

THE FIRST SERMON (PART II): PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION

ACTS 02:25–36

Introduction

The first sermon ever preached after Pentecost was preached by Peter. He focused on the proofs of the resurrection.

- I. Proof 1: the prophecy of David — the prophecy concerned Jesus (vv. 25-28).
- II. Proof 2: Peter's testimony (vv. 29-31).
- III. Proof 3: the eye-witnesses — the disciples (v. 32).
- IV. Proof 4: the exaltation and the ascension of Jesus into heaven (vv. 33-36).

I. Acts 02:25–28 *The Prophecy of David*

Proof 1: The prophecy of David concerned Jesus. Peter said that “David [spoke] about Christ” (Psa. 16:8-11). What David said was a prophecy of the Lord's experience upon earth (vv. 25-28).

1. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' daily experience or life.
 - a. Jesus experienced God's constant presence and power.
 - => Jesus always saw God before His face. Jesus looked and kept His gaze upon God. He thought upon God, focused His mind and attention upon God. He concentrated and stayed His mind upon Him. The idea is that Jesus always practiced and was always conscious of God's presence — taking “captive every thought” (see 2 Cor. 10:5).
 - => Jesus always had God on His right hand, that He should not be moved. God was right there as an advocate and as a protector and defender. God was a provider looking after Christ, strengthening, guiding, upholding, seeing that He was not moved nor shaken. The picture is that of a defender in court or of a soldier on the battlefield standing at a person's right hand, protecting, looking after and providing for his welfare. (See Psa. 109:31 for this picture.)

Psa 121:5 The LORD watches over you — the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
(see Psa. 121:1-8)

Isa 41:13 For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

- b. Jesus' heart was glad and His tongue praised God. Such a consciousness of God's presence was bound to cause...
 - the heart *to be glad* (euphranthe): to be joyful and full of euphoria, full of God's presence and glory.
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- the tongue *to rejoice* (egalliasato): to leap for joy and break forth with praise and song.
- c. Jesus' body lived in hope. The phrase *will live* (kataskenosei) means *shall tabernacle* or pitch a tent. Jesus' *body* lived, tabernacled, pitched its tent, encamped and made its abode upon hope — the hope of conquering death, of being resurrected. Hope of living forever was the basis and foundation of Jesus' life, that for which He lived. He focused His whole life and being upon the hope of the glorious resurrection (see Paul's testimony, Ph. 3:7-16, esp. v. 11).
 2. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' conviction that He could be delivered from death. Note several points.
 - a. The word *abandon* (egkatalaipo). A soul can be utterly forsaken, doomed permanently in hell. But Christ was absolutely sure that His soul would not be left and abandoned in hell.
 - b. The words *hell* or *grave* (hades). (See *Grave, Hell*, Acts 2:27.) Christ said emphatically that His soul would not be left in hades, that is, in the realm of the dead. He would arise and live forever.
 - c. The word *decay* (diaphtheiro). (See *Grave, Hell*, Acts 2:27.)
 - d. The title Jesus used of Himself, "[God's] Holy One." Jesus was holy, righteous and pure. He was without sin and totally devoted to God. He was perfectly acceptable to God. Therefore God was bound to raise Him, to keep His body from being destroyed and lying in decay.

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.*

Heb 7:26 *Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

1 Pet 1:19 *But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

1 Pet 2:22 *“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

3. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' revelation. His revealing the way of life and God's presence. The Hebrew original reads “the path of life.” This is a marvellous declaration, a declaration that reveals the most glorious truth. God revealed the *path of life* to Christ, and Christ reveals it to us. The path of life, the way to escape death is to live in the countenance and presence of God. God will never abandon a man, never allow a man to see decay if that man lives and walks in His presence.

Jesus knew the path: it was God's presence. Note: He was full of the joy of God's presence. (So should we be.)

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Psa 16:11 *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

ACTS 02:27
GRAVE, HELL (GREEK, *HADES*; HEBREW, *SHEOL*)

Because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. Acts 02:27

The Greek word used here is Hades. Jesus revealed that *Hades* is the other world, that is, the unseen world, the spiritual dimension of being (see *Paradise*, Lk. 16:23). Jesus said that Hades (the other world) was divided into two huge areas or sections. The two areas are separated by a great gulf that is impassable (Lk. 16:26). One area is the place of sorrow (Lk. 16:23-24, 28), and the other area is the place of paradise where believers go. To say that one is dead is to say that one is in Hades or in the other world.

Note a critical fact: the other world or the spiritual dimension of being does exist. Denying hell does not change the fact that Hades exists. There are two areas or places in the other world: paradise and hell — the place of glory and the place of torment. And Christ says both actually exist. (See Lk. 16:22-23, see notes, Lk. 16:19-31; *Paradise*, Lk. 16:23; *Hell, Torment*, Lk. 16:24; notes, Lk. 23:40-43; Eph. 4:8-10: *Hell, Jesus Christ, Triumph*, 1 Pet. 3:19-20.)

The context of what Jesus said in David's prophecy needs to be noted.

1. The word *abandon* (egkatalaipo) means to leave behind, to utterly forsake and abandon. It is a strong word indicating a permanent state. A soul can be utterly forsaken and abandoned and doomed permanently in hell.
2. The word *decay* (diaphtheiro) means to decay, deteriorate, putrefy, destroy, perish. In no place does Christ promise a *new body* to the unbeliever, to the unsaved and lost. A person's body and flesh can be destroyed forever. (This is a fact seldom pointed out.)

Gal 6:8 *The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

Gen 3:19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

Job 17:14 *If I say to corruption, 'You are my father,' and to the worm, 'My mother' or 'My sister.'*

Job 21:26 Side by side they lie in the dust, and worms cover them both.

Psa 104:29 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. (see Ecc. 3:20; 12:7) □

II. Acts 02:29–31 Peter's Testimony

Proof 2: Peter's testimony. Peter was forceful: the words of David could not refer to himself. David was dead and buried. It was even known where his grave was, on Mt. Zion where most of Israel's kings were buried.

But there is something significant about David. He was a prophet of God, and God had revealed to him that the Messiah would come through his line. The Messiah would be one of his descendants and sit upon his throne (Psa. 132:11; see Psa. 89:3-4, 35-37; 2 Sam. 7:16). Therefore, what David was doing was predicting the resurrection of Christ. The prophecy referred to Jesus and His resurrection.

Note: Peter's declaration of the prophecy. He gave the three reasons why God raised up Christ. These are the same reasons He will resurrect believers.

1. Christ was raised to reign with God.
2. Christ was raised to deliver His soul from hell and the grave (see v. 27).
3. Christ was raised to deliver His body from decay (see v. 27). (The believer's body is to be raised from the grave and made into a new body. (See note, Mt. 22:31-32; *Resurrected Body of Jesus Christ*, Jn. 21:1; notes, 1 Cor. 15:35-49; 15:50-58.)

III. Acts 02:32 The Eye-Witnesses

Proof 3: The eye-witnesses to the resurrection were the disciples. (See *Jesus Christ, Resurrection*, Acts 1:3.)

IV. Acts 02:33–36 The Exaltation and the Ascension

Proof 4: The exaltation and the ascension of Jesus into heaven. Note three points. (See note, *Jesus Christ, Ascension*, Acts 1:9.)

1. Jesus was raised to be exalted. His resurrection involved the exaltation.
=> To be raised is for the purpose of exaltation.
=> To be raised is being exalted to the very presence of God.
=> To be raised and given eternal life is a state of exaltation.
=> To be raised means to be exalted.

Note the words "the right hand of God." This is a position by the side of God, a place of honour, glory, authority, dominion and rulership (see Acts 5:31). Christ has been raised to sit by the right hand of God in such a position.

And note: Christ, who is the obedient Son of God and the exalted Lord, has received what God had promised Him, the Holy Spirit. The exalted Christ has the presence of God, the Holy Spirit, to *pour out* (execheen) upon us all. This is what “you now see and hear,” the glorious presence and energy of the Holy Spirit, of the very Spirit and presence of God Himself. (See Jn. 15:26; 16:7.)

Thought 1. The believer’s heart should shout “hallelujah, praise the Lord.” Christ has sent the great promise and gift of the Spirit!

2. David prophesied the Lord’s exaltation (see Psa. 110:1). David could not have been speaking of himself, for he never arose from the dead, nor has he ever been exalted. David was prophesying that God (Jehovah) had spoken to *David’s Lord* (Messiah), promising that the Lord would sit on God’s right hand. And the Lord would reign until God subjected all the Lord’s foes. The picture of the footstool is that of complete triumph and victory over all the enemies of Christ, both human and spiritual.
3. Peter declared emphatically: Jesus is both Lord and Messiah. “Let all...be assured” (asphalos). The word is emphatic. It means without any doubt whatsoever, with perfect assurance and certainty, be assured that...
 - Jesus is Lord (v. 33).
 - Jesus is Messiah (see *Messiah*, Mt. 1:18).
 - Jesus whom you crucified (see *Jesus Christ, Death*, Acts 2:23). ■

ACTS 02:36
LORD (GREEK, *KURION*; HEBREW *ADONAI*)

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 02:36

The Greek word for Lord is used to refer to men such as rulers and to the Lord Jesus Christ. (See *Lord*, Ph. 2:11.) In reference to the resurrected and exalted Christ, it means:

- => “Jesus our Lord” (2 Pet. 1:2).
- => “My Lord and my God” (Jn. 20:28).
- => “Both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).
- => “The Lord of all” (Acts 10:36).
- => “The Lord of glory” (1 Co.2:8; Jas. 2:1).
- => “The Lord of lords” (Rev. 17:14).
- => “The Lord our God” (Rev. 19:1).
- => “The Lord God [Theos, Jehovah]” (1 Pet. 3:15; see Isa. 8:13).
- => “The Lord your God” (Mt. 4:7; Lk. 4:12).

- => “The Lord [Jehovah]” (1 Pet. 2:3; see Psa. 34:8; Mk. 1:2c3; see Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1).
- => “Lord Jesus” (Acts 7:59; 8:16; 9:29; 2 Cor. 1:14; 2 Th. 1:7; Heb. 13:20; Rev. 22:20).
- => “Christ the Lord” (Lk. 2:11).
- => “The Son of Man is Lord” (Mk. 2:28).
- => “The Lord of David” (Mk. 12:35-37).
- => “The [Lord] owner of the house” (Mk. 13:35).

Phil 2:9-11 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is seen as the *resurrected and exalted* Son who sits at the right hand of the Father (Jehovah). He sits in the exalted position of glory and majesty, dominion and power, praise and honour. He rules over all.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ is also seen as the sovereign Majesty of the Universe, the Supreme Being who possesses the very nature of God (Jehovah, YAHWEH Himself). As the Son of God He is just like God in Being, nature, essence and character — perfect God in every respect. Therefore, He can be addressed as *the Lord* God, Jehovah or YAHWEH because He is God (see *The Word, Jesus Christ*, Jn. 1:1-5; notes, Ph. 2:6; 2:7; see *LORD*, Ph. 2:11). □