

3. Peter begins by referencing David from Psalm 16:8–11 and, later, from Psalm 110:1, in Acts 34a–35. The two references were considered enigmatic by Jewish scholars. Here’s why:

4. In **Psalm 16:10**, the text reads:

For you will not abandon my soul to **Sheol** [ **Paradise compartment of Hades** ]; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

5. Verse 16:9 concludes with the confident statement, “My flesh will also dwell securely” (NASB). In view of these two statements a conundrum occurs: How can David speak of his flesh being secure, yet go to Hades, and then, counterintuitively, not undergo decay?

6. By the time Peter gets to verses 34 and 35 he will have established the inventory necessary to understand David’s proclamation in:

**Psalm 110:1** - The **LORD** [ יהוה ] (**Jehovah**): “**Jehovah**”: **God the Father** ] says to my **Lord** [ אדני ] (**Athonay**): **Messiah** ]: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

7. The two Psalm passages refer to the physical death, burial, resurrection, ascension, visits to Tartarus and Paradise, and session of Jesus Christ.

8. The “visits to Tartarus and Paradise” were required so that Jesus could first deliver a victorious proclamation to the demons involved in the Genesis-6 attempt to corrupt the true humanity of the pre-diluvial civilization:

**1 Peter 3:18** - For Christ also died for sins once for all [ **unlimited atonement** ], the just [ **Jesus** ] for the unjust [ **mankind** ], so that He might bring us to God [ **at physical death or the Rapture** ], having been put to death in the flesh [ **physical death** ], but made alive in the spirit [ **resurrection** ];

**1 Peter 3:19** - in which also He went and made proclamation [ κηρύσσω (*kērússō*): to proclaim; to announce His strategic victory for the Prosecution ] to the spirits [ “sons of God” or demons of Genesis 6 ] in prison [ φυλακή (*phulaké*): cf. Revelation 18:2 ],

**v. 20** - who once [ pre-diluvial ] were disobedient [ sexual deviancy ], when the patience of God [ μακροθυμία (*makrothumía*): gracious restraint before proceeding to action ] kept waiting [ 120 years ] in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

9. The Genesis 6 invasion by Lucifer’s demons resulted in their being incarcerated in the Tartarus<sup>3</sup> compartment of Hades.
10. Consequently, these fallen angels were isolated from all events of human history from the global flood to the resurrection of Christ.
11. The Lord visited them in Tartarus in resurrection body and proclaimed to them His strategic victory on the cross, certified by the resurrection, and then confirmed by his imminent ascension and session.
12. The tactical victory of the angelic conflict is accomplished by Church Age believers who advance to spiritual maturity by means of fulfilling the protocol plan of God.
13. Secondly, upon leaving Tartarus, the Lord went to the Paradise compartment, gathered up the souls of all Old Testament saints, and led them into heaven in interim bodies. (Ephesians 4:8, cf. Psalm 68:18).
14. On His arrival in the throne room of God, Jesus was invited to sit down at the Father’s right hand as “King of kings and LORD of lords” (Psalm 110:1).

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<sup>3</sup> In all major English translations of 2 Peter 2:4, the word “hell” is the aorist active participle of the verb τάρταρώω (*tartaróō*), a hapax legomenon transliterated into English from the Greek noun, “*Tártarus*.” It refers to that compartment of Hades in which certain demons, described as “sons of God” in Genesis 6:2, 4, are incarcerated. See also Jude 6 as a parallel passage.

15. Upon doing so, He possesses absolute authority to remain seated until God makes all His enemies “a footstool for Your feet.” Since Psalm 16 and Psalm 110 was a source of confusion for Jewish interpreters, we note this analysis:

During the period of Late Judaism, both Psalm 16 and Psalm 110 were considered by Jewish interpreters to be somewhat enigmatic. Therefore they were variously understood. There was no problem with the confidence expressed in Psalm 16:8–9, 11. But how could the psalmist have expected God to keep him from the grave and from undergoing decay, as in v. 10? And Psalm 110 was even more difficult, for who is this “my Lord” to whom “the Lord” has said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet” (v.34)? Early rabbis linked the psalm with Abraham, others with David, and some even with Hezekiah; but there is no clearly attested messianic understanding of Psalm 110 in rabbinic literature until about A.D. 260.

Nevertheless, Jesus is reported in all three synoptic Gospels as having interpreted Psalm 110:1 as a messianic passage and as applying it to himself (Mark 12:35–37). And it was probably Jesus’ own treatment of Psalm 110:1 that (1) furnished the exegetical key for the early church’s understanding of their risen Lord, (2) served as the pattern for their interpretation of similar enigmatic Old Testament passages (e.g., 2 Samuel 7:6–16 with Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 55:3 with Psalm 16:10 in Paul’s Antioch address of Acts 13:16–41), and (3) anchored all other passages as could be brought together on a “verbal analogy” basis (e.g., Hebrews 1:5–13).

Therefore, working from Psalm 110:1 as an accepted messianic passage and viewing Psalm 16:8–11 as having a similar reference on the basis of the hermeneutical rule of (verbal analogy), Peter proclaims that Psalm 16:10 (“You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay”) refers to Israel’s promised Messiah and no other. It is an argument based on the exegetical precedent set by Jesus, inspired by the church’s postresurrection perspective, and worked out along the lines of commonly accepted midrashic<sup>4</sup> principles of the day. Peter insists, David could not have been speaking about himself, for he did indeed die, was buried, and suffered decay—as the presence of his tomb in the city eloquently testifies (v. 29). Nor did he ascend into heaven.

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<sup>4</sup> “Midrash (‘to search’). A particular manner of interpreting the Bible, developed mainly in Judea during the period of the Second Temple (516 B.C.—A.D. 70). The Jewish sages were convinced that the words of the Bible lent themselves to many interpretations. On Sabbaths and holidays they would preach in the synagogues, using the verses of the Bible as their text, and revealing many profound interpretations of these verses” (Naomi Ben-Asher and Haim Leaf, “Midrash,” in *The Junior Jewish Encyclopedia*, 14th rev. ed. [New York: Shengold Publishers, 1996], 216).

Therefore, David must have been prophesying about the resurrection of the Messiah in Psalm 16:10 and about his exaltation in Psalm 110:1. And with God's raising of Jesus from the dead, these formerly enigmatic passages are clarified and the pouring out of the Spirit explained.<sup>5</sup>

16. From this analysis, which reveals first-century misunderstandings of the messianic implications of Psalms 16 and 110, we are able to anticipate the structure of Peter's Argument.
17. He begins with a quote from Psalm 16:8–11 and drives the point home with Psalm 110:1 as his summation.
18. First of all, in verse 25, Peter calls to witness a name that is hallowed in the literal song and story Israel: the revered name of King David. His name is the proper noun **Δαβίδ** (*Dabíd*) which is transliterated from the Hebrew **דָּוִד** (*Dawith*): "David."
19. The Hebrew alphabet's fourth letter is the *daleth* or "D": (**ד**) and pronounced as an English "D." When the *daleth* contains a *Daghesh Lene*, represented by a "dot" in the middle of the character, its pronunciation is altered.
20. Note that the first "D" in David contains a *Daghesh Lene* which is pronounced like the "D" in English.
21. However, the second "D" in David does not contain the *Daghesh Lene* so it is pronounced like the diphthong "th" as in the word "the": *Dawith*.
22. The sixth letter in the Hebrew alphabet is the *waw* or "W": (**ו**) and pronounced as an English "W."
23. But wait; there's more. In Modern Hebrew, the *waw* is pronounced as an English "v." Thus, David is pronounced *Davith* in Hebrew, *Dabid* in Greek, and David in English.

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<sup>5</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: John–Acts*, gen. ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1981), 9:279–80.