

# Pentecost: Peter Proclaims Jesus' Resurrection from the Dead (Acts 2:1-29)

Expository Lessons from the Book of Acts

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## I. Review from Prior Lesson

- a. The book of **Acts** is a continuation of the story begun by Luke in the gospel of **Luke**.
- b. Acts begins with Jesus resurrected from the dead, teaching the apostles about the kingdom of God over a period of 40 days.
- c. Jesus is bodily resurrected to heaven, to sit at the right hand of God, in fulfillment of prophecy. Two angels tell the apostles that He will return (at the Second Coming) in a similar manner in which He left them.
- d. Since Judas had killed himself after betraying Jesus, the apostles now select a replacement to bring the number of apostles back up to twelve.
  - i. The apostles select two qualified men who had been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry and pray. Matthias is chosen by lot to replace Judas.
- e. We now turn our attention to the events on the day of Pentecost, in **Acts 2**. This chapter has been especially important to two groups of Christians:
  - i. So-called 'Pentecostals' focus on this chapter, for obvious reasons. Here we see the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit coming down on the apostles in the form of tongues of fire, and the apostles "speaking in tongues".
  - ii. Members of groups with roots in the Restoration Movement (Stone-Campbell) also focus on this chapter, especially because of the emphasis on baptism in **Acts 2:38**.

## II. Holy Spirit Comes Down on the Apostles at Pentecost

- a. The prelude to the events that happened at Pentecost: Jesus pointed to what was about to take place.
  - i. Jesus had told the apostles: "...and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but *tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high*." (**Luke 24:47-49**, NKJV)

- ii. “And being assembled together with them, He commanded them *not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ He said, ‘you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’*” (**Acts 1:4–5**, NKJV)
  - iii. Recall also that the night before he died, Jesus had told the apostles:
    - 1. “...It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” (**John 16:7**, NKJV)
    - 2. Jesus said that He had to depart, so that the Holy Spirit could come to the apostles.
- b. Read **Acts 2:1-13**.
- i. Summary of the events described in the text:
    - 1. The apostles are gathered in Jerusalem, in a house, after the ascension of Jesus.
      - a. The sound of a wind from heaven comes, filling the house.
      - b. Tongues of fire appear on each of them.
      - c. They are filled with the Holy Spirit and begin to speak in other tongues, with an ability given to them by the Spirit.
    - 2. On the day of Pentecost, Jews from all over the world are gathered together in Jerusalem.
      - a. The people hear the strange sound and gather to where the apostles are.
      - b. The foreigners all hear the apostles speaking in their own native languages, regardless of where they are from. This is a miracle and confuses the people.
  - c. Consider the significance of Pentecost, an important annual festival on the Jewish calendar.
    - i. We discussed this recently in our lesson on **Leviticus 23: Calendar of the Feasts and Special Days**. The Jewish calendar foreshadowed significant events to be revealed later in Christ and the church.
    - ii. Recall that Jesus was crucified on the eve of the *Passover*.

1. That feast pointed back to the original Passover, in **Exodus 12**.
  2. A “lamb without blemish” was selected, one for each family, and was sacrificed at twilight.
  3. The blood of the lamb saved the people from death.
  4. The people were to eat a memorial meal consisting of the flesh of that lamb, regularly thereafter.
  5. After that lamb was slain, the people were required to remove all the yeast from their households. Those who did not comply with this were cast out from the community.
    - a. In **1 Corinthians 5:1-12**, Paul explains how this foreshadowed how Christ was our Passover lamb. Now that He has been slain, we must remove the yeast (= sin) from our lives, or we will be cast out of the church.
- iii. Pentecost, also known as the Festival of Weeks, is described in **Leviticus 23:9-22**.
1. Outline of this festival (two parts).
    - a. Part 1: This is marked by the first sheaf of the grain harvest. (**Leviticus 23:10-14**)
    - b. Part 2: This commences seven weeks (+ 1 day) after the first sheaf offering. (**Leviticus 23:15-22**)
      - i.  $(7 \times 7) + 1 = 50$  days. (Note that our word ‘Pentecost’ comes from the Greek word for ‘50’).
      - ii. This also was called the *Feast of Weeks*, since it occurred ‘a week of weeks’ (or seven sevens) plus one more day after the start of the grain harvest.
  2. This festival was *associated with the harvest*.
    - a. Originally, it was 50 days after the first sheaf of grain was harvested and offered (a date which could vary from year to year). Later it was changed to 50 days after the Passover feast, a more fixed date.
  3. This also reminds me of some things Jesus said regarding the *spiritual harvest of souls* that He was looking forward to.

- a. “Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” (**Matthew 9:37–38**, NKJV)
  - b. “Do you not say, “There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” (**John 4:35**, NKJV)
- iv. Recall that three times each year, *all the Jewish men* were supposed to *gather in Jerusalem*.
  - 1. “Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: You shall keep the *Feast of Unleavened Bread* (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the *Feast of Harvest*, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the *Feast of Ingathering* at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. *Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.*” (**Exodus 23:14–17**, NKJV)
  - 2. Two of these three special occasions were:
    - a. ‘Feast of the Unleavened Bread’ = Passover (which is immediately followed by, and closely associated with, the requirement to get rid of all the leaven for seven days).
    - b. Feast of the Harvest, or Firstfruits = Weeks, or Pentecost
- v. All males were required to “appear before the Lord” on those three events each year. That is why there were so many people from other nations gathered in Jerusalem on that day.
  - 1. This had been established by the Lord over 1400 years before the birth of Jesus.
  - 2. This Pentecost would be the fulfillment of the true spiritual harvest of the firstfruits!
- d. There are gathered together in Jerusalem, “devout men from every nation under heaven”. This goes way beyond the Roman Empire!
  - i. Locations named included:

1. Parthians, Medes and Elamites; these are people from the Parthian or Persian empire to the east, from Asia.
  2. Those dwelling in Mesopotamia, the land from where Abraham came (modern Iraq).
  3. From Asia Minor (modern Turkey); to the north and west
  4. From Egypt, Libya and Cyrene; north Africa
  5. From Rome (capital city of the Roman Empire)
  6. Arabs, from Arabia
- ii. Jesus had told the apostles to preach the gospel “to the end of the earth” (**Acts 1:8**), and to make disciples of “every nation” (**Matthew 28:18-20**). The Holy Spirit began this enterprise by bringing devout Jews of all nations together into Jerusalem, to hear the message from the apostles.

### III. Fulfillment of the Prophecy of Joel

- a. Read **Acts 2:14-21**.
- b. Points made in this prophecy (from **Joel chapter 2** or **3**, depending on the version of the Old Testament you have), include:
  - i. The Lord would pour out His Spirit on all flesh.
  - ii. This would happen “in the last days”.
  - iii. This will be accompanied by prophecy, wonders in heaven, and signs on earth.
  - iv. “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
    1. **Question:** What does that expression mean, as Peter is using it here? Does it mean to cry out the name of Jesus, to say a prayer, or something else?
    2. For the answer, we will need to see what follows in the rest of **Acts 2**.

### IV. Peter Advances the First of Several Prophecies about Jesus' Resurrection

- a. In the next section, Peter directly quotes two prophecies and alludes to four others. Most modern Bibles footnote prophecies when they are directly quoted, but not when they are just alluded to. We need to dig deeper to follow what Peter is really saying.

b. Read **Acts 2:22-24**.

- i. Peter reminds the people gathered of what they already were aware of:
  1. Jesus had lived among them (addressing them as people who had been in Judea and who were aware of Jesus).
  2. They were aware that Jesus had done “miracles, wonders and signs” among them, which God did through Him.
  3. Jesus had been put to death “by lawless hands”.
- ii. *To this, Peter now adds that God had raised Jesus from the dead. Peter will establish his case on two points.*
  1. Fulfillment of prophecies.
  2. Eyewitness testimony of the apostles (**Acts 2:32**).

## c. A few words regarding miracles of Jesus.

- i. Many modern so-called Bible scholars who have been influenced by ‘higher criticism’ theories that have arisen over the past 200 years, try to hold on to Jesus as a historical character, but *dismiss all the miracle accounts as myths*.
  1. Their reasoning is simple: We don’t see miracles today, therefore they must not exist. Therefore, they reason, any accounts of miracles must be the product of an age of myths and superstitions.
- ii. Even Jesus’ enemies were aware that He could perform miracles.
  1. “Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, ‘Could this be the Son of David?’ Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, ‘This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’” (**Matthew 12:22-24**, NKJV)
  2. “And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, *and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.*” (**Luke 23:7-8**, NKJV)

- iii. The modern liberal 'Bible scholars' who tend to invalidate every account of miracles in the gospels have decided to approach the Bible as a scientist would approach a branch of science, such as physics, chemistry or biology. They assume that the 'laws of science' that we currently observe have been operating at all times in the past, just as they are operating today.
1. Therefore, they conclude that since we do not observe miracles today (such as walking on water or raising the dead from the grave), then they must not have occurred in the past, either!
  2. As a result, someone who believes that the miracles in the Bible really DID take place is treated as an illogical, ignorant, and unscientific person, simply believing in childish myths.
  3. Personally, as an environmental engineer, I have a strong background in the physical sciences (biology, chemistry, microbiology, physics, electro-magnetics, etc.). For decades, I have used knowledge of all these areas of science (along with mathematics, reason, logic and common sense) to design water and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
    - a. However, I also realize that all of these laws of nature that we observe (as well all the components of the physical universe we observe) were created by God. If He created these laws of science, it is no problem for me to believe that He can change or suspend those laws any time He chooses.
  4. As an engineer who has worked on the design of all kinds of water systems, I am quite familiar with the physical laws of nature pertaining to water. I know, for example, that under those laws:
    - a. Liquid water does not stand up straight like a wall (unless there is a wall or some other force holding it back), as it did when Moses and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea in **Exodus 14**.
    - b. It is not possible for a human who is more dense than liquid water to walk on top of that water, as Jesus did when He walked on the Sea of Galilee in **Matthew 14**.
    - c. An ax head, which is heavier than water, cannot be made to float by throwing a stick of wood into the water, as Elisha did in **2 Kings 6**.

- d. Water cannot change its chemical form and suddenly turn into fine wine, as it did during the time of Jesus at the wedding feast in Cana, in **John 2**.
  - e. Undrinkable water in a lake does not suddenly become potable (safe to drink) upon a piece of wood being cast into it, as in **Exodus 15**.
  - f. **HOWEVER**, God has the ability to suspend any of the normally-operating laws of nature, to allow miracles such as these to happen!
- iv. The entire story of Christ is based on miracles. You cannot have Jesus Christ (or even God the Father, as revealed in the Bible) without miracles.
- 1. It all starts with understanding who God is.
  - 2. He created the universe, spoke it into existence from nothing.
  - 3. He created all the laws of nature, so can break or suspend or change them at any time.
  - 4. As the angel Gabriel told Mary, when she was told, as a virgin, that she would conceive and bear a child:
    - a. "For with God *nothing will be impossible*." (**Luke 1:37**, NKJV)
- v. If you don't believe that miracles can happen, it is because *you don't understand who God is*. All these scholars who say miracles do not happen, do not understand Who they are dealing with!
- 1. The God who spoke the universe into existence, and created all the laws of the universe, is able to do *ANYTHING*.
- vi. If God can raise Jesus from the dead after three days, in fulfillment of prophecies written hundreds of years in advance (two miracles – raising from the dead and that it was foretold in advance hundreds of years earlier), then it is *no problem for me to believe* that:
- 1. The Lord parted the Red Sea with a wall of water on each side (saving the Israelites and drowning the Egyptians).
  - 2. Jesus could be born from a virgin, Mary.
  - 3. Jesus could turn water into wine, walk on water, heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons and feed thousands miraculously with a few loaves and fishes.

- vii. While I have known many Christians over the decades who have occasionally gone through bouts of what they refer to as “intellectual unbelief”, I don’t recall ever struggling with that!
  - 1. Based on the evidence of the Scriptures, there is no question in my mind that God exists and that He can do anything He chooses to do.
  - 2. In some cases, those who abandon God do so because they don’t know who God is.
    - a. For some others, who leave the faith, it is because they do not know *who Satan is*. Therefore, when bad things happen, they mistakenly blame God and become alienated from Him.
- d. The first prophecy: **Psalm 16**.
  - i. Read **Acts 2:23-32**.
  - ii. I think of the classic approach Peter takes here in presenting the faith to unbelievers as comparable to a powerful one-two punch combination in a prizefight, which ends up knocking out a powerful opponent.
    - 1. That combination consists of:
      - a. Eyewitness testimony regarding the resurrection,  
AND
      - b. The fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.
    - 2. This one-two punch is the powerful combination used by the apostles to proclaim (and prove) the faith to others. We can do the same today!
  - iii. Peter’s argument here is as follows.
    - 1. David’s prophecy in **Psalm 16** said, “You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow Your Holy One to see corruption”.
    - 2. This prophecy could not have applied to David, since David had died long ago (about 1,000 years before Peter was speaking), and his tomb (as well as David’s bodily remains therein) was with them.
    - 3. Therefore, logically, this prophecy could not have been referring to David himself, even though it says “my soul”. It

must have been referring to the one descended from David, the Christ.

- a. Note that Paul makes a similar point when quoting from **Psalm 16** in his address in Pisidian Antioch in **Acts 13:34-35**, but arrives at his conclusion (that this refers to the Christ, rather than to David himself) by a different path of reasoning.

iv. Read **Psalm 16**.

1. Since Peter is quoting from the LXX version we will read from a translation based on the LXX as well, where it is designated **Psalm 15**.
2. Two different texts of the Old Testament: Septuagint (LXX) versus Masoretic Text (MT).
  - a. Most modern Protestant Bibles (KJV, NKJV, ESV, NIV, etc.) use the Masoretic Text for the Old Testament. This is a Hebrew text, where we have manuscripts going back to about 1,000 AD.
  - b. When the apostles quoted from the Old Testament, they generally quoted from the Septuagint (LXX), a translation from Hebrew into Greek made by the Jews approximately 200 BC.
    - i. This was the Old Testament of the early church (first 300 years or so), and continues to be used by the Orthodox church and by some others, today.
    - ii. For more information regarding how the early Christians viewed the Septuagint and its history, see David Bercot, *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, article on 'Septuagint'.
  - c. Since I am interested in prophecies and wanted to read what the apostles are quoting, I started checking out the LXX about ten years ago.
  - d. In many places, the MT and LXX are very similar. However, in some places, they do differ.
3. An example of the difference between the two texts can be seen in this psalm.

- a. From translations based on the MT:
    - i. “Therefore my heart is glad, and *my glory rejoices*; My flesh also will rest in hope.” (**Psalm 16:9**, NKJV)
    - ii. “Therefore my heart is glad and *my glory rejoices*; My flesh also will dwell securely.” (**Psalm 16:9**, NASB95)
    - iii. “Therefore my heart is glad, and *my whole being rejoices*; my flesh also dwells secure.” (**Psalm 16:9**, ESV)
    - iv. (Note that some translations like the NIV are based on the MT, but switch to the LXX to match the New Testament quote!)
  - b. From translation based on the LXX:
    - i. “Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced exceedingly.” (**Psalm 15:9**, LXX, OSB)
    - ii. “On account of this, my heart was gladdened, and *my tongue rejoiced exceedingly*. Moreover, my flesh will dwell in hope....” (**Psalm 15:9**, LES)
    - iii. If you compare the quote in **Acts 2** in a Greek NT with the same quote from **Psalm 15** in the LXX, they are essentially identical.
      1. Even if you don’t know any Greek, you can see this for yourself in an interlinear that has both the NT and the LXX, such as the Apostolic Polyglot Bible.
4. **Question:** Why does this matter to us that Peter is quoting from the LXX here?
- a. **Answer:** Because Peter is quoting several prophecies and explaining how they were fulfilled in Christ. I want to read from a translation based on the same text (the LXX) that he was quoting from!
- v. Things we can learn from reading **Psalm 16** include:
    1. In **Acts 2**, Peter is quoting **Psalm 16** from the Septuagint text.

- a. If you don't know any Greek, you can see this for yourself by comparing an interlinear LXX with an interlinear New Testament (both are included in the Apostolic Polyglot Bible).
  - b. If Peter is using the LXX when going to the Old Testament, perhaps we should be as well.
2. *Sheol* (Hebrew word, from the MT) and *Hades* (Greek word, in the LXX and where it is quoted in the New Testament, in **Acts 2**) refer to the same place.
  3. Hades is the place where the souls of the dead go, as they await final judgment. Jesus mentions Hades in **Luke 16**, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.
    - a. "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments *in Hades*, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." (**Luke 16:22-23**, NKJV)
  4. **Question:** In the three days from the time Jesus was crucified until He rose from the dead, where was His spirit? In heaven, hell (gehenna), Hades, somewhere else, or nowhere?
    - a. Based on what Peter said in **Acts 2**, it seems clear that while Jesus' body was in the tomb, His spirit was *in Hades*. However, His spirit was not abandoned there, nor did His body see decay.
    - b. This also agrees with what Jesus said in **Matthew 12**, that he would be "in the heart of the earth" for three days and nights, just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for that same period of time.
      - i. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights *in the heart of the earth*." (**Matthew 12:40**, NKJV)
      - ii. The phrase "in the heart of the earth" certainly does not sound like heaven to me! This refers to Hades.
        1. I am not sure whether we are to take it literally or figuratively that Hades is

located somewhere deep within the interior of the earth!

- c. His spirit was released from Hades and rejoined with his resurrected body on the third day.
  - d. Early Christians understood that Jesus was in *Hades*, as Peter says in **1 Peter 3:19** regarding him “preaching *to the spirits in prison*”.
5. **Questions:** What about what Jesus said to the thief on the cross? When he referred to seeing him in paradise, did that refer to heaven?
- a. “Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, ‘If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.’ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise.’” (**Luke 23:39–43**, NKJV)
- vi. The early Christians provide insights regarding Hades.
1. Hades is captured in an ancient foundational statement of faith, the *Apostles Creed*:
    - a. “...He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to Hades (or to the lowermost parts). On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead...”
  2. For more on this, see *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, ed. David Bercot, articles on:
    - a. ‘Descent into Hades’, and
    - b. ‘Dead, Intermediate State of the’.
  3. From Justin Martyr, writing c. 160 AD:

- a. "...so likewise Christ declared that ignorance was not on His side, but on theirs, who thought that He was not the Christ, but fancied they would put Him to death, and that He, like some common mortal, would remain in Hades."
  - i. (Source: Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, chapter 99; found in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, p. 248)
- b. "For I choose to follow not men or men's doctrines, but God and the doctrines [delivered] by Him. For if you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this [truth], and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to heaven; *do not imagine that they are Christians...*"
  - i. (Source: Justin Martyr, *Dialogue of Justin with Trypho, a Jew*, chapter 80; found in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, p. 239)
  - ii. While many today hold to a belief that when a faithful Christian dies his or her soul goes immediately to heaven (instead of to Hades), Justin said that those who believed such things were heretics.
    - 1. Justin even said they should not even be considered to be Christians!

4. From Irenaeus, writing c. 180 AD:

- a. "For they do not choose to understand, that if these things are as they say, the Lord Himself, in whom they profess to believe, did not rise again upon the third day; but immediately upon His expiring on the cross, undoubtedly departed on high, leaving His body to the earth.
- b. "But the case was, that for three days He dwelt in the place where the dead were, as the prophet says concerning Him: 'And the Lord remembered His dead saints who slept formerly in the land of sepulture; and He descended to them, to rescue and save them.'

- c. “And the Lord Himself says, ‘As Jonah remained three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth.’ (**Matthew 12:40**) Then also the apostle says, ‘But when He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?’ (**Ephesians 4:9**)
- d. “This, too, David says when prophesying of Him, ‘And you have delivered my soul from the lowest Hades;’ (**Psalms 86:13**) and on His rising again the third day, He said to Mary, who was the first to see and to worship Him, ‘Do not touch Me, for I have *not yet ascended to the Father*; but go to the disciples, and say to them, I ascend to My Father, and to your Father.’ (**John 20:17**)
- e. “If, then, the Lord observed the law of the dead, that He might become the first-begotten from the dead, and tarried until the third day ‘in the lower parts of the earth;’ (**Ephesians 4:5**) then afterwards rising in the flesh, so that He even showed the print of the nails to His disciples, He thus ascended to the Father;—[if all these things occurred, I say], how must these men not be put to confusion, who allege that ‘the lower parts’ refer to this world of ours, but that their inner man, leaving the body here, ascends into the super-celestial place?
- f. “For as the Lord ‘went away in the midst of the shadow of death,’ (**Psalms 23:4**) where the souls of the dead were, yet afterwards arose in the body, and after the resurrection was taken up [into heaven], it is manifest that the souls of His disciples also, upon whose account the Lord underwent these things, shall go away into the invisible place allotted to them by God, and there remain until the resurrection, awaiting that event; then receiving their bodies, and rising in their entirety, that is bodily, just as the Lord arose, they shall come thus into the presence of God.
- g. “For no disciple is above the Master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.’ (**Luke 6:40**) As our Master, therefore, did not at once depart, taking flight [to heaven], but awaited the time of His resurrection prescribed by the Father, which had been also shown forth through Jonah, and rising again after

three days was taken up [to heaven], so ought we also to await the time of our resurrection prescribed by God and foretold by the prophets, and so, rising, be taken up, as many as the Lord shall account worthy of this [privilege].”

- i. (Source: Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 5, chapter 31; found in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, pp. 560-561)

vii. Take-aways from early Christians regarding Hades, include:

1. Those who believed we go straight to heaven after death (spirit only, leaving body behind) were the heretics.
2. Jesus was in “the lower parts of the earth” (Hades) for three days, just as he said in **Matthew 12**.
3. When He rose, he told Mary not to hold onto Him, because He had *not yet ascended* to the Father.
  - a. Clearly, Jesus was not in heaven right after his death. Therefore, he did not meet the thief on the cross there!
  - b. So how do we understand the statement Jesus made to the thief on the cross, “I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise”? I can think of two possibilities.
    - i. Either ‘paradise’ referred to the better region of Hades; *OR*
    - ii. perhaps the comma is placed by the translators in the wrong place (there are no commas in Koine Greek, so translators need to use their judgement). A few have suggested that in English the comma should occur after the word ‘today’ rather than before.
      1. In that case, Jesus’ statement would have been “I tell you today, you will be with me in paradise”.
      2. However, to the best of my knowledge, no major Bible translation puts the comma after ‘today’. Therefore, perhaps the most likely answer is that paradise referred to the better region of Hades.

4. A student is not above his teacher. The best we can ever do is to follow the pattern previously established by Jesus. Therefore, faithful Christians should anticipate:
  - a. Our spirit will descend to Hades when we die, awaiting the resurrection.
  - b. After some period of time, there will be a physical resurrection from the dead, where our spirits will be reunited with our bodies, which will be transformed.
  - c. We will ascend to heaven (body and spirit) only in the end.
- e. After Peter quotes from **Psalm 16**, he quotes or refers to five more prophecies in **Acts 2** regarding the resurrection of Jesus. We will continue with the other prophecies in the next lesson.