

Acts 2:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death:
because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Analysis

Christ's resurrection was necessary because 'it was not possible that he should be holden' by death. The Greek 'ouk en dunaton' (not possible) asserts metaphysical impossibility - death had no legal claim on the sinless one. Having satisfied justice's demands, Christ possessed inherent right to life. God 'loosed the pains of death' (Greek 'lusas tas odinas'), using birth imagery - death's labor pains producing resurrection life. This establishes justification's foundation: our righteousness derives from His inability to remain dead.

Historical Context

Peter quotes Psalm 16:8-11, David's confession of trust becoming prophetic of Christ's resurrection. The apostle's Jewish audience recognized Davidic authorship yet acknowledged David's body remained in Joseph's tomb (Acts 2:29). This interpretive move - distinguishing David's experience from his prophetic vision - revolutionized messianic understanding.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's necessary resurrection (not merely possible) secure your salvation's certainty?
2. What does death's inability to hold Christ teach about its powerlessness over believers?

Interlinear Text

ὅν	ό	θεὸς	ἀνέστησεν	λύσας	τὰς	ἀδῖνας	τοῦ
Whom	G3588	God	hath raised up	having loosed	G3588	the pains	G3588
G3739		G2316	G450	G3089		G5604	
θανάτου	καθότι	οὐκ	ἢν	δυνατὸν	κρατεῖσθαι	αὐτοῦ·	
of death	because	not	it was	possible	should be holden	it	
G2288		G2530	G3756	G2258	G1415	G2902	G846
ὑπ' αὐτοῦ·							
of	it						
G5259		G846					

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 6:14 (Resurrection): And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

1 Peter 1:21 (Resurrection): Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Colossians 2:12 (Resurrection): Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Acts 2:32 (Resurrection): This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Ephesians 1:20 (Resurrection): Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

Romans 6:4 (Resurrection): Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 8:11 (Resurrection): But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

John 10:18 (Parallel theme): No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

2 Corinthians 4:14 (Resurrection): Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

Hebrews 13:20 (References God): Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,