

## The Book Of Acts: Verse by Verse Study Notes

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### Acts 2:22-28

- **Summary of Last Week:**

Peter has explained to the crowd at the Temple courts the phenomenon of the Galilean Jews speaking in languages that are not native to them. He declares that the dawning of Joel's prophecy of a worldwide outpouring of the Spirit has begun.

He is not claiming that Joel's prophecy has completely fulfilled – as there are many features to that prophecy that do not fit the current circumstances.

Peter uses Joel's prophecy as a background to the real message that he wants to present: The Good News that Jesus Christ is indeed the long-awaited Messiah. In doing so, Peter will use the standard outline presented throughout the New Testament:

1. The announcement that the age of fulfilment has arrived.
2. An account of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
3. The citation of Old Testament scriptures pointing to Jesus.
4. A call to repentance.

- **Jesus' Story: v.22**

“Men of Israel, listen to this. I speak of Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.”

Note: Peter does not elaborate on the mighty works, wonders, and signs which accompanied Jesus' ministry. He stresses that the Israeli nationals need no fresh telling of that story.

- Jesus' mighty works, wonders, and signs: F.F. Bruce points out:

"The miracles of Jesus were not mere "wonders"; they were "mighty works," the evidence of God's power operating among the people, and "signs" of the kingdom of God - "the powers of the age to come."

Hebrews 6:5, "They have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age." See: Luke 7:16; 11:20

Peter saw Jesus' miracles, signs, and wonders as the proof that God was opening a new chapter in the history of salvation. The "powers of the world to come" had been manifested through Jesus.

Jesus' supernatural activities were not just random acts of God among his people. They were all designed to capture the attention of those Jesus was sent to save. (See: John 3:34)

The thrust of Peter's message: These miracles, signs, and wonders should have adequately convinced Israel that Jesus was, in fact, the Messiah that was promised.

- **The Response Of The Jews: v. 23**

"He was delivered up to you in accordance with God's appointed counsel and foreknowledge; you took him and by the agency of lawless men you nailed him up and killed him."

Paraphrasing Peter's Message: "God sent His Messiah with great proofs – miracles, signs, and wonders. You saw them. You can attest they were genuine. But what did you do about it? You took Him and killed him."

God sent them His Messiah – but they failed to embrace him. "He came to his own, but they rejected him." – John 1

Peter stresses the fact that Jesus' death was by crucifixion. He is careful how he describes this. While Pilate condemned Jesus and the soldiers carried out the execution – they were “lawless men”. In other words, they were not under the Old Testament Law or part of Israel's covenant nation.

The Jewish Complicity: “... You took him and by the agency of lawless men you nailed him up and killed him.” Peter is recounting that it was the Jewish authorities – specifically the chief priests- who handed Jesus over to the Romans.

- **The God-Part of the Crucifixion:**

The handing over of Jesus to Pilate was not entirely a human event. Peter says this all happened by God's appointed counsel and foreknowledge.”

God's sovereignty and human participation; While Pilate and the chief priests may have believed that Jesus' life was in their hands, just the opposite is true.

It was God who was working through their actions to accomplish what he sent Jesus to do, that is, to offer himself as a sacrifice for sins. (See: John 19:11-12) Who Really Killed Jesus? Romans 8:32: “God did not spare his own son but gave him up for all of us.”

- **The Human responsibility:**

Peter tells the crowd that, although they were complicit in the death of Jesus, a higher authority intervened. Verse 24: “But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.”

- **Who raised Jesus from the dead?**

In a sense, all three members of the Trinity were involved:

The Father: Romans 4:24 - "Our faith will be regarded as God's approval of us who believe in the one who brought Jesus, our Lord, back to life." (See also 2 Corinthians 4:14)

The Holy Spirit: Romans 8:11 - "The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. If the same Holy Spirit lives in you, He will give life to your bodies in the same way." (See Also: Romans 6:4)

Jesus: John 10:17- "The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again." In John 2:19 he said something to his opponents that was very thought provoking. He said, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." That's the Son laying down his life and taking it up again.

- **The Impossibility Of Jesus Being Held By Death:**

Peter says God put an end to Jesus' agony by raising him from the dead – but then he adds an interesting point. He says, "since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

Why? 1. "Because God is greater than death." But there is more. 2. God also raised Jesus from the dead because he made him a promise that he would do it. Peter is going to point to Psalm 16 which says, 'Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead.'

3. Because, by his sacrifice, Jesus has paid the debt of sin. Death can only hold those who cannot pay the debt of sin. Hebrews 2:14: "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil."

Forensic Theology: Because Jesus has paid the debt of all sin for all time – death could not hold him. He paid for the sins of the world – so the Father had the forensic right to raise him from the dead. Death only has authority over those who cannot pay their debt.

- **Peter's Proofs:**

The Greek version of Psalm 16:8-11: "David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'"

The Hebrew and Greek texts of Psalm 16 are assigned to David. Peter will argue that the words he is quoting could not strictly refer to David because David's body was buried, and it underwent decomposition.

No Jew would insist that David had been rescued from the grave. A simple proof would be the fact that David's tomb was a well-known landmark.

Peter has much more to say about this. That's what we will see next time.

