

# Acts 2:29-36

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/acts/acts-2/acts-229-36/>

*Peter tells the crowd that he and the other disciples are witnesses to Jesus's resurrection. They have seen Him alive again. And now He has ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of God. The Jewish people are called to realize that they crucified God's messiah.*

Having quoted from a psalm of King David, Peter now shows that these verses predict the event of Christ's resurrection. He calls his audience *Brethren*, fellow Jews who revere King David and respect the scriptures. Peter makes the point that although David wrote a psalm of praise to God for keeping him safe from his enemies, "Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay" (Acts 2:27) ultimately David did die the death of a man.

Peter declares that *confidently* he can say to the crowd regarding the patriarch David that he *both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day*. There was evidence that David remained dead, because the Jews knew where he was buried. They could visit the place where his dead body was laid to rest.

Yet, there was a special meaning in David's psalm. Prior to His ascension, Jesus opened the minds of Peter and the other apostles to understand the Old Testament and how it pointed ahead to Christ (Luke 24:44-45). So Peter explains that *because David was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead*. This *oath* that God had sworn to David is found in 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, where God stated the following to David through Nathan the prophet:

"When your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, then I will set up one of your descendants after you, who will be from your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build for Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father and he shall be My son; and I will not take My favor away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. But I will settle him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever."

Peter asserts that David *looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ*. Psalm 16:10 praises God for not abandoning the Holy One's soul to Hades (the place of the dead) or allowing him to undergo decay (to physically deteriorate) (Acts 2:31). Peter points to *the Christ*, Jesus of Nazareth, who *was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay*. It was *this Jesus* whom God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Here Peter specifies to the crowd that Jesus, who they saw crucified publicly fifty days ago after a messy, public trial, is no longer dead. He is alive, He was *raised up again* by God. He was *the Christ* and He experienced *resurrection*. King David wrote prophetically about Him, that He would be the one of David's descendants for whom God would establish His throne forever.

By God's inspiration, David *looked ahead* and wrote a psalm that applied to both God rescuing him from his enemies, as well as God rescuing his descendant from Hades (death) and keeping

His body from rotting or decaying. But Peter cites his own experience at the end of this declaration. First he reveals to the crowd what the scriptures said concerning this, and he clinches his argument by explaining that he and the disciples with him *are all witnesses* to Christ's return to life. Recall that this is not just one man, Peter, talking to the crowd. He is accompanied by the eleven apostles and 120 disciples who were just speaking of God's mighty deeds in various languages. Peter is saying that he and this other large group of people saw Jesus of Nazareth in a resurrected body. Jesus did not stay dead after His execution. He was God's Holy One. And every one of the 120 disciples were *witnesses* to the fact that He came back to life. Jesus appeared to all the disciples, and at one point to as many as five hundred at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6).

Peter continues his sermon. He tells the crowd what happened next for Jesus. Since He resurrected, the natural question is, where is He now? Jesus was *exalted to the right hand of God*. Exalted (Greek, "hypseis") means "lifted up." Jesus ascended to sit at God's right hand, which is the place of rulership second to the primary ruler. Peter makes sense of what the crowd had witnessed, that Jesus, *having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear*. Here we see a description of the Triune God working together. God *the Father* made a *promise* to send *the Holy Spirit*, and *Jesus* the Son *received* that *promise* and communicated it to the disciples, when He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit's coming. Now, *exalted* and seated at *the right hand of the Father*, the Son *poured forth this* power of the *Spirit*, which the crowds *both see and hear* that morning through the many languages spoken by the disciples who have received the *Spirit*.

Again Peter quotes King *David*, who *he himself* wrote:  
*'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,*

*Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.''*

Peter attributes the meaning here to Jesus, who sits at the Father's *right hand*, because *it was not David who ascended into heaven*. David does not sit at God the Father's *right hand*. He died and was buried and the Jews know where his tomb is to that day. So David was not writing about *himself*, but again about the future Messiah, who *ascended into heaven* to sit at the Father's *right hand*. Jesus was exalted to the *right hand* of the Father as a reward for His faithful obedience to the Father, for doing His will (Philippians 2:8-10; Hebrews 12:1-2; Revelation 3:21). Jesus states in Revelation 3:21 that He will give as a reward to all believers who overcome as He overcame to share His throne. This is consistent with many of Jesus' parables, such as the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. It is also asserted in Hebrews 2, where it is made clear that Jesus is reestablishing the path for humans to ascend to the position for which they were designed, to rule the earth as servant leaders, through the "suffering of death" (Hebrews 2:9-10).

Peter concludes his sermon by summing up the truth of who Jesus is and of His victory over death by also turning the message back to the crowd of Jews listening to him: *Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified*.

Verse 5 states that the people listening to Peter were “devout,” that they feared God and were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, they practiced their Jewish faith despite being scattered across the Roman world. They honored the scriptures as well, which is why Peter cited several Old Testament writings to display the prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus.

So Peter is addressing *all the house of Israel*, the entirety of the Jewish nation and identity, who hoped for a messiah to come save them—a messiah had come, Peter tells them, this they can know *for certain*, it is completely true, *that God made Jesus both Lord and Christ* (sent from God), and the *house of Israel* rejected Him. Their rejection of God’s messiah was so extreme that they *crucified* him. The blame falls on them for Jesus’s execution.

Peter’s sermon thoroughly summarizes the truth of who Jesus was, that His death was planned out by God, and that He was resurrected and given authority over the earth by God. But the Jewish people had demanded His death. They needed to reckon with this fact. What they had done was an evil, even if it fit in with God’s sovereign plan.

### **Biblical Text**

**29 “Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. 32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:**

**‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,**

**35 Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”’**

**36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”**