIVING} “David knew this before it took place,”^{”IE} and “with prophetic insight.”^{”WEYMOUTH}

HE SPAKE OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

“. . . spake of the resurrection of Christ . . .” Other versions read, “spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ,”^{”NKJV} “spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah,”^{”NRSV} “was talking of the coming again of Christ from the dead,”^{”BBE} “that the Messiah would come back to life, and he spoke about that before it ever happened,”^{”GWN} “speaking of the Messiah’s resurrection,”^{”NLT} “he did speak concerning the rising again of the Christ,”^{”YLT} “predicting Messiah’s resurrection,”^{”LIVING} “the resurrection of Christ and told it,”^{”WILLIAMS} “spoke [by

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

foreknowledge of the resurrection of the Christ (the Messiah),^{”AMPLIFIED} and “*THE resurrection of Christ, and it is this of which he is speaking.*”^{”PHILLIPS}

Let me go over this once again. Here are the facts in the case.

- ⇨ God would build David a house (2 Sam 7:11).
- ⇨ He would raise up One from David’s own lineage to sit upon his throne (2 Sam 7:16).
- ⇨ He would reign forever (2 Sam 7:13).
- ⇨ His kingdom would have no end (2 Sam 7:16).
- ⇨ As a King, He would build God’s house (1 Chron 17:12).
- ⇨ God would make this King higher than the kings of the earth (Psa 89:27).
- ⇨ God swore and would not repent, that He would raise up one to sit on David’s throne (Psa 89:3-4).

Given these facts, exactly how would David correlate his prophecies with the coming King? With what event would he associate the fulfillment of these prophecies? How will the Holy Spirit lead him to speak? Peter leaves no doubt on the matter. David was inspired, and Peter is also inspired. Now Peter affirms the matter clearly, and without any ambiguity whatsoever. David was moved to speak **“of the resurrection of Christ.”** He did not speak about Christ’s second coming, but about His resurrection. **He did not speak of Jesus returning to earth from heaven, but of Him returning from the region of the dead!**

Is it possible to state the case with any more clarity? With the insight of faith **and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David saw the raising up of a King to sit upon his throne, and it moved him to speak of the resurrection of Christ!** He foresaw a King being raised up to build God’s house, and he spoke of the **resurrection** of Christ. He looked ahead by faith and saw an eternal reign, and spoke of the **resurrection** of Christ

Some men say that Jesus is coming back from heaven to be seated on the throne and reign. Peter will declare He rose from the dead to do so!

This prophecy is all the more remarkable when you consider how very few references are made in Moses and the Prophets to the resurrection of the dead in general, and to the resurrection of Christ specifically. **Job** alluded to the resurrection of the dead (Job 14:12-15; 19:25-27). **David** spoke of Christ’s resurrection (Psa 16:9-10). He gave some veiled words about the general resurrection (Psa 17:15; 49:15). **Isaiah** spoke of death being swallowed up in victory (Isa 25:8), and the earth casting out her dead (Isa 26:19). **Daniel** spoke of many that sleep in the dust of the earth awakening (Dan 12:2-3). He was told by a heavenly messenger that he would “rest” and stand in his lot at the end of

be hard pressed to find anyone speaking about Christ being raised up to sit upon David’s throne that points to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. That, however, is what Peter did as he was moved by the Holy Spirit.

HIS SOUL AND HIS FLESH

“... that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.” Other versions read, “that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption,”^{”NKJV} “that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh decay,”^{”NASB} “that He was not abandoned to the grave, nor did His body see decay,”^{”NIV} “He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption,”^{”NRSV} “He was not left in Hades, and His flesh did not experience decay,”^{”CSB} “that neither has he been left in hades nor his flesh seen corruption,”^{”DARBY} “that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld nor

This is Peters exposition of resurrection – Christ’s resurrection in particular, and resurrection in general. It involves a twofold deliverance: one from Hades, and one from the grave. The spirit is in Hades, and the body is in the grave. Both deliverances must occur for there to be a resurrection from the dead.

his days (Dan 12:13). **Hosea** spoke of God’s people being ransomed “from the power of the grave”, and being redeemed “from death” (Hos 13:14).

In all of this, David, being a man after God’s own heart, spoke with the greatest clarity on the nature the resurrection itself. It involves not being left in Hades, and the body coming out of the grave. He also is the only prophet that spoke of Christ’s resurrection from the dead – and his reference needed to be interpreted by Peter for men to see it.

Peter also affirms that David’s prophecy was prompted by what he saw. That is, through the Spirit he saw the enthronement of Jesus, and was moved by the Spirit to prophesy of Christ’s resurrection. **That is an association made in heaven, not upon earth.** Yet, you will

did his flesh see corruption,”^{”NAB} “He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave,”^{”NLT} “He will not be left in death. His body will not decay in the grave,”^{”IE} “to the effect that He was not left forsaken in the Unseen World, nor did His body undergo decay,”^{”WEYMOUTH} “that He was not deserted [in death] and left in Hades (the state of departed spirits), nor did His body know decay or see destruction,”^{”AMPLIFIED} and “Christ was not deserted in death and His body was never destroyed.”^{”PHILLIPS}

This is Peters exposition of resurrection – Christ’s resurrection in particular, and resurrection in general. It involves a twofold deliverance: one from Hades, and one from the grave. The spirit is in Hades, and the body is in the grave. **Both deliverances must occur for there to**

be a resurrection from the dead. It has already occurred in Jesus, it will yet be fulfilled in the resurrection when **“all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”** (John 5:28-29).

I am chagrined at the bent of some translations in the direction of soul-sleeping. They translate this verse as though it involves redundant expressions. *“He was not abandoned to the grave, nor did His body see decay,”*^{NIV} *“He will not be left in death. His body will not decay in the grave,”*^{IE} *“Christ was not deserted in death and His body was never destroyed.”*^{PHILLIPS} *“He said that the Messiah wouldn’t be left in the grave and that his body wouldn’t decay,”*^{GWN} *“he was not left in the grave, neither did his body see corruption,”*^{MRD} and *“He will not be left in death. His body will not decay in the grave.”*^{IE}

These are wholly inappropriate translations. They reflect human persuasion rather than Divine intent. Two parts are mentioned (*“soul”* and *“His flesh”*), and two locations or conditions are mentioned (*“Hell”* [Hades] and *“corruption.”*)

SOUL-SLEEPING

The soul-sleeping heresy affirms that both the seen and unseen parts of those who are dead are *“asleep.”* This is base on the Scriptural references to death as *“sleep”* (Deut 31:16; Job 7:21; 14:12; Dan 12:2; John 11:11; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor 15:6,18).

These references pertain to the body, and are used to confirm the reality of the coming resurrection. The use of the term *“sleep”* is not intended to denote unconsciousness, but the prospect of being raised from the dead. Thus Job speaks of death as sleeping *“in the dust”* (Job 7:21), and Daniel to *“sleep in the dust of the earth”* (Dan 12:2).

A Separation

At death, there is a **separation** of the seen and unseen parts of men. It is not possible, therefore, that they would both remain in the same place. Rachel’s death is described using this kind of language. *“And it came to pass, as **her***

soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin” (Gen 35:18).

When the son of a widow of Zarephath died, Elijah raised him from the dead. The prophet asked the Lord, *“I pray Thee, let this child’s soul come into him **again.**”* When the boy was raised, it is described in these words: *“And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him **again,** and he revived”* (1 Kgs 17:22).

Referring to his preference of death over life in the body, Paul wrote of being **“absent from the body”** (2 Cor 5:8).

When referring to an epochal vision he received, Paul said he did not know whether he was *“in the body or out of the body”* – and he was very conscious at that time (2 Cor 12:3).

When Stephen died, he is said to have fallen *“sleep”* (Acts 7:60). However, before he died, he referred to the **separation** of his spirit from his body. He prayed, *“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”*

resurrection.

JESUS PREACHING TO THE SPIRITS. The very person who, in our text, was preaching on the day of Pentecost, later referred to Jesus’ activity **after** He died, and before He was raised. *“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, **but quickened by the Spirit:** by which also **HE** went and preached unto **the spirits** in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water”* (1 Pet 3:18-20). Those seeking to defend the soul-sleeping view, as well as several others, say that the preaching of reference was that of Noah, in whom, they aver, the spirit of Christ was present. However, Noah is never depicted as possessing *“the Spirit of Christ,”* prophesying of Christ, or preaching to *“spirits.”* Later Peter again refers to this incident. *“for this cause was **the gospel preached** also to **them that are dead,** that they might be*



(Acts 7:59). It is inconceivable that he was referring to a period of unconsciousness, or to the resurrection of the dead that would be in the future.

At death there is a **separation** of the seen and unseen part of men.

Consciousness After Death

Scripture does not support unconsciousness after death, or a lack of awareness of the surroundings. **Our text is proclaiming a prophecy that referred to Jesus having gladness in the presence of the Lord after He died, and expecting His appointed resurrection.**

There are both teaching and testimonies that affirm the consciousness of those who have died. This is pertinent to the significance of our text, which speaks of Christ’s anticipation of His

judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Pet 4:6). Noah preached no Gospel, nor did he preach that anyone might *“live according to God in the spirit.”* Although this incident presents some difficulties for surface thinkers, it is in Scripture. It testifies to the Lord having no pleasure in the death of the wicked. There is no reason to imagine that all of those who died in the flood were wicked, and consequently went to Hell. Scripture does not affirm this. Nor, indeed, are we to suppose there were no children, demented, or some who did not have the faintest notion of the existence of Noah. This text does not clarify all of the issues of post-death myseries, but it does affirm the activity of Jesus after His death and before His resurrection. Peter says of Jesus **“HE went and preached to the spirits!”**

REVELATION WHILE OUT OF THE BODY. When Paul was caught up into the “third heaven,” he was very aware of what was happening. He “heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” The experience was so vivid that Paul gloried in the experience (2 Cor 12:4-5). If the soul-sleeping theory is true, then Paul was speaking ignorantly and without due regard for the truth. Who is the fool who will postulate such an absurdity?

WE HAVE COME TO THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT. Candidly

⇨ “And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean **spirits** [νεύμασιν], and they come out” (Luke 4:36).

⇨ “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing **spirits** [νεύμασιν], and doctrines of devils” (1 Tim 4:1).

⇨ “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in

serious suggestion. In that case we have the One who is “the Truth” using a fable to teach something. In the account, Jesus did not speak like a soul-sleeper would speak. In fact, no soul-sleeper could talk like this. The Lord, who is “full of grace and truth,” said Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. There he was comforted. The rich man died, was buried, and lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment. This dead man spoke to Abraham, received an answer from Abraham, made another petition of Abraham, and was given another answer by Abraham. Both the rich man and Abraham knew about the rich man’s brothers, and of their spiritual condition. Abraham knew about Moses and the Prophets, who did not live until more than 500 years after he died. Abraham also spoke of other personalities who existed with both the rich man and Lazarus, and how, if they desired to do so, they could not pass from one region to the other. That is how Jesus spoke about life after death.

SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR. John was given a glimpse of some of these “spirits of just men made perfect.” He tells us who they were, where they are now, and of their former lives on the earth. “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar **the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held**” (Rev 6:9). He did not see men in the body, but “souls.” They were not men in the earth, but those who had been killed because of their testimony. These “souls” cried out to the Lord “a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Rev 6:10).

Far from being asleep, these souls were very conscious, both of their surroundings, and of their former lives. Heaven knew this was the case, so there was an immediate response to their cry. “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled” (Rev 6:11). Methinks if some person had told these “souls” of the doctrine of soul-

In no way can any of these verses be perceived as speaking about men in the flesh, or in the body. We have come to an assembly of “spirits” who have been perfected – that is, freed from the encumbrances of the flesh. That this could refer to unconscious beings in the grave is an absurdity unworthy of being embraced by intelligent men.

the Spirit affirms of all who are in Christ Jesus, “But ye **are come** unto . . . the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb 12:22). Other versions read, “You **have come**,” NKJV “you have **approached**,” NAB “what you have come to is.” NJB This is a description of where believers remaining “in the body” have come. Elsewhere these coming ones are referred to as “being yourselves also in the body” (Heb 13:3). And to whom does the Spirit say we “have come?” Pertinent to this discussion, He states it includes “the spirits of just men made perfect.” The word “spirits” is translated from the Greek word πνεύμασιν (pnyhoo-mah-sin). This exact word is found five times in Scripture, and its meaning is obvious. It is never applied to people on earth.

⇨ “And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth He even the unclean **spirits** [νεύμασιν] and they do obey Him” (Mark 1:27).

heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the **spirits** [νεύμασιν] of just men made perfect” (Heb 12:23).

⇨ “By which also he went and preached unto the **spirits** [νεύμασιν] in prison” (1 Pet 3:19).

In no way can any of these verses be perceived as speaking about men in the flesh, or in the body. We have come to an assembly of “spirits” who have been perfected – that is, freed from the encumbrances of the flesh. That this could refer to unconscious beings in the grave is an absurdity unworthy of being embraced by intelligent men.

The rich man and Lazarus. Jesus gave the account of “a certain rich man,” and “a certain beggar named Lazarus.” Some affirm that this was really a parable, and not an actual account. However, who has ever heard of a parable that likens reality to something that is nothing more than a myth. If the soul-sleepers are right, then Jesus used a lie to teach truth – and I view that as a

sleeping, they would have laughed at them in derision.

MOSES AND ELIJAH CAME BACK. We have the record of two men who left this world – one by death, and one by translation – yet came back in glory. When Jesus was transfigured, *“behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem”* (Luke 9:31). **They both talked with Jesus about His appointed decease, or death – and on earth neither of them said so much as one syllable about**

Christ’s death. They surely could not have talked if they were asleep or unconscious – even doing so with prophetic insight.

Thus we have the record of several departed souls, or spirits, and of their activity **after** they died. Whether some of them are viewed as parables or reality, the fact of consciousness after death still remains. **It is unimaginable that the premier Personality, the Lord Jesus Himself, would have come behind “the spirits of just men made perfect” (Abraham, Lazarus, Paul, Moses, and Elijah), not being active after He died**

and before He rose from the dead.

CONCLUSION

Peter has introduced the resurrection of Christ in a most insightful way. He has declared that David *“foresaw”* it, and prophesied of the Savior’s anticipation of it. That is, this is something that was in God’s eternal purpose – Jesus taking back His life again, just as He was commissioned to do. God, therefore, alerted humanity to it more than 800 years ahead of time. It was foretold by David before Jesus, and anticipated by the Savior while He yet remained in the region of the dead.

WE ALL ARE WITNESSES

“³² This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”

Peter has already stated that God has raised Jesus from the dead: *“Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it”* (Acts 2:24). He has also declared this was something prophesied by David. Now He will affirm the truth of Christ’s resurrection once again, and buttress it with yet another witness.

THIS JESUS

“This Jesus . . .” Other versions read, *“This man Jesus,”* ^{GWN/NJB} *“He was speaking of Jesus,”* ^{LIVING} *“So Jesus,”* ^{IE} *“It was this very Jesus,”* ^{ISV} *“I mean Jesus,”* ^{WILLIAMS} and *“Christ is the man Jesus.”* ^{PHILLIPS}

“This Jesus” is *“Jesus of Nazareth,”* a man approved by God in their presence, and over an extended period. It is the Jesus they took, crucified, and killed *“by wicked hands.”* It is also the One David foresaw, as well as the One who testified to God Himself that He would not leave Him in Hades, or allow His body to see corruption.

The people had tried to put *“this Jesus”* from themselves, thereby fulfilling the second Psalm. *“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and*

against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (Psa 2:3). Now, they are having to face that *“same Jesus”* again!

GOD RAISED UP

“. . . hath God raised up . . .” Other versions read, *“God has raised up,”*

the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd” (Eccl 12:11). He once again faces them with the stark reality of God’s reversal of their judgment. They killed Him, God raised Him! They rejected Him, God accepted Him! They hated Him, God loved Him!

“This Jesus” is “Jesus of Nazareth,” a man approved by God in their presence, and over an extended period. It is the Jesus they took, crucified, and killed “by wicked hands.” It is also the One David foresaw, as well as the One who testified to God Himself that He would not leave Him in Hades, or allow His body to see corruption.

^{NKJV} *“God raised up again,”* ^{NASB} *“God has raised . . . to life,”* ^{NIV} *“God has given back to life,”* ^{BBE} *“God has resurrected,”* ^{CSB} *“God brought . . . back to life,”* ^{GWN} *“Jesus rose from the dead,”* ^{LIVING} and *“God raised from death.”* ^{WEYMOUTH}

Like the wise man of Solomon’s reference, Peter is fastening truth in the minds of those before him. *“The words of*

Twenty-one times it is stated that God raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 2:24,32; 3:26; 5:30; 10:40; 12:7; 13:22,30,33,34; 17:31; Rom 4:24; 6:4; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor 4:14; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:20; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 1:21). By way of comparison, fourteen times it is stated that Christ *“died”* (Rom 5:6,8; 6:10; 8:34; 14:9,15; 1 Cor 8:11; 15:3; 2 Cor 5:14,15; 1Thess14; 5:10). To say that Christ’s resurrection is central to the

preaching of the Gospel is an understatement, to say the least. Yet, there is a great deal of purported Gospel preaching that does not make much of Christ's resurrection.

WE ALL ARE WITNESSES

" . . . whereof we all are witnesses." Other versions read, "of which we are all witnesses," ^{NKJV} "to which we are all witnesses of the fact," ^{NIV} "and of that all of us are witnesses," ^{NRSV} "We are all witnesses of this," ^{CSB} "We are all eye-witnesses of this!" ^{IE} "a fact to which all of us testify," ^{WEYMOUTH} "and of that all we [His disciples] are witnesses," ^{AMPLIFIED} and "a fact of which all of us are eye-witnesses!" ^{PHILLIPS}

would say it again: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead: **whereof we are witnesses**" (Acts 3:14-15). Again, he would say, "And **we are His witnesses** of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). At the house of Cornelius he again testified, "And **we are witnesses** of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; Not to all the people, **but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and**

4). These witnesses saw Jesus **after** He was risen from the dead. In fact, He had spent considerable with them, showing Himself "alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). Further, His appearances were not limited to "the twelve," but included "above five hundred brethren" (1 Cor 15:6), "James" (1 Cor 15:7), Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:9), "the women" (Matt 28:9), Cleopas and his companion (Luke 24:15-34), and others (Lk 24:10-11,35-36).

Some might conjecture that it would have been better to have the actual Jesus there, and thus the people could have the witness of the disciples corroborated. However, there is something that must not be overlooked. **A faithful witness is verified to the conscience of men by the Holy Spirit.** Jesus had promised that when the Spirit came, He would "reprove," or convict, ^{NKJV} "the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:8-11).

This promised work is precisely what will be accomplished on this marvelous day of Pentecost – a day when the "door of faith" was being opened to the sons of men. During the events of this Christ's resurrection will be confirmed.

Technically, no one actually witnessed the resurrection itself – not even the soldiers who watched the tomb. They were startled by an angel, not the rising of Jesus from the dead (Matt 28:2-4). These witnesses saw Jesus after He was risen from the dead.

Jesus had told them, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth**" ^{NKJV} (Acts 1:8). Prophetically He had said to them, "And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48). Later Peter

drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).

Technically, no one actually witnessed the resurrection itself – not even the soldiers who watched the tomb. They were startled by an angel, not the rising of Jesus from the dead (Matt 28:2-

CONCLUSION

Thus, Peter has presented the resurrection of Christ, so essential to man's salvation. He has declared it as the work of God Himself, who raised Him from the dead, thereby negating the judgment of those who took Him, crucified Him, and killed Him. He has also affirmed that David prophesied of Christ's resurrection, knowing that God was going to raise up a King to sit on his throne, and that He would reign forever. **He has also declared that he and those**

with him are eye-witnesses of the risen Christ.

All of this confirms that salvation **must** be implemented and completed by a **living** Savior. Spiritual life is not maintained by rules, regulations, ceremonies, and procedures. Such things have a little measured value. As it is written, "For **bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that**

now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim 4:8). This is not referring to "exercise," as ordinarily conceived. It rather refers to disciplines of the body – religious disciplines like fasting, abstinence, celibacy, regular religious activities, etc. Thus, the New American Standard Version reads, "For **bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come**" (1 Tim 4:8).

Peter reveals that the pangs of death could not hold Jesus. He is risen from the dead – Given O. Blakely

However valuable these things, and other similar activities, may appear, **they cannot culture the soul, feed the spirit, or heighten spiritual sensitivity.** They do not enhance Divine fellowship, cause grace to come to us in greater measures, or make our prayers more effectual.

From beginning to end, we require a living Savior, and that is what Peter is declaring. He is opening up the

nature of the New Covenant, which significantly differs from the Old Covenant which “stood **only** in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation” (Heb 9:10). Now, instead of a ceremony, men are being called “into the fellowship” of God’s dear Son (1 Cor 1:9). Instead of coming to the Temple, they will be urged to “draw nigh unto God” Himself by means of a “better

hope” (Heb 7:19), and to do so “with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb 10:22). All of that requires a **living** Savior – one who can say, “I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev 1:18). That is the Jesus that Peter is declaring!

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 9/1/2006. We will continue our current series of lessons on the book of Acts. The tenth lesson will cover verses thirty-three through thirty-six of the second chapter: “THE PREACHING OF JESUS: HE IS LORD.” While some are teaching that Jesus will yet sit upon David’s throne, Peter will affirm that the resurrection of Christ led to that enthronement, not His second coming. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

*The Blakely Family: Given, June, Benjamin, Jonathan, and Eva
406 South Sergeant Street, Joplin, MO 64801*

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Telephone: (417) 782-3063, Email: Given (GivenB@aol.com) June: (JuneE01@aol.com)

ADAH’s Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/adah.htm> -- EVA’s Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/Eva.htm>

Benjamin (Bensvison@aol.com), Eva (Evablakely@aol.com)

Adah Hutchcraft (adahhutchcraft@hotmail.com), Jason Hutchcraft (hcchurch@interlink-cafe.com)

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hebrews: <http://wotruth.com/hebindex.htm>

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