

Session 7 Peter Preaches Jesus: Approved, Crucified, Raised

Acts: The Book That Explains Everything

Session 7 | Acts 2:22-24



Before You Read

Big idea: Acts 2:22-24 moves from Peter’s explanation of Pentecost to Peter’s proclamation of Jesus. Peter addresses Israel, appeals to the public ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, charges the hearers with guilt in His death, and announces that God raised Him from the dead.

How to use this guide: Read each KJV verse first. Then mark the facts Peter states before building a doctrinal system around them.

Three words to keep watching

- **Israel** - Peter’s sermon is still addressed to Israel in

Jerusalem.

- **Approved** - God publicly demonstrated who Jesus was by miracles, wonders, and signs.
- **Raised** - The resurrection is God’s answer to the crucifixion.

A simple right-division reminder: Acts 2 is still before Saul’s conversion, before Paul’s apostleship, and before the revelation of the mystery of the body of Christ through Paul. Peter is preaching the crucified and risen Jesus to Israel in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:22

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

What does the passage say?

- Peter addresses “ye men of Israel.”
- He tells them to hear his words.
- He identifies Jesus as Jesus of Nazareth.
- Jesus was a man approved of God among them.
- God approved Him by miracles, wonders, and signs.
- These works were done in their midst.
- Peter says the hearers themselves also know these things.

Words to notice

- **Ye men of Israel** - Peter identifies the audience directly.
- **Jesus of Nazareth** - Peter names the earthly identity of the One Israel had known.

- **Approved of God** - God publicly marked out Jesus by His works.
- **Miracles and wonders and signs** - The works were not random displays of power; they testified to who Jesus was.
- **As ye yourselves also know** - Peter appeals to known public facts.

Cross-references worth marking

- John 3:2 - Nicodemus recognized that Jesus’ miracles showed God was with Him.
- John 5:36 - Jesus said His works bore witness that the Father sent Him.
- John 10:37-38 - Jesus appealed to His works as evidence.
- Acts 10:38 - Peter later summarizes Jesus’ ministry as God working through Him.

Do not miss

- Peter does not begin with vague religious sentiment. He begins with Jesus’ public ministry among Israel and says the hearers already know the evidence.

Acts 2:23

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

What does the passage say?

- Jesus was delivered according to God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge.
- Peter says, "ye have taken."
- The crucifixion was carried out by wicked hands.
- Jesus was crucified and slain.

Words to notice

- **Delivered** - Jesus' death was not outside God's purpose.
- **Determinate counsel** - God's settled purpose is in view, especially His purpose to send and deliver the Messiah.
- **Foreknowledge of God** - The foreknowledge is attached to Him being delivered, not to the wicked hands that took and crucified Him.
- **Ye have taken** - Peter charges the hearers with responsibility.

- **Wicked hands** - The human action was evil; Peter assigns the taking and crucifying to them.
- **Crucified and slain** - Peter speaks plainly about the death of Christ.

Cross-references worth marking

- Luke 22:22 - Jesus' path is spoken of as determined, yet "woe" remains on the betrayer.
- Luke 24:20 - The chief priests and rulers delivered Jesus to be condemned and crucified.
- Acts 3:13-15 - Peter again charges Israel with denying and killing the Prince of life.
- Acts 4:27-28 - Compare carefully: God's counsel and human opposition appear together, but the opposition remains the act of Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and Israel.
- Acts 2:36 - Peter again says, "whom ye have crucified."

Do not miss

- This verse holds divine purpose and human guilt together, but notice the wording carefully. The "delivering" is tied to God's counsel and foreknowledge; the "taking" and crucifying are assigned to the hearers and to wicked hands.

Acts 2:24

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

What does the passage say?

- God raised Jesus up.
- God loosed the pains of death.
- Death could not hold Jesus.
- The resurrection answers the crucifixion of verse 23.

Words to notice

- **God hath raised up** - The resurrection is God's act.
- **Loosed** - Death's hold was broken.
- **Pains of death** - Death is pictured as having binding power or distress.

- **Not possible** - Death could not finally hold Christ.
- **Holden of it** - Jesus was not subject to death's permanent grip.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:10 - Peter will quote this passage to prove resurrection from Scripture.
- Luke 24:6-7 - The angels announce that Jesus is risen.
- Acts 13:30 - Paul later preaches, "But God raised him from the dead."
- Romans 6:9 - Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.

Do not miss

- The resurrection is not an add-on to Peter's sermon. It is the hinge. Men crucified Jesus, but God raised Him up.

Text And Translation Helps

- The KJV phrase **approved of God** in Acts 2:22 carries the idea of being shown, demonstrated, or marked out by God. Peter is saying that God gave public evidence concerning Jesus.
 - The three terms **miracles and wonders and signs** overlap, but each adds weight. The works were powerful, astonishing, and meaningful.
 - The phrase **determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God** should not be weakened into mere prediction.
- Peter speaks of God's settled purpose and knowledge, but the verse does not remove guilt from the men who took and crucified Christ.
- The phrase **wicked hands** keeps human evil in the verse. God's purpose does not make the human rejection of Christ innocent.
 - The phrase **pains of death** may sound unusual, but Peter's point is clear: death's grip was broken because it could not hold Christ.

Common Ideas To Test

- "Peter is preaching to a generic church audience."
 - Test it by Acts 2:22: he says, "Ye men of Israel."
- "Jesus' miracles were only acts of kindness."
 - Test it by Acts 2:22: Peter says they approved Him of God.
- "Acts 2:23 means God planned the crucifixion itself."
 - Test it by the wording: the delivering is tied to God's counsel and foreknowledge; the taking and crucifying are assigned to the hearers and to wicked hands.
- "The resurrection is a secondary doctrine."
 - Test it by Acts 2:24: resurrection is Peter's immediate answer to crucifixion.

Session Summary

- Peter turns from Joel's prophecy to Jesus of Nazareth.
- He addresses Israel directly.
- Jesus was publicly approved of God by miracles, wonders, and signs.
- The hearers already knew the facts of Jesus' ministry.
- Jesus was delivered according to God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge.
- The hearers were guilty for taking and crucifying Him by wicked hands.
- God raised Jesus up because death could not hold Him.

For Long-Term Study

Mark these themes as Acts unfolds

- Peter's continued address to Israel.
- Public evidence concerning Jesus.
- Divine purpose and human responsibility.
- The resurrection as central apostolic preaching.
- The apostles proving Christ from Israel's Scriptures.

Questions to keep asking

1. To whom is Peter speaking?
2. What did God do through Jesus in Israel's midst?
3. What did the hearers already know?
4. How does Acts 2:23 hold God's counsel and man's guilt together?
5. Why is Acts 2:24 essential to Peter's sermon?

One sentence to remember

Peter charges Israel with the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, but declares that God approved Him by signs and raised Him because death could not hold Him.