

1. Let's begin by reviewing something Jesus told the twelve apostles, before He was crucified, in **Luke 18**.

"Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.' But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken." (**Luke 18:31-34**, NKJV)

- a. Before He was crucified, Jesus told the apostles that He would be rejected, insulted and killed, then raised from the dead the third day, all in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.
- b. However, *at that time* Jesus did not explain which prophecies He had in mind, and the apostles did not understand what He was talking about.

2. After being raised from the dead, Jesus appears to the apostles.

- a. "Then He said to them, 'These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.' And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 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 24:44-49**, NKJV)

I. When Jesus says, "these are the words I spoke to you while I was still with you", I think of what Jesus had said in the passage we previously read from **Luke 18**.

II. At last, after rising from the dead, Jesus is able to explain to the apostles *how* He fulfilled the prophecies from

i. the **Law of Moses** (first 5 books of the Old Testament),

ii. the **Prophets** and

iii. the **Psalms**;

representing *three major portions* of the Hebrew scriptures.

III. Then Jesus tells the apostles to wait in the city of Jerusalem. The message will go out to all nations, beginning from there.

- b. Now I am going to ask you who are listening the same two questions I generally ask whenever I teach this passage.
1. **Question No. 1:** Where in the Old Testament does it say that the Son of Man will be *mocked, insulted and killed*?
 2. **Common Answers to Question No. 1:** Many Christians, especially those who have been reading their Bibles for a few years can come up with at least a few examples. Among the passages often mentioned: **Isaiah 53, Psalm 2, Psalm 22, and Psalm 69.**
 - a. Some also might think of the Passover Lamb story from **Exodus 12** (a true story that is also an 'Eastern-style' or *allegorical* type prophecy about the Passion and death of Jesus Christ).
 3. **Question No. 2:** Where in the OT does it say that the Son of Man will *rise from the dead*? Can you think of any prophecies where it says someone is going to rise from the dead?
 - a. **Typical Response to Question No. 2:** Most Christians find this second question much harder to answer than the first one. Whenever I ask this question, *I typically see a lot of blank stares!*
 - b. However, Jesus *clearly said* that his resurrection from the dead was in fulfillment of prophecy. But *what are* those prophecies, and *how can we find them*?

B. Let's Start by Asking Peter

- a. Unfortunately for us, while Jesus explained the prophecies to the apostles in **Luke 24**, we do not have the details of what He said on that occasion. His detailed explanation is not provided in any of the four gospels. So, what are we to do?
 - i. Here in **Luke 24** Jesus finally explained to his disciples how He fulfilled all the prophecies (first to the two on the Road to Emmaus, then again to the apostles).
 - ii. However, the fact that we do not have Jesus' explanation of *how* He fulfilled the prophecies was frustrating to me, personally, for a long time.

- iii. I really want to know what Jesus taught on that occasion; however, unfortunately we have no record of it! This was profoundly frustrating to me for quite some time.
- iv. As some of you are aware, I am trained as an engineer, and that is how I have made my living. I wondered, “Is there any way I might be able to *reverse-engineer* this, to recover something close to what Jesus taught regarding the prophecies being fulfilled?”
 - 1. If I carefully studied what his closest disciples preached and taught later regarding the prophecies, would it be possible to work backwards and reconstruct something close to what Jesus taught?
 - 2. The basic concept of reverse-engineering (for example as done by militaries throughout history, and computer software/hardware design companies today) runs something like this:
 - a. Capture an example of the finished product (for example, something manufactured, or in the case of the military it might be a sunken ship or downed plane of their enemies).
 - b. Take it apart to see how it works.
 - c. By *working backwards*, figure out how it was created by its original designer.
- v. Fortunately, we do in fact have subsequent teaching on the prophecies by one of the men who was in the room in **Luke 24**, who heard the full explanation of the prophecies provided by Jesus.
 - 1. We have what was taught by the apostle Peter.
 - 2. We have examples of Peter preaching in the first half of the **Book of Acts**. We also have two short letters of Peter in the New Testament: **1 & 2 Peter**.
- b. Let’s start by examining two sermons of Peter, given just a few weeks after the resurrection of Jesus, recorded in **Acts chapters 2-3**. There, let us see if Peter had anything to say regarding prophecies about the resurrection of Jesus.

C. First Prophecy About the Resurrection of Christ, from Peter (Psalm 16)

- a. Peter addresses the crowd gathered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, just weeks after Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. There, Peter recalls the

promise given by David (the famous king and author of many of the psalms) who lived about 1000 years before the birth of Jesus.

- i. Peter says, “Him (*referring to Jesus*), being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him: ‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

1. Note that Peter has just quoted from **Psalm 16:8-11**, which was written by king David, about 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus.

- ii. [Peter continues...] “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.” (**Acts 2:23-32**, NKJV)

b. The point Peter is making:

- i. *David* had said, “You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you let my flesh see corruption.”
- ii. However, David was long dead (and his body had long since decayed). Logically, this prophecy *could not have applied to David in the personal sense.*
- iii. Therefore, this prophecy must have applied to *the promised offspring of David*, the Messiah (= *the Christ*).
- iv. Jesus uses the same term *Hades* in **Luke 16:23**, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.
 1. *Hades* is the place where the souls of the dead go to await the final Day of Judgement; when all people will be judged at the same time (as discussed in **Matthew 12:41-42**)

2. *Hades* is *NOT* the same place as Gehenna, a.k.a hell (= lake of fire). Therefore, *immediately after* someone dies, he or she *will not* go straight to heaven or hell. Right after we die, our spirits go to *Hades*.
 3. If this concept is unfamiliar to you, I encourage you to listen to two audio lessons by David Bercot: *What the Early Christians Believed about Life after Death* and *Christ's Descent into Hades*. Those lessons provide great background information for some of the things we will discuss in the first part of this lesson.
 4. Therefore, in **Acts 2** Peter is saying that the soul of Jesus went to *Hades* for the three days; but it did not remain there long.
 - a. God did not leave His soul there; instead, God (the Father) resurrected Jesus from the dead before Jesus' body saw any decay.
 - b. This also agrees with what it says in the *Apostles Creed*: "...He descended into the *lower regions* (= Hades); on the third day He rose from the dead..."
- c. In **Acts 13:35** Paul cites the same prophecy from **Psalms 16** in his talk in Antioch of Pisidia.
- i. There he notes that this promise made to David fell to David's descendent.
 - ii. Paul supports the idea of the promise made to David falling to the Christ by pointing back to **Isaiah 55:3** (or possibly to **Psalms 88:49-50** from the LXX, designated **Psalms 89** in most modern Bibles).
- d. Let's take another look at the text of the psalm quoted by Peter here, **Psalms 16**.
- i. In most modern Bibles (including KJV, NKJV) the Old Testament is based on the Masoretic Text. However, the text quoted by Peter in **Acts 2** (also by Paul in **Acts 13**) is not from the Masoretic Text (abbreviated MT). It is from a different text of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint (abbreviated LXX).
 1. This was a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek language that was made by Jewish scholars about 200-250 BC, in Egypt.
 - ii. In most places the MT and the LXX are very similar. However, in a few places there are some important differences.

- iii. When Jesus and the apostles quote from the Old Testament, they generally follow the LXX version (as Peter does here).
 - 1. If you check into this, you will find many examples...
 - 2. A classic example, to me: **Revelation 2:26-29**. There we find Jesus Himself quoting **Psalm 2:9** from the LXX: "He will rule them with a rod of iron".
 - a. In contrast, the Masoretic Text reads "He will break them with a rod of iron".
 - b. Reading the passage in context, one can see that the *main point Jesus is striving to make* to the church in Thyatira, when He quotes from **Psalm 2**, follows naturally from the LXX but *is not supported by the MT*!
- iv. Also, early Christians for over 300 years considered the LXX to be the best version of the Old Testament (because that was the one used by the New Testament writers). For example, see:
 - 1. Irenaeus (c. 180) in *Against Heresies*, Book 3, chapter 21; found in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, p. 452
 - 2. Augustine (c. 403) in *Epistle No. 71 (to Jerome)*, chapter 4
- v. In this pursuit to understand the prophecies as Peter and other early Christians presented them, I am generally using translations based on the LXX (rather than MT).
 - 1. I want to use the same Bible text that Peter was generally quoting from.
 - 2. If you were in search of a hidden treasure that was buried by someone long ago, wouldn't you want to *use the original map* and clues from long ago, rather than a modern map you might be more familiar with?
 - 3. Like buried treasure, some of these prophecies were hidden in the text.
 - a. If Satan or Jesus' enemies knew exactly what was going to happen beforehand, they could try to thwart God's plan.
 - b. Sometimes prophecies (like instructions on a map indicating the location buried treasure) can involve riddles or words that have multiple meanings. These riddles could communicate the true path to one's

friends, while confusing their enemies (and sending them off in the wrong direction).

- c. The LXX is in the same language (Greek) as the New Testament. Therefore, it is easier to see when a key word or phrase in the New Testament appeared previously in the Old Testament. It is much easier to see the connections when comparing texts that are written in the same language!
- 4. For me, switching from the Masoretic Text to the Septuagint (for checking out the prophecies) was like going to the optometrist with my comfortable 8-year old prescription glasses.
 - a. After I try out the new prescription lenses, I can suddenly *see more clearly* (read the fine letters at the bottom of the chart).
- vi. Here some may object, “But I don’t *have* a Septuagint; and I can’t read ancient Greek!”
 - 1. Most of the points we will cover in this lesson can be seen in Bibles that are based on MT. However, a few of the things we will touch on can only be confirmed with LXX.
 - a. As always, don’t just trust what I tell you; please check things out for yourself to see if what I am saying is true.
 - b. There are plenty of English translations of the LXX available, and even interlinear versions. Alternative translations of the LXX readily available include:
 - i. Apostolic Polyglot Bible (interlinear),
 - ii. Brenton’s translation,
 - iii. New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS),
 - iv. Lexham English Septuagint (LES), and
 - v. Orthodox Study Bible (OSB).
 - c. I realize that there are textual variations in the LXX. I am following the Rahlfs-Hanhart critical text in my personal study of the Old Testament; and in this lesson I will be drawing from various English translations that are based on the LXX.

2. Actually, it was David Bercot who first encouraged me years ago to consider reading the Septuagint. It has been eye-opening and encouraging.
 - a. If you want to learn more about this, I encourage you to consider a series of lessons by David Bercot on *Discovering the Septuagint*.