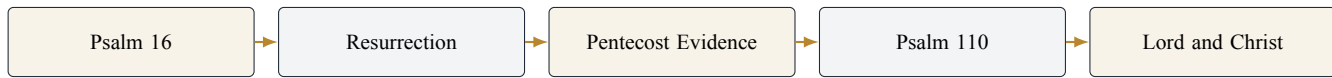


Session 8 David Foretells the Risen and Exalted Christ

Acts: The Book That Explains Everything

Session 8 | Acts 2:25-36



Before You Read

Big idea: In Acts 2:25-36, Peter proves from David's writings that Jesus rose from the dead and was exalted to God's right hand. The visible and audible miracle at Pentecost is evidence that the risen Christ has poured out the Holy Ghost. Peter concludes by calling all the house of Israel to know that the Jesus they crucified is both Lord and Christ.

How to use this guide: Read the whole argument before studying each verse. Watch how Peter moves from Psalm 16, to the empty tomb, to Psalm 110, and then to his conclusion in verse 36.

Three words to keep watching

- **Resurrection** - David foresaw that Christ would not be left in hell and would not see corruption.
- **Exaltation** - The risen Christ has ascended and is at God's right hand.
- **Therefore** - Verse 36 states the conclusion Israel must draw from Peter's evidence.

A simple right-division reminder: Peter is addressing Israel in Jerusalem and proving Jesus' identity from Israel's Scriptures. Saul has not yet been converted, and the later revelation of the mystery has not yet been given through Paul.

Acts 2:25

For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

What does the passage say?

- David speaks concerning Christ.
- The Lord is always before Him and at His right hand.
- Because of the Lord's presence, He will not be moved.
- Peter begins his resurrection proof from Psalm 16.

Words to notice

- **For** - Peter is explaining why death could not hold Jesus in verse 24.
- **David speaketh concerning him** - Peter tells the hearers

that David's words concern Christ.

- **Before my face** - The speaker lives in conscious confidence before the Lord.
- **Not be moved** - The Lord's presence gives certainty in the face of death.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:8-11 - The passage Peter quotes.
- Luke 24:44-46 - Jesus said the Psalms spoke of His suffering and resurrection.
- Acts 13:32-37 - Paul later uses Psalm 16 to prove the same resurrection.

Do not miss

- Peter does not quote Psalm 16 merely as a devotional thought. He identifies it as prophecy concerning Christ.

Acts 2:26

Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

What does the passage say?

- The heart rejoices and the tongue is glad.
- The flesh rests in hope.
- The hope includes the body, not only the inner life.
- The confidence of verse 25 produces the joy of verse 26.

Words to notice

- **Therefore** - Joy follows from the Lord's presence and faithfulness.

- **My flesh** - Peter's argument concerns bodily death and resurrection.
- **Rest** - Death will not have the final word.
- **In hope** - This is confident expectation grounded in God's promise.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:9 - The direct source of Peter's quotation.
- Psalm 30:3 - David rejoices that the LORD brought up his soul from the grave.
- 1 Corinthians 15:20 - The risen Christ is the firstfruits of those who slept.

Do not miss

- The hope in this passage is not vague optimism. Peter is building an argument for bodily resurrection.

Acts 2:27

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

What does the passage say?

- The soul will not be left in hell.
- God's Holy One will not see corruption.
- Peter presents both statements as resurrection prophecy concerning Christ.
- Verse 31 will give Peter's explicit interpretation.

Words to notice

- **Leave** - Christ entered death but was not abandoned there.
- **Hell** - In this context the KJV word refers to the realm

of the dead, corresponding to the Old Testament idea of *Sheol*; it is not the lake of fire.

- **Thine Holy One** - The title points to God's Messiah.
- **See corruption** - Christ's body did not remain in the grave to decay.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:10 - The direct source of the quotation.
- Acts 2:31 - Peter says plainly that David spoke of the resurrection of Christ.
- Acts 13:35-37 - Paul contrasts David, who saw corruption, with Christ, who did not.

Do not miss

- Let verse 31 interpret verse 27. Peter applies both the soul not being left in hell and the flesh not seeing corruption to Christ.

Acts 2:28

Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

What does the passage say?

- God makes known the ways of life.
- The speaker will be full of joy in God's presence.
- Life and joy conclude Peter's quotation from Psalm 16.

Words to notice

- **Ways of life** - The path leads beyond death to life.
- **Full of joy** - Resurrection replaces the sorrow and con-

finement of death.

- **Thy countenance** - The joy is found in God's presence.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:11 - The direct source and conclusion of the quotation.
- Psalm 21:6 - The king is made exceeding glad with God's countenance.
- Hebrews 12:2 - Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him and is seated at God's right hand.

Do not miss

- Peter's quotation moves from confidence, through death, to life and joy. It is a resurrection passage.

Acts 2:29

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

What does the passage say?

- David died and was buried.
- David's sepulchre remained known in Peter's day.
- Peter appeals to an accepted historical fact.
- David therefore could not be the final fulfillment of Psalm 16.

Words to notice

- **Men and brethren** - Peter reasons directly with his fellow Israelites.
- **Patriarch David** - David is honored, but his greatness

does not remove the fact of his death.

- **Dead and buried** - Peter states the contrast with the risen Christ.
- **Unto this day** - David's tomb was present evidence.

Cross-references worth marking

- 1 Kings 2:10 - David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David.
- Nehemiah 3:16 - Jerusalem's "sepulchres of David" were remembered.
- Acts 13:36 - David was laid with his fathers and saw corruption.

Do not miss

- Peter combines Scripture with history: David wrote the Psalm, but David's occupied tomb proves that the prophecy reaches beyond him to Christ.

Acts 2:30

Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

What does the passage say?

- David was a prophet.
- God had sworn an oath to David.
- Christ would come from David's physical descendants.

- God would raise up Christ to sit on David's throne.

Words to notice

- **Being a prophet** - David wrote with knowledge of God's revealed promise.
- **Sworn with an oath** - The Davidic promise rests on God's faithfulness.
- **Fruit of his loins** - Christ comes through David's physical line.
- **His throne** - Peter's resurrection argument remains connected to Israel's promised King and kingdom.

Cross-references worth marking

- 2 Samuel 7:12-16 - God promises David a seed, kingdom, and established throne.
- Psalm 132:11 - God swore that the fruit of David's body would sit upon his throne.
- Luke 1:32-33 - Jesus is promised the throne of His father David and an unending kingdom.

- Romans 1:3 - Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

Do not miss

- Peter does not separate resurrection from the Davidic promise. The risen Jesus is Israel's promised Christ and King.

Acts 2:31

He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

What does the passage say?

- David saw the matter beforehand as a prophet.
- David spoke of the resurrection of Christ.
- Christ's soul was not left in hell.
- Christ's flesh did not see corruption.

Words to notice

- **Seeing this before** - Prophecy gave David knowledge of a future fulfillment.
- **Resurrection of Christ** - Peter states the meaning of Psalm 16 directly.

- **His soul** - The pronoun refers to Christ in Peter's explanation.
- **His flesh** - Christ's body did not remain in the grave and decay.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 16:10 - The prophecy Peter is interpreting.
- Luke 24:25-27 - Jesus explained from the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
- Acts 13:35-37 - Paul gives the same Christ-centered interpretation of Psalm 16.
- 1 Corinthians 15:4 - Christ rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Do not miss

- Peter leaves no uncertainty about the subject of Psalm 16: he says David spoke of the resurrection of Christ.

Acts 2:32

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

What does the passage say?

- God raised this Jesus from the dead.
- Peter and the other apostles are witnesses.
- The scriptural promise and the eyewitness testimony agree.

Words to notice

- **This Jesus** - Peter means Jesus of Nazareth, whom he named in verse 22.
- **God raised up** - Resurrection is God's action and vindication.

- **We all** - Peter stands with the apostolic company.
- **Witnesses** - They testify to someone they saw alive after His death.

Cross-references worth marking

- Acts 1:3 - Jesus showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs.
- Acts 1:21-22 - An apostle had to be a witness of the resurrection.
- Acts 3:15 - Peter again says, "whereof we are witnesses."
- 1 Corinthians 15:5-8 - Paul records numerous resurrection appearances.

Do not miss

- Peter's case has two kinds of evidence: David's inspired prophecy and the apostles' eyewitness testimony.

Acts 2:33

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

What does the passage say?

- The risen Jesus has been exalted by God's right hand.
- He received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost.
- He shed forth the visible and audible Pentecost event.
- What the crowd sees and hears comes from the exalted Christ.

Words to notice

- **Therefore** - Exaltation follows resurrection.
- **Exalted** - Jesus has been raised to the place of heavenly honor and authority.

- **He hath shed forth this** - Christ is the source of the Pentecost sign.
- **See and hear** - The evidence is public, visible, and audible.

Cross-references worth marking

- Acts 2:12 - The crowd asked, "What meaneth this?"
- Acts 1:4-5 - Jesus promised baptism with the Holy Ghost.
- John 14:26; 15:26 - Jesus promised that the Father would send the Comforter and that Christ would send Him from the Father.
- Acts 5:31 - God exalted Jesus with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.

Do not miss

- Verse 33 explicitly answers the question of verse 12. The risen and exalted Christ poured out what the crowd could see and hear.

Acts 2:34

For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

What does the passage say?

- David did not ascend into the heavens.
- David nevertheless wrote of his Lord seated at the LORD's right hand.
- Peter quotes Psalm 110 to explain Christ's exaltation.
- The Pentecost sign is evidence that Christ has reached that place of honor.

Words to notice

- **For** - Verse 34 gives scriptural support for the exaltation claimed in verse 33.
- **David is not ascended** - David cannot be the enthroned Lord of the Psalm.

- **The Lord said unto my Lord** - The LORD addresses David's superior, the Messiah.
- **My right hand** - This is the place of divine favor, authority, and exaltation.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 110:1 - The direct source of Peter's quotation.
- Acts 1:3, 9-11 - The apostles saw Jesus alive and then watched Him ascend.
- Mark 16:19 - Jesus was received into heaven and sat at the right hand of God.
- Hebrews 1:3 - After purging sins, Christ sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Do not miss

- What the crowd could see and hear on earth proved an unseen heavenly reality: the Jesus whom the apostles saw ascend was now exalted at the Father's right hand.

Acts 2:35

Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

What does the passage say?

- Christ sits at God's right hand while awaiting the subjection of His foes.
- His exaltation is already real, though His enemies are not yet visibly subdued.
- Psalm 110 includes both present enthronement and future victory.

Words to notice

- **Until** - A period of waiting precedes the complete subjection of enemies.
- **I make** - God will accomplish the promised victory.

- **Thy foes** - Christ still has enemies.
- **Thy footstool** - The picture is one of total defeat and subjection.

Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 110:1 - The entire statement Peter quotes.
- 1 Corinthians 15:25-26 - Christ must reign until all enemies are under His feet; the last enemy is death.
- Hebrews 10:12-13 - Christ sits at God's right hand expecting His enemies to be made His footstool.

Do not miss

- Christ's exaltation does not mean that every promised victory was visibly completed on Pentecost. Psalm 110 includes a future subjection of His foes.

Acts 2:36

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

What does the passage say?

- Peter addresses all the house of Israel.
- Israel is commanded to know the conclusion with certainty.
- The same Jesus they crucified has been made both Lord and Christ.
- Peter's charge brings together Israel's guilt and God's exaltation of Jesus.

Words to notice

- **Therefore** - This is the conclusion drawn from resurrection, eyewitness testimony, Pentecost, and the Psalms.
- **All the house of Israel** - Peter identifies his intended audience unmistakably.

- **Know assuredly** - The evidence demands a settled conclusion.
- **Whom ye have crucified** - Peter does not soften Israel's responsibility.
- **Both Lord and Christ** - Jesus is the exalted Lord and Israel's promised Messiah.

Cross-references worth marking

- Acts 2:22-23 - Peter first addressed Israel and charged the hearers with crucifying Jesus.
- Acts 3:13-15 - Peter again contrasts Israel's rejection with God's vindication of Christ.
- Acts 5:30-31 - The apostles preach that Israel slew Jesus, but God raised and exalted Him.
- Philippians 2:9-11 - God highly exalted Jesus, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Do not miss

- Peter's sermon does not end with a generic spiritual lesson. It confronts Israel with the identity of the crucified, risen, and exalted Jesus.

Text And Translation Helps

- **Hell** in Acts 2:27 and 2:31 translates *Hades*. In this resurrection argument it refers to the realm of the dead, corresponding closely to the Old Testament concept of *Sheol*. Peter is not saying Christ suffered in the lake of fire.
- **Corruption** refers to bodily decay. David's body saw corruption; Christ's body did not remain in the grave to decay.
- **According to the flesh** in verse 30 identifies Christ's physical descent from David.
- **By the right hand of God exalted** in verse 33 speaks of Christ's heavenly elevation to the place of divine honor and authority.
- **Made ... both Lord and Christ** in verse 36 does not mean Jesus first began to exist or first acquired His essential identity at Pentecost. God publicly established and declared the crucified Jesus in His messianic and exalted position.

Follow Peter's Argument

1. **Psalm 16 promised resurrection** - Christ would not be left among the dead or see corruption (vv. 25-28).
2. **David's tomb required a greater fulfillment** - David died, was buried, and saw corruption (v. 29).
3. **David wrote prophetically of Christ** - God's oath concerned David's seed and throne (vv. 30-31).
4. **The apostles witnessed the risen Jesus** - Scripture and eyewitness testimony agree (v. 32).
5. **The risen Christ poured out the Holy Ghost** - Pentecost answers the crowd's question (v. 33).
6. **Psalm 110 explained Christ's exaltation** - Jesus is at God's right hand awaiting the defeat of His foes (vv. 34-35).
7. **Israel must know the conclusion** - The crucified Jesus is both Lord and Christ (v. 36).

Common Ideas To Test

- "Psalm 16 is only about David."
 - Test it by Acts 2:29-31: Peter says David died and saw corruption, then states that David spoke of the resurrection of Christ.
- "Hell in Acts 2:27 means the lake of fire."
 - Test it by the argument: Peter is discussing death, burial, bodily corruption, and resurrection.
- "Pentecost is mainly evidence about the spiritual condition of the apostles."
 - Test it by Acts 2:33-34: the sign is evidence that the risen Christ has been exalted and has shed forth the Holy Ghost.
- "Peter is speaking to an undefined audience."
 - Test it by Acts 2:36: he addresses "all the house of Israel."
- "All Christ's enemies were already subdued in Acts 2."
 - Test it by Acts 2:35: Christ is exalted while the subjection of His foes remains future.

Session Summary

- David's Psalm 16 foretold the resurrection of Christ.
- David's occupied tomb proved that he was not the final fulfillment of his prophecy.
- God had sworn that David's seed would sit upon his throne.
- The apostles witnessed Jesus alive after His resurrection.
- The exalted Christ poured out the Holy Ghost, producing what the crowd saw and heard.
- Psalm 110 explains that Christ is seated at God's right hand awaiting the defeat of His foes.
- Peter calls all Israel to know that the Jesus they crucified is both Lord and Christ.

For Long-Term Study

Mark these themes as Acts unfolds

- The apostles proving Jesus from Israel's Scriptures.
- Resurrection as the center of apostolic witness.
- The relationship between signs on earth and Christ's authority in heaven.
- Peter's continuing address to Israel.
- Christ's present exaltation and the future defeat of His enemies.

Questions to keep asking

1. Why could Psalm 16 not be fulfilled finally in David?

2. What does Peter say David foresaw?
3. What two kinds of resurrection evidence does Peter give?
4. How does verse 33 answer the question in verse 12?
5. What does the word "for" connect in verse 34?
6. What does Peter command all the house of Israel to know?

One sentence to remember

David's Scriptures, the apostles' eyewitness testimony, and the Pentecost sign all prove that the crucified Jesus has risen, ascended, and been exalted as both Lord and Christ.