

Son of David  
Acts 2:25-33

We have been going through this marvellous sermon of Peter, the first of the Christian Era, and it inaugurated the beginning of the church. And we saw so clearly the teaching that the prophecy of Joel to some extent was being fulfilled before their eyes, and that this was the beginning of the last days before the terrible judgment of the day of the Lord. And the whole speaking in foreign languages in none other than Jerusalem was a sign that God was reaching out to all nations through the gospel but also the judgment that would come on Israel.

So the question comes what hope have we? If God is judging Israel, what hope have we? But look at the last verse in that quote of Joel (Acts 2:21), “**And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**” It is a promise that there is grace and salvation to the one who calls upon or trusts in the name or the person of the Messiah. Well, the nation of Israel had been waiting centuries for the Messiah, and many had claimed to be the Messiah, so the question is: who is Messiah? And what we have in verses 22-24 is an explanation of who the Lord is. It is to make apparent what was so clear but they missed it. It was like they could not see. And that is what biblical preaching seeks to do, explain the truths of Scripture to make plain the personhood of Jesus.

And he has basically three points. One was that Jesus was well attested or publicly validated that he was Messiah through all the signs and wonders done through his hand. That was indisputable. But you crucified him. Your guilt is apparent. But this was all foreordained and planned by God. The death of the Christ was no accident but part and parcel of his messianic mission. But God proved that he was God’s man through the resurrection last time we were together. And we saw that it was impossible for death to hold Jesus. He had paid that penalty for sin, but it also indicated that he was God’s man and that he was the pure, righteous, innocent One of God.

And this is where Peter goes next because one of the reasons why it was impossible for death to hold him is Jesus is none other than David’s greater Son that would come. And the Jews knew that when Messiah would come, and he would come through the line of David. There would come one that would be king forever. He would reign and rule, and they looked for this one. The hope of David was found in a particular Saviour who would come through a particular nation, and even through a particular family. He could not come through any other family. This is why when you look into the Gospel of Matthew which is written primarily to the Jews, Matthew begins his gospels with a genealogy that comes from Adam, through Abraham, and more importantly through David. “Son of David” is not just talking about genealogy but is a Messianic term and may I say that it is the Messianic hope of the Jews. It is the hope of the audience who happens to be before Peter at this time.

Could Peter prove that this one who came, lived, died and rose again is that very hope? Could he prove that Jesus is none other than the Christ and his connection to David? So far Peter has used Scripture to show that the signs that they saw this particular day spoke of the coming judgment and the inauguration of a new day, but is there any Scripture that could point to that Jesus is the long awaited Son of David, and he is the one that we need to call upon in order to have salvation? And may I say that

these Old Testament prophecies are important for us also. They show us none other than the glorious plan of God, and that God is not only sovereign but committed to all his promises and word. When we see the fulfilment of prophecy, we realize God is more grand and glorious than we could have imagined. He grows in our estimation. The more we grow in knowledge of who he is, the more sin loses its grip on us and all we can do is make much of him. We know he can be trusted.

So what I want us to do is walk through the quote, noticing what it says, and then I want us to look at Peter's explanation of this text.

1. We need to understand the quote. Vv. 25-28.

Let me say a couple things here about Peter using this quote. One is that Peter preaches Christ from the Scriptures. He doesn't deviate from Bible. The scriptures are our authority, and this first century audience would know the Scriptures come from God, and they are authoritative. If God says something that seals it. The other thing is he does not try to bend or read into the passage a message that isn't there. By far the most popular preach today is topical. I decide rather than the passage what I want to preach, and then so often a message is read into the passage. When you hear this passage and then go to Peter's explanation you can see that explanation right in the passage. And the reason is that Scripture cannot mean anything other than what it was intended to mean, which means every passage only has one meaning. Peter handles Scripture as a workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of God, and he becomes an example for all of us.

So, look at verses 25-26, "**For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope.'**" This is a quote that is taken from Psalm 16:8-11, which is an incredible Psalm of trust that David has in God. But notice the word "For" at the beginning. It is a word that is explaining a truth about the resurrection of Jesus, and the need of that resurrection. And one of the reasons why death cannot hold Jesus is because of what God had spoken and promised. David speaks of his own devotion to God, but David speaks also as a prophet in these verses about "him." Do you see that pronoun? It is talking about Jesus the Christ - the Son of David.

And when he says that he is always at my "right hand," speaking of the Father is that the Father is with him all the way through his life. It was the place of protection. A body guard always stood at the right hand of the person he was protecting. God is for him and not against him. His confidence is in his Father God. He rejoiced and was glad to accomplish the will of the Father. And look at that phrase, "**my flesh shall dwell in hope.**" The flesh is the physical body, and here we know that Jesus knew not only the horrors of the cross but also the glories of his coming resurrection. You can almost hear the words of this Psalm through Hebrews 12:2, "**looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.**"

Now look at the next verse, because in this verse it becomes apparent that David is not talking about himself, "**For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.**" Now again, the hope of the resurrection in the Old

Testament was alive and well, and most in Israel believed in the resurrection. And when David writes, **“For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,”** any godly Old Testament saint could have uttered this, and would have. Hades can refer to the place of judgment but it can also just be talking about the place of the dead - the grave. Job uttered something similar in Job 19:25-26, **“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.”** God will resurrect all those who trust in Jesus, and we can say the same thing that David records here. You will not abandon my soul in the grave! Praise God for this precious promise.

But here Peter says that David is not talking about himself but “him” or Jesus, but how do we know? And the reason why is because none who have died in the Lord can express of ourselves the next line except Jesus alone, **“or let your Holy One see corruption.”** The “Holy One” is again a messianic term. And here we see the Holy One will die but his body will not see corruption, so even in that tomb for three days his body did not go through that corruption process that all of us will go through save the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look at the last verse in this quote, **“You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”** Look at that first line, “You have made known to me the paths of life.” Here in the context, the paths of life is the way of resurrection life. The One again who resurrected the Son was none other than God the Father. You are the One who created this resurrection and the cause of this resurrection life. And then there is that perfect joy that exists between the members of the Trinity. In the presence of God there truly are pleasures forevermore.

And this quotation by Peter of the Old Testament should teach us a couple of things. One is that the Old Testament all points to the coming of Jesus Christ. To the disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus expounded the Scriptures. We read in Luke 24:27, **“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”** Some passages are more obvious, and others are not. Some, like the commands and precepts show the need of the coming deliverer because the people cannot keep them. Some passages like the offerings that had to be given year after year, month after month, and day after day, causes us to long for the one perfect sacrifice that could pay the penalty of our sin. But the entirety of the New Testament points to the coming of Jesus. As you leave the Old Testament there is a longing for the perfect Prophet, Priest and King. We should never neglect the Old Testament. It is preparing us for the gospels and all that we learn in the New Testament.

But the other thing this passage should teach us is the value of the New Testament. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old. It speaks to the new day and era and time that we are living in. We are living in the time of fulfillment. What the prophets had longed to see - the coming of Christ, his suffering and glory that should follow - has come. Anytime we are reading and studying the Scripture we are reading it as the New Testament church. God has given us revelation of his Son but also for us as a church living in this time of fulfillment how to glorify Him. All of us as believers in this age should read the New Testament personally and enthusiastically learning of our great God and his will for us both individually and corporately. But how enthusiastically

and intentionally and how much effort are you putting into knowing the Scriptures? How much are you in the Old Testament seeing the anticipation of the coming of Christ, and learning of him? How much are we looking at this time of fulfillment realizing the glory of this time frame that we are living in? God has spoken, and we should be overwhelmed with the glory and opportunity of learning what he has spoken.

2. We need to see Peter's interpretation Vv. 29-33.

This is such a blessed examination of this passage. Peter does not get lost in the details in the passage but seeks to bring out the main point. So often as preachers we miss the forest because of examining every little twig on every tree, that the main message or point gets lost, or we are so fascinated by the twig we forget what it points to. But look at how he starts here, "**Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.**" I love the way Peter says this, "with confidence." It is not "I think" or "I have been pondering," or "I think this is what God is like." The preacher preaches with confidence and with authority because he preaches the Scriptures, and interprets the Scriptures and applies the Scriptures with conviction and confidence. Therefore the very will of God is heard through him.

And again, he makes a statement that all his listeners would know that the tomb of David is still occupied and just a short distance away near the town of Siloam. And that tomb, although raided a couple times for the valuables inside is still with them to this very day. Now why is that so important? It is so important that they know this historical truth that is also taught in Scripture, his tomb is also mentioned in Nehemiah 3:16, because it helps interpret this passage. Look at what he says next, "**Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne.**" So David here speaks as a prophet, prophesying something that will take place. And he knows that God had made a promise to him. What is the oath that God made to David? And it what is known as the Davidic Covenant. In 2 Samuel 7:13-16, God talks about Solomon building the house or the Temple but this prophecy also looks beyond that, "**He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.**" And listen to Psalm 132:11, "**The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: 'One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.'**"

So this is what David communicated in the next verse in Psalm 16, "**he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.**" This Psalm is about the Messiah. God would not abandon the One who would sit on the throne of David to see corruption in the grave. It spoke of his death and resurrection. So now, as a biblical preacher he applies that truth to the fulfillment that he and others had witnessed, "**This Jesus God**

**raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.**” Again, it is God that raised Jesus, but it was confirmed through the multitude of witnesses. Who are the witnesses in this verse? And they would be at the very least the 120 that are gathered together, but would include many that happened to be in the crowd. This again, as we said last time was not done in a corner. What Peter is doing is relating this passage as being fulfilled by Christ, and if he is the fulfillment of the passage then he is the Messiah, the Lord, the long awaited greater Son of David, the Eternal one, and the Hope of Israel.

Look at verse 33, **“Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.”** Even though there is a plethora of witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, the question is: where is Jesus today? And the answer is that he is reigning and ruling in the most powerful position and the most exalted in all of the universe. He is at the right hand. Listen to how Philippians 2:8-11 describes this: after the humiliation of the cross comes the glory, **“And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so 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.”**

And then he takes this and relates it back to what they had just witnessed with the foreign languages. This has inaugurated the Messianic age. He has come and now evidence that he has come is the pouring out of the Spirit of God.

The argument that Peter makes is impeccable, and the reason he can present it so authoritatively and so convicting to his audience is because it is dripping in revelation that has already been given. Peter is not looking at any hidden code or hidden meaning. He gives the very core, centre or main truth of the passage. It is so valuable an example for preachers and teachers of the Word. His main message is that Jesus is the Christ. He is risen from the grave! Recognize him and trust him. You cannot argue with Scripture. It is God’s authoritative Word.

And it comes back to how we learn about Jesus and teach about Jesus. It is the authority of God’s Word. And this passage ought to excite our hearts. Here is a prophecy that was made centuries before the coming of Christ and it comes to pass. We have not followed cunning devised fables but a salvation that could only be planned out by God. By seeing these truths our response should be - Yes! Yes! Yes! This is my Lord and this is my Saviour. And it should cause us to want to obey, follow and learn more of him. And God has given an authoritative book to cause us to see wisdom and beauty of the knowledge of Christ. Praise God for Christ and the authoritative Word where we can know him.