

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 8: ACTS 2:24-38

ACTS 2:14-36 | PETER'S FIRST SERMON

- Verses 14-24 included on session 7
- Verse 24 – (repeated from session 7)
 - The truth of verse 24 is terribly problematic to these Israelites. It is bad enough to be guilty of the death of an innocent man, but now this innocent man is *alive* and *ascended* and being presented as *Messiah*. Such a scenario will require more than "oops!"
 - In vv. 25-31 Peter will use Hebrew Scripture to show that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was yet another prophetic fulfillment proving him to be the Messiah. Peter will return to his main subject in verse 32.
- Verses 25-28 –
 - These verses contain Psalm 16:8-11. Peter uses these verses to give evidence that the Messiah was *supposed to die and be resurrected*, a fact that they *all* had missed (including the Apostles, until after the resurrection - see Luke 18:31-34).
 - The purpose of Peter's sermon is to convince Israel that Jesus is their Messiah. It is not a *good news* sermon as much as a *bad news from which to repent* sermon.
 - Concerning the word hell in verse 27, the words of Bullinger are in order:
 - *Seeing that the Holy Spirit has used it in Acts 2:27, 31 as His own equivalent of Sheōl in Psalm 16:10, He has settled, once for all, the sense in which we are to understand it. The meaning He has given to Sheōl Ps. 16:10 is the one meaning we are to give it wherever it occurs in the N.T., whether we transliterate it or translate it. We have no liberty to do otherwise, and must discard everything outside the Word of God.* (Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*. Appendix 131).
- Verses 29-31 –
 - Peter speaks about the **patriarch David** who was also a **prophet**.
 - Peter rightly teaches that since David was **both dead and buried** that the prophecy must pertain to **Christ** who would **sit on his throne**.
 - Peter uses the term **Christ** as *the Anointed One*, i.e.: the Messiah. The only logical conclusion is that David, **seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ**.
- Verse 32 –
 - Since a prophecy of the Patriarch David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, Peter then shifts to **this Jesus**, using the earthly name of our Lord, not the Messianic title (Christ).
 - Jesus the man **hath God raised up** and **we all are witnesses**. The identity of **we** is open. It could be "we the 12" or it could be "we the men of Israel," for the resurrection was almost universally known in the region.
- Verse 33 –
 - Jesus is now **by the right hand of God exalted**.
 - Concerning **the promise of the Holy Ghost**, compare Acts 1:4 where it speaks of **the promise of the Father**, and the *Father* promised *the Holy Ghost* (this is also true in Luke 24:49, John 14:16, and others).

- Verses 34-35 –
 - Once again Peter uses an illustration from the Psalms, quoting Psalm 110:1, and making note that this was not about David, thus must be about another.
- Verse 36 –
 - This is the point of the sermon. Peter wants Israel to know that **Jesus, whom ye have crucified** is **both Lord and Christ** (i.e.: *master and Messiah*).
 - It is a sermon to **all the house of Israel**, and thus *not* a sermon to "the church," nor is it a sermon of the church age.
- Verse 37 –
 - Peter's sermon has been:
 - What took place in the upper room was the beginning of prophetic fulfillment, and the completion of that fulfillment is not good (vv. 15-21)
 - Jesus is Israel's Messiah (vv. 22-35)
 - His miracles prove this (v. 22)
 - His resurrection proves this (vv. 23-32)
 - His ascension proves this (vv. 33-35)
 - Jesus is Lord and Christ.
 - This being true, **they were pricked in the heart** and wanted to know, **what shall we do?**
 - Peter's message does NOT:
 - Present Jesus as personal *savior*.
 - Say a single word about forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ.
 - Nothing about God not counting their sins against them.
 - The only question remains: *will Peter's response to their question rectify these issues?*
- Verse 38 –
 - Peter's response is clear (and clearly disturbing to the typical church view).
 - He says nothing about belief/faith.
 - He only gives a works answer.
 - He promises **the gift of the Holy Ghost** and not "forgiveness from your sins."
 - Questions the typical view should answer:
 - Would this answer be appropriate for a Christian witness today? Why not?
 - Is any evangelistic message ever preached from these verses? Why not?
 - Can we really attribute Peter's poor answer to an assumption that "the audience already knew all these things?" Why not? (To do so, we have to make it up, for no such idea comes from the text).