



Book of Acts

Chapter 3

The Resurrection

Michael Fronczak
Bible Study Resource Center
564 Schaeffer Dr.
Coldwater, Michigan 49036
Biblestudyresourcecenter.com

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Theme: First miracle of the church; Peter's second sermon

McGee Introduction: We are still in the first division of the Book of Acts which shows the Lord Jesus Christ at work by the Holy Spirit through the apostles in Jerusalem. We have seen the birthday of the church on the Day of Pentecost, a day which can never be repeated. There was a church because the Holy Spirit had become incarnate in believers. He was indwelling the believers, and He filled them with His love, power, and blessing for service.

Just as you and I cannot repeat Bethlehem, neither can we repeat Pentecost. But we do need the power of the Holy Spirit today. Thank God, He is in the world, convicting the world, restraining evil in the world. We don't have to seek Him; He is indwelling all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this third chapter we will find the healing of the lame man, verses 1–11. The appealing and revealing address of Peter is in verses 12–26. The result was five thousand men who believed!¹

In the previous chapter we had the First Impression of the Church and the First Sermon. Now we will see the first miracle in Acts.

Acts 3:1

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being the ninth hour.*

Peter and John seem to be paired up in these early chapters. It is interesting to note that they are mentioned seven times in the book of Acts. Also interesting is that John seems to be subordinate to Peter, it is always "Peter and John." (Acts 3:1,3,4,11; Acts 4:13,19; Acts 8:14).

[ninth hour] This was 3:00 in the afternoon. Jews had three hours of prayer a day: at 9:00 a.m., noon, and 3:00 p.m. They taught that Abraham instituted the first, Isaac the second, and Jacob the last.

Clarke: At the hour of prayer—This, as is immediately added, was the ninth hour, which answers, in a general way, to our three o'clock in the afternoon. The third hour, which was the other grand time of public prayer among the Jews, answered, in a general way, to our nine in the morning. See the note on Acts 2:15.

It appears that there were three hours of the day destined by the Jews to public prayer; perhaps they are referred to by David, Psalm 55:17: EVENING and MORNING, and at NOON, will I pray and cry aloud. There are three distinct times marked in the book of the Acts. The THIRD hour, Acts 2:15, answering, as we have already seen, to nearly our nine

¹McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:522). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

o'clock in the morning; the SIXTH hour, Acts 10:9, answering to about twelve with us; and the NINTH hour, mentioned in this verse, and answering to our three in the afternoon. The rabbins believed that Abraham instituted the time of morning prayer; Isaac, that at noon; and Jacob, that of the evening: for which they quote several scriptures, which have little reference to the subject in behalf of which they are produced. Others of the rabbins, particularly Tanchum, made a more natural division. Men should pray,

1. When the sun rises;
2. when the sun has gained the meridian;
3. when the sun has set, or passed just under the horizon.

At each of these three times they required men to offer prayer to God; and I should be glad to know that every Christian in the universe observed the same rule: it is the most natural division of the day; and he who conscientiously observes these three stated times of prayer will infallibly grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.²

Barnes: In the previous chapter, (Acts 2:43,) we are told *in general* that many wonders and signs were done by the hands of the apostles. From the many miracles which were performed, Luke selects one, of which he gives a more full account; and especially as it gives him occasion to record another of the addresses of Peter to the Jews. An impostor would have been satisfied with the *general* statement that many miracles *were* performed. The sacred writers descend to particulars, and tell us where, and in relation to whom, they were performed. This is a proof that they were honest men, and did not intend to deceive.³

This apparently was the time of the evening sacrifice when a priest went in to offer incense with his prayers. We find in the first chapter of Luke that this was the service Zacharias was performing when he went to minister before the golden altar and the angel appeared to him. That golden altar, the altar of incense, speaks of prayer. This was the time of prayer. There would be a great company in the temple area praying at this time.⁴

JNTC: One afternoon at three o'clock, the hour of *minchah* prayers. The Greek for this verse reads, literally, "And Kefa and Yochanan were going up to the Temple at the hour of the prayer, the ninth." By Roman reckoning the day began at sunrise, so the "ninth hour" would have been around 3 PM. According to one Talmudic source (B'rakhot 26b) the three prayer services were instituted after the fall of the First Temple to replace the sacrifices (see Daniel 6:11 for a comparable custom during the Babylonian Exile). The three services are called *Shacharit* ("morning"), *Minchah* ("afternoon"; the word means "gift, offering") and *Ma'ariv* ("evening").⁵

² Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament

³ Barnes' Notes on the New Testament

⁴ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:522). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:1). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

“Peter and John were going up to the temple” This is an IMPERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. It was the habit of all of the early disciples to go to the Temple daily (cf. Luke 24:53; Acts 2:46). The original followers of Jesus in Palestine worshiped (1) in the Temple (at least on special days if not daily); (2) in the local synagogue (every Sabbath). This was the pattern for a long period of time. These believers saw no division between their faith in Jesus as the Promised Messiah and Judaism. They saw themselves as the “people or congregation of Israel.” This is why they chose the name *ekklesia* for their group. In the Septuagint this is how the Hebrew covenantal phrase, “the congregation (*qahal*) of Israel” was translated.

Peter and John: Acts 3 describes the dramatic healing of a beggar. How soon after Pentecost this occurred is not clear. Days, weeks or months may have elapsed. The story begins with the indefinite, “One day...”

This chapter describes the preaching of the gospel in Jerusalem (specifically, at the temple) by Peter and John, two of the church’s leaders. What Luke wrote is important because it shows us how the apostles preached the gospel.

Luke begins his story by referring to the apostle John (presumably the son of Zebedee) as teaching alongside Peter. We do not know why he is mentioned, for he plays no active role in Luke’s story. John is the silent partner in the narrative, as well as on one other occasion where his name appeared (8:14-17). Some have suggested that Luke refers to two apostles witnessing together for “legal” purposes. He was following the biblical pattern that two witnesses are needed to establish a matter (Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; Matthew 18:15; 1 Timothy 5:19).

We are not sure why Luke included John’s name, or why he left out the other apostles. But his stress on Peter is clear. Luke’s account is, in some ways, a “Tale of Two Apostles”—the acts of Peter, and then those of Paul. (Of course, the real “actor” is the Holy Spirit, who guides the church and its preaching.)⁶

Praying in the temple The event Luke describes in chapter 3 shows Peter and John going to the temple for a formal prayer time. It was the ninth hour of the day, about 3:00 p.m.

Devout Jews observed three special times of prayer at the temple—at 9:00 a.m., at noon, and at 3:00 p.m. The special feature of the first and last prayer time was the offering of the morning and evening sacrifices (Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:1-8). The Jewish historian Josephus gives an example of how important these daily sacrifices were for the Jews. They continued to be offered even food was scarce when the Romans besieged the city during the Jewish War of A.D. 66-70 (*Antiquities* 14:65).

The fact that the apostles went to the temple to pray at these times indicates their view of Jewish traditions. They were continuing to follow Jewish forms of worship and Jewish customs. The apostles remained at the heart of Jewish national life, where they could challenge people with the gospel message.⁷

⁶ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

⁷ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

Acts 3:2

And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

[**Beautiful**] This gate is supposed to have been made of brass and was about 31 x 62 feet

Clarke: man lame from his mother's womb—The case of this man must have been well known:

1. from the long standing of his infirmity:
2. from his being daily exposed in a place so public.

It appears that he had no power to walk, and was what we term a cripple, for he was carried to the gate of the temple, and laid there in order to excite compassion. These circumstances are all marked by St. Luke, the more fully to show the greatness and incontestable nature of the miracle.

Barnes: Whom they laid daily. That is, his friends laid him there *daily*. He would therefore be well known to those who were in the habit of entering the temple. Among the ancients there were no hospitals for the afflicted; and no alms-houses for the poor. The poor were dependent, therefore, on the charity of those who were in better circumstances. It became an important matter for them to be placed where they would see many people. Hence it was customary to place them at the gates of rich men, (Luke 16:20;) and they also sat by the side of the highway to beg where many persons would pass, Mark 10:46, Luke 18:35, John 9:1-8. The entrance to the *temple* would be a favourable place for begging.

Giving money to beggars was considered praiseworthy in the Jewish religion. So the beggar wisely placed himself where pious people might see him on their way to worship at the temple.

McGee: This man had been born lame. He was brought every day and was put there at the gate of the temple. What a contrast he was to the gate which is called Beautiful. Here was a beautiful gate, and here was a man who was marred. Man can make beautiful things, but man cannot improve himself. Of course, man can do some trimming on the outside. He can cut his hair, have his fingernails manicured, take a bath now and then, and use some deodorant, but man can never change that old nature which he has. This is the contrast we have here—a beautiful gate of the temple and a man lame from his mother's womb.

He was there to beg for alms. This was the way he lived, of course.⁸

JNTC: Beautiful Gate. The Hebrew word for “beautiful” is “*yafeh*,” and any tourist can enter the Old City of Jerusalem by the “Jaffa Gate”; it is the end of the road from the port

⁸McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:522). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

of Yafo (Jaffa, Joppa), named for its beauty, on the seacoast south of Tel Aviv. The gate spoken of here may be the Nikanor Gate referred to in the Mishna (Middot 2:3), which led from the Court of the Gentiles to the Women's Court of the Temple.⁹

alms. Gifts of money or goods given to the poor.

Acts 3:3

Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

We find out later that this man was lame for 38 years (John 5). The man is asking for alms, not to be healed. It was not the man's faith that healed him.

Who seeing Peter. There is no evidence that he was acquainted with them, or knew who they were. He asked of them as he was accustomed to do of the multitude that entered the temple.

This shows us that after the Day of Pentecost, Peter and John still went up to the temple to pray. All the believers there in Jerusalem were Israelites or proselytes, and they continued to go to the temple to pray. The poor beggar saw Peter and John, and he hoped that they would be able to give him something.¹⁰

Acts 3:4

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

Barnes: Fastening his eyes. The word used here denotes to look *intently*, or with fixed attention. It is one of the peculiar words which *Luke* uses, Luke 4:20, 22:56, Acts 1:10, 3:12, 6:15, 7:55, 10:4, etc., in all twelve times. It is used by no other writer in the New Testament, except by Paul twice, 2 Corinthians 3:7,13.

Barnes: Look on us. All this was done to fix the attention. He wished to call the attention of the man distinctly to himself, and to what he was about to do. It was also done that the man might be fully apprised that his restoration to health came from him.

Acts 3:5

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

Clarke: Expecting to receive something of them—Because it was a constant custom for all who entered the temple to carry money with them to give to the treasury, or to the

⁹Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:2). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

¹⁰McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:522). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

poor, or to both. It was on this ground that the friends of the lame man laid him at the gate of the temple, as this was the most likely place to receive alms.

Acts 3:6

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, appears in the Book of Acts 7x. Similar to the title Pilot had placed on the cross. "In the Name of Jesus Christ" - his declaration, his authority. No evidence in the Scripture of faith on his part. He was there seeking alms, not healing. Peter asserted the authority of Jesus Christ and he healed him.

[Silver and gold have I none] It was customary to carry money into the temple for offerings and to give to the poor, but the apostles were so poor they had nothing to give.

[but such as I have give I thee] To know one has this power is more wonderful than all the riches of the world.

[In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk] The first definite exercise of the Christian's power of attorney (John 16:23).

Clarke: Silver and gold have I none—Though it was customary for all those who entered the temple to carry some money with them, for the purposes mentioned above, yet so poor were the apostles that their had nothing to give, either to the sacred treasury, or to the distressed. The popish writers are very dexterous at forming analogies between St. Peter and the pope; but it is worthy of note that they have not attempted any here. Even the judicious and generally liberal Calmet passes by this important saying of the person whom he believed to have been the first pope. Thomas Aquinas, surnamed the angelical doctor, who was highly esteemed by Pope Innocent IV., going one day into the pope's chamber, where they were reckoning large sums of money, the pope, addressing himself to Aquinas, said: "You see that the Church is no longer in an age in which she can say, Silver and gold have I none?" "It is true, holy father," replied the angelical doctor, "nor can she now say to the lame man, Rise up and walk!" This was a faithful testimony, and must have cut deep for the moment. One thing is very remarkable, that though the saints of this church can work no miracles while alive, they work many when dead; and it is the attestation of those post mortem miracles that leads to their canonization. Thomas a Becket, who did no good while he lived, is reported to have done much after his death. Many have visited his tomb, and, in days of yore, many were said to be healed of whatsoever disease they had. The age is more enlightened, and the tomb of this reputed saint has lost all its power.

Barnes: Of Nazareth. This was the name by which he was commonly known. By this name he had been designated among the Jews, and on the cross. It is by no means improbable that the man had heard of him by this name; and it was important that he

should understand that it was by the authority of him who had been crucified as an impostor.

“In the name of Jesus Christ” means “by the authority of Jesus Christ.” The apostles were doing this healing through the Holy Spirit’s power, not their own.

McGee: An incident is told of one of the early saints of the church in Rome who walked in on the pope as he was counting money. Realizing that he had walked in on something which was private, he started to walk out. The pope said to him, “No longer can the church say ‘Silver and gold have I none.’” As the saintly man continued walking out, he said, “Neither can the church say to the impotent man, ‘Rise up and walk.’”

Today the organized church has wealth. I suppose that if one could put together all the holdings of all the churches, all groups, denominations, and non-denominations across the country, we would find the church wealthier than any other organization. I think it is wealthier than the Standard Oil Company. Yet the church today lacks power.¹¹

ESV: 1–10 Peter Heals a Lame Man. The healing of a lame man at the temple gate provides an example of an apostolic miracle (2:43) and attracts a crowd to hear Peter's second sermon in the temple area. In Acts, actions often lead to an explanation about what God is doing; word and deed go together.

To heal **in the name of Jesus** was to invoke his power and presence.

Crippled beggar (3:2-6) Luke says that "many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43). The healing of the beggar was a striking exhibit of this apostolic power. A man crippled from his birth, a beggar, regularly asked for charity at the temple gate called Beautiful. Scholars are not sure which gate this was, as neither the Talmud nor Josephus mention a "Beautiful Gate."

Among Jews of the time, almsgiving was considered an act that gained a person religious merit. Giving to the poor was emphasized in the rabbinic tradition and in Jewish writings such as the book of Tobit (4:7-11; 12:8-9). In line with this tradition, Jews coming to the temple would often help people with a coin or two. Beggars, such as the one in Luke’s story, would have stationed themselves in strategic positions to receive some of these alms.

So, as Peter and John approached the gate, this beggar asked them for money. But Peter spoke to him, saying, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (3:6). Peter didn’t mean he had absolutely no money—as though he didn’t have access to a single coin. Rather, he was stressing the much greater value of God’s healing.

Peter was also making a statement about the role of the messianic community in the world. Its main mission was to enable humans to partake of the *spiritual* gifts God gives. "A crippled man asks for alms but the community which holds all goods in common has little silver or gold to offer him. Temporary modest financial gain and charitable handouts are not what this community is primarily about" (William H. Willimon, *Acts*, page 44).

¹¹ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:523). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

We shouldn't take this as a negative, as though it is useless to give financial help to the poor and needy. The church can make available the knowledge of spiritual salvation *and* provide material help where possible and appropriate.¹²

Acts 3:7

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

[Feet] = base or heel; anklebone (Gr. *sphuron*, only here). Very technical term, but we should not be surprised as Luke who is writing this was a doctor by profession.

In John 5, the lame man who was healed, the Pharisees sought to kill (John 16, 18). Later on we find that this situation gave rise to an inquiry by the Sanhedrin. The inquiry never denies the reality of the miracle, they couldn't: the man was *standing* there.

Two ideas embodied in this miracle. One is that it is a natural continuity of the work of Jesus Christ. In this case through the Holy Spirit through Peter and John. So on the one hand it is continuous, it was a continuity of what started in the gospels. It also was a commencement, it was the beginning, it was the first miracle of the period we call the Church, from Pentecost on.

What does this have to do with us, you and me? The lameness of humanity is the Church's opportunity. Christianity is not come into the presence of the world's woes to give out doles in order to help bear its limitations. They came to give men life, to put them on their feet and to enable them to do without alms. They did not just give him an handout, they empowered him. They gave him a gift that canceled disability, communicated ability and created worship.¹³

[immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength] This is the kind of healing that Jesus always produced. (Matthew 13:58)

Clarke: Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength—The suddenness of the cure was the proof of the miracle: his walking and leaping were the evidences of it.

Barnes: And he took him. He took hold of his hand. To take hold of the hand in such a case was an offer of aid, an indication that Peter was sincere, and was an inducement to him to make an effort. This may be employed as a beautiful illustration of the manner of God when he commands men to repent and believe, He does not leave them alone; he extends help, and aids their efforts. If they tremble, and feel that they are weak, and needy, and helpless, his hand is stretched out, and his power exerted to impart strength and grace.

¹² Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

¹³ Chuck Missler, Notes on The Book of Acts, khouse.org

Acts 3:8

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

[leaping] Greek: *exallomai* (GSN-1814), springing or jumping up.

[stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God] Five new experiences for the lame man:

1. Standing up by himself
2. Walking by himself
3. Leaping and jumping like a child
4. Praising God in the temple (Acts 3:8)
5. Holding preachers (Acts 3:11)

[leaping] Greek: *hallomai* (GSN-242), jumping, leaping, springing up. Here; John 14:10; John 4:14 (cp. Isaiah 35:6). The reference to the man's leaping employs a rare word (Gk. *hallomai*), which is found in the Septuagint (Greek OT) of Isa. 35:6 with reference to the messianic age.

Clarke: Walking and leaping, and praising God—These actions are very naturally described. He walked, in obedience to the command of the apostle, rise up and walk: he leaped, to try the strength of his limbs and to be convinced of the reality of the cure: he praised God, as a testimony of the gratitude he felt for the cure he had received. Now was fulfilled, in the most literal manner, the words of the Prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 35:6: The lame man shall leap as a hart.

Barnes: Praising God. This was the natural and appropriate expression of his feelings on this occasion. His heart would be full; and he could have no doubt that this blessing had come from God alone. It is remarkable that he did not even express his gratitude to Peter and John. They had not pretended to restore him in their own name; and he would feel that man could not do it. It is remarkable that he praised God without being *taught* or entreated to do it. It was instinctive- the natural feeling of the heart. So a sinner. His first feelings when renewed, will be to ascribe the praise to God. While he may and will feel regard for the ministry by whose instrumentality he has received the blessing, yet his main expression of gratitude will be to God. And this he will do instinctively; he needs no prompter; he knows that no power of man is equal to the work of converting the soul, and will rejoice, and give all the praise to the God of grace.

McGee: Friend, don't miss this word *leaping*. It occurs twice in this verse.

This is a very interesting chapter. We will find that Peter is going to offer the kingdom to the nation again because at this time the church is 100 percent Israelite. There are no Gentiles from the outside. The church began with the Jews in Jerusalem. Later, it will go to the ends of the earth. But this, now, is the Jerusalem period.

Don't try to tell me this is another dispensation. We have hyperdispensationalists today who call this another dispensation. It is not different at all. But it is a period of

transition. The Lord had said they were to begin at Jerusalem. They were not to begin by going out to the ends of the earth.

Now the kingdom is being offered to Israel again. This will be the final opportunity. What will be some of the identifying marks of the kingdom? Well, one is that the lame shall leap! “Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isa. 35:6).

Every instructed Israelite going up to the temple that day marveled at this lame man leaping. They knew this could actually be the beginning of the kingdom. The Messiah had been crucified, raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and seated at God’s right hand. If they would receive Him, He would come again.¹⁴

Acts 3:9

And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

[saw him walking and praising God] This is always true of real healings.

Clarke: And all the people saw him—The miracle was wrought in the most public manner, and in the most public place, and in a place where the best judgment could be formed of it; for, as it was a Divine operation, the priests, etc., were the most proper persons to judge of it; and under their notice it was now wrought.

Barnes: And they knew, In this they could not be deceived; they had seen him a long time, and now they saw the same man expressing his praise to God for complete recovery. The particulars in this miracle are the following; and they are as far as possible from any appearance of imposture.

(1.) The man had been afflicted from a child. This was known to all the people. At this time he was forty years of age, Acts 4:22.

(2.) He was not an impostor. If he had *pretended* lameness, it is wonderful that he had not been detected before, and not have been suffered to occupy a place thus in the temple.

(3.) The apostles had no agency in placing him there. They had not seen him before. There was manifestly no *collusion or agreement* with him to attempt to impose on the people. The man himself was convinced of the miracle; and did not doubt that the power by which he had been healed was of God.

(5.) The *people* were convinced of the same thing. They saw the effects; they had known him well; they had had every opportunity to know that he was diseased; and they were now satisfied that he was restored. There was no possibility of deception in the case. It was not merely the *friends* of Jesus that saw this; not those who had an *interest* in the miracle, but those who had been his enemies, and who had just before been engaged in putting him to death. Let this miracle be compared, in these particulars, with those *pretended* miracles which have been affirmed to have been wrought in defence of other systems of religion, and it will be seen at once that here is every appearance of sincerity,

¹⁴McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:523). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

honesty, and truth; and in them every mark of deception, fraud, and imposition. (See Paley's Evidences of Christianity, Proposition ii., chap. ii.)

Acts 3:10

And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

Healing in Jesus' name (3:6-11)

When Peter offered the beggar healing in Jesus' name, he was instantly made whole and he jumped to his feet. Think of the impact this had on any Jews who saw what had happened. There was no denying that a miracle had occurred. This man had been born lame. No doubt he had begged at the gate for many years and was a known figure. Now, he was up and jumping about.

To emphasize how dramatic this healing was, Luke piled detail upon detail of the beggar's condition and activity upon being healed. The man's feet and ankles became strong (3:7). Then he jumped to his feet and began to walk (3:8). Next, the beggar went into the temple, walking and jumping, praising God (3:8-9). (No doubt, there was much about the story to excite Luke, himself a physician.)

The beggar had been healed at Peter's initiative, who invoked the name of Jesus. The power of the risen Christ was with him, and when he called on "the name," God healed the man. Luke used the phrase, "the name of Jesus" several times in this and the next chapter to show the source of the apostles' power (3:6, 16, 4:10, 18, 30).

Luke used this story to show an important connection between Jesus and the apostles: because the apostles teach in Jesus' name, they also have the same power to heal as he did. The proof that they continued the teaching ministry of Jesus is seen in the evidence that they continued the healing ministry as well. The same power was at work.

This point can be seen in the similar words used to describe Peter's healing and when Jesus healed a paralyzed man in Capernaum (Matthew 9:2-8; Mark 2:3-12; Luke 5:17-26). There, as here in Acts, the paralyzed man was told to rise, and he jumped to his feet. He then went home praising God. Everyone who had seen the miracle was amazed and filled with awe (Luke 5:26). In the same way, the people who saw the beggar healed and praising God, were filled with wonder and amazement (Acts 3:10).

The Capernaum miracle had supplied Jesus with public confirmation of his authority to forgive sins as well as to heal the sick. When the apostles healed the lame beggar at the temple gate, they too were seen as having the same spiritual authority and power as Jesus. Those who had seen the healing of the beggar—and who had spiritual eyes to see—understood that something of the kingdom of God was being revealed. Isaiah had spoken of the messianic age when "the lame leap like a deer" (Isaiah 35:6). Those at the Beautiful gate had seen the prophecy come to pass.¹⁵

¹⁵ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

Acts 3:11

And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

[**porch**] About 800 feet long and built on the east side of the outer court (John 10:23).

[**Solomon's porch**] The outer court of the temple or court of the Gentiles was surrounded by cloisters supported upon ranges of marble columns. They were called porches and were used by the Jews and strangers as public promenades. The eastern side of the court was called Solomon's porch, built by him and left standing, when Nebuchadnezzar took the city, probably because of its grandeur and beauty. It was over 800 feet long.

Clarke: Solomon's porch—By what we find in Josephus, Ant. b. xx. c. 8, s. 7, a portico built by Solomon, on the east side of the outer court of the temple, was left standing by Herod, when he rebuilt the temple. This portico was four hundred cubits long, and was left standing, probably, because of its grandeur and beauty. But when Agrippa came to Jerusalem, a few years before the destruction of the city by the Romans, and about eighty years after Herod had begun his building, (till which time what Herod had begun was not completed), the Jews solicited Agrippa to repair this portico at his own expense, using for argument, not only that the building was growing ruinous, but that otherwise eighteen thousand workmen, who had all of them, until then, been employed in carrying on the works of the temple, would be all at once deprived of a livelihood.

Held Peter and John—He felt the strongest affection for them, as the instruments by which the Divine influence was converted to his diseased body.

All the people, Excited by curiosity, they came together. The fact of the cure, and the conduct of the man, would soon draw together a crowd, and thus furnish a favourable opportunity for preaching to them the gospel.

Peter had an audience, and he capitalized on the opportunity to share Jesus Christ. He clearly presented his message by telling (1) who Jesus is, (2) how the Jews had rejected him, (3) why their rejection was fatal, and (4) what they needed to do to change the situation. Peter told the crowd that they still had a choice; God still offered them the opportunity to believe and receive Jesus as their Messiah and as their Lord. Displays of God's mercy and grace, such as the healing of this crippled man, often create teachable moments. Pray to have courage like Peter to see these opportunities and to use them to speak up for Christ.

God's supernatural healing of the crippled man through **Peter and John** (v. 7), together with his exuberant response (v. 8), attracted a crowd amazed (**filled with wonder and amazement**) at what had taken place. They ran and assembled at **Solomon's Colonnade**, a portico of columns running the length of the east side of the outer court (cf. 5:12). Two other cripples were healed in Acts (9:32-34; 14:8-10).¹⁶

v. verse
cf. *confer*, compare

Solomon's **portico** was a colonnaded area along the eastern wall of the temple area. See also 5:12.

Acts 3:12

And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

These are questions 7 and 8 in the Book of Acts. The next question is in Acts 4:7.

[own power or holiness] It is not by man's power or godliness that miracles are performed, but by the power of God upon the lives of men who have tarried until they are filled with power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8).

Peter's Second Sermon: Peter's sermon was a response to their amazement. If they understood history they should have expected this. Peter's sermon is very Jewish: first he is presenting it in the Temple; secondly, the very terms of his address are distinctly and uniquely Israel.

"Ye men of Israel" - talking to Jews. "Why wonder ye" - if strangers were present they should be amazed, but not the Jews.

Note he points out that this miracle should NOT be ascribed to them.

Barnes: He answered. The word answer, With us, implies that a question had been asked, or that some subject had been proposed for consideration. But the word is used in a different sense in the Bible. It is often used when no question was asked; but when *an occasion* was offered for remarks, or where an opportunity was presented to make a statement. It is the same as replying *to a thing*, or making a *statement* in regard to some subject, Daniel 2:26, Acts 5:8.

Barnes: Why marvel ye at this? The particular thing which he intended to reprove here, was not that they *wondered*, for that was proper; but that they *looked on Peter and John* as if they had been the authors of this healing. They ought to have understood it. The Jews were sufficiently acquainted with miracles to interpret them, and to know whence they proceeded; and they ought not, therefore, to ascribe them to man, but to inquire why they had been wrought *by God*.

Barnes: Or holiness. Piety. As if God had bestowed this oh us on account of our personal and eminent piety. It may be remarked, that here was ample opportunity for them to establish a reputation of their own. The people were disposed to pay them honours; they *might* at once have laid claim to vast authority over them; but they refused

¹⁶Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:360). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

all such personal honours, and ascribed all to the Lord Jesus. Whatever success may attend the ministers of the gospel, or however much the world may be disposed to do them honour, they should disclaim all power in themselves, and ascribe it to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not by the talents or personal holiness of ministers, valuable as these are, that men are saved; it is only by the power of God, designed to honour his Son. See 2 Corinthians 3:5,6.

McGee: He doesn't say, "Ye men of the United States." He is talking to the men of Israel. This is the Jerusalem period, friend. This is the transition period. The church has not yet moved out to other areas. No one in Rome has heard yet. No one in America has heard. No one in England has heard. This is in Jerusalem.

May I say something kindly? Folk reading the Bible should bring to it the same common sense they use in reading other books. This is God's Book. But it is not some "way out yonder" type of book. It deals with us right where we are, and it communicates so we can understand it.

Peter is very careful to tell them that this miracle was not done in his own power. He is going to direct this Jewish audience back to the Old Testament. He is going to tell them that if they will turn to God, these prophecies can be fulfilled.

Listen to some of the prophecies which these Jewish people knew. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12:10). This would be fulfilled if they would turn to Him. It was *not* fulfilled because the nation did not accept the Lord Jesus at that time. They did not repent and turn to Him. Peter will invite them to turn to the Lord Jesus. They will refuse. The time is still to come when this will be fulfilled. Also Ezekiel spoke of the kingdom: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. 36:27–28). Notice the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, a remarkable chapter—only six verses—that speaks of the worship during the time of the kingdom: "And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isa. 12:1–2). Also, as we have mentioned, Isaiah 35:6 told of the lame man leaping as an hart. "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isa. 35:10). They should have seen that this lame man was a miniature, a picture of the whole nation. If they would but turn to God, all these promises would be fulfilled.¹⁷

¹⁷ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:524). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Peter's sermon (3:12-26)

The healing of the beggar created a commotion as people rushed to Peter and John in Solomon's Colonnade (3:11). The outer court of the temple, called the Court of the Gentiles, was surrounded by porticoes. Solomon's Colonnade ran the length of the eastern portion of the outer court.

The colonnades or porticos were busy places. Religious teachers debated, and taught their pupils in its shade (Luke 2:46; 19:47; John 10:23). Merchants and money changers conducted business there as well (Luke 19:45; John 2:14-16). The early church met and taught here on a regular basis (2:46; 5:12; 42).

As the crowd converged on Solomon's Colonnade, Peter had an opportunity to preach the gospel. Luke recounts his words in what turned out to be another major presentation of the gospel. It is similar in content and style to Peter's Pentecost sermon (2:14-41). Both sermons focus on the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior. Here, Peter stresses the role of Jesus as both Isaiah's Suffering Servant and Moses' "prophet to come" whom Israel was to obey.

The particular interest of this sermon lies in the way in which it gives further teaching about the person of Jesus, describing him as God's servant, the Holy and Righteous One, the Author of life and the prophet like Moses. This indicates that a considerable amount of thinking about Jesus, based on study of the Old Testament, was taking place. (I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, page 90) In this speech, Peter stresses the Jews' rejection of Jesus and his vindication by God. Peter again calls for repentance in terms of acceptance of Jesus as Messiah.

At the heart of Peter's speech is the important point that a new reality has entered the world. The presence of the Spirit of God, through the name of Jesus, was beginning to work in new and powerful ways in the lives of ordinary human beings. Luke probably intended his report of Peter's sermon here and at Pentecost to be examples of how the faith was typically proclaimed to Jews, both as to content and approach.¹⁸

Acts 3:13

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go.

"...his Son" - the word should actually be translated "his Servant" (Cf. Isa 53).

Pilate tried to let Jesus go, but the crowd wanted Barabbas. The crowd said of Jesus "Let his blood be on us and on our children" (Mt 27:25). His blood is on all of us, not just the Jews, it is our sins that put Jesus on the Cross.

[glorified his Son Jesus] This healing shows that Jesus had been glorified, for the Holy Spirit in baptismal measure was promised when He would be glorified (John 7:37-39).

¹⁸ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

Clarke: The God of Abraham, etc.—This was wisely introduced, to show them that HE whom they called their God had acknowledged Jesus Christ for his Son, and wrought this miracle in his name; and, by thus honouring Jesus whom they slew, he had charged home the guilt of that murder upon them.

Clarke: Denied him in the presence of Pilate Ye have renounced him as your king, and denounced him to death as a malefactor, when Pilate, convinced of his perfect innocence, was determined, judged it proper and just, to let him go. Pilate wished to act according to justice; you acted contrary to justice and equity in all their forms.

Barnes: The God of Abraham. He is called the God of Abraham because Abraham *acknowledged* him as his God, and because God showed himself to be his Friend. Comp. Matthew 22:32, Exodus 3:6,15, Genesis 28:13, 26:24. It was important to show that it was the same God who had done this that had been acknowledged by their fathers; and that they were not about to introduce the worship of any other God. And it was especially important, because the promise had been made to Abraham, that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed, Genesis 12:3. Comp. Galatians 3:16.

Barnes: When he was determined, Matthew 27:17-25, Luke 23:16-23. Pilate was satisfied of his innocence; but he was weak, and timid, and irresolute, and yielded to their wishes. The fact that *Pilate* regarded him as innocent was a strong aggravation of their crime. They should have regarded him as innocent; but they urged on his condemnation, against the deliberate judgment of him before whom they had arraigned him; and thus showed how obstinately they were resolved on his death.

JNTC: The God of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, the God of our fathers. This phrase is not accidental in Kefa's sermon. Its two parts are found in the first paragraph of the *Amidah*, the central section of the *Minchah* prayer service (see v. 1N), which begins, "Praised be You, *Adonai* our God and God of our fathers, God of Avraham, God of Yitzchak and God of Ya'akov, ..." and which his hearers would just then have been reciting in their *minchah* prayers in *minyans* throughout the Temple grounds, much as is done today at the Western Wall ("Wailing Wall") in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Kefa's point: the very God to whom you have just now been praying in these words **has glorified his servant Yeshua**. In using the word "servant" Kefa identifies Yeshua as God's suffering servant spoken of in Isaiah 42–53; he makes the same identification at 1 Ke 2:21–25 by citing Isaiah 53.¹⁹

God of Abraham (3:12-13)

With the healed beggar still holding him, Peter began speaking to the crowd. The first matter he dealt with was the surprise of the onlookers. It was essential that they understood by whose power this healed beggar was standing. The healing was caused by the power of Jesus, the one whom God had chosen and glorified (3:13). To place this

¹⁹Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:13). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

event within the context of the Jews' belief system, Peter referred to God as "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers" (3:13).

By beginning his speech with the greeting, "Men of Israel," and then referring to God in the way he did, Peter was attempting to speak from the Jews' point of view. He was also making an important point about Jesus. This man whom they ignorantly crucified was intimately associated with God and the fathers of the nation in an important way. To say that God was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was to refer to a time-honored way by which Jews spoke of God. Indeed, God had introduced himself to Moses at the burning bush as the God of the fathers (Exodus 3:6, 15; 4:5). It underscored the Jewish nation's self-identification as the people of God from ancient times.

This formulaic way of speaking about God was seen throughout the Old Testament, and emphasized Israel as a sanctified nation (1 Kings 18:36; 1 Chronicles 29:18). By New Testament times the phrase "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" connected the glory of ancient Israel to the Jews' concept of themselves as God's remnant people (Mark 12:26; Acts 7:32).²⁰

Acts 3:14

But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

[ye denied] This is plain speech from one who had denied Christ himself (Matthew 26:69-75).

[Holy One] Demons and apostles called Christ "the Holy One" (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; Acts 2:27; Acts 3:14; Acts 4:27,30; cp. Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 29:23; Isaiah 49:7).

[Just] Jesus is called this here; Acts 7:52; Acts 22:14.

Barnes: And the Just. The word *just* here denotes *innocent*, or one who was free from crime. It properly is used in reference to *law*, and denotes one who stands upright in the view of the law, or who is not chargeable with crime. In this sense the Lord Jesus was not only *personally* innocent, but even before his judges he stood unconvicted of any crime. The crime charged on him at first was blasphemy, Matthew 26:65; and on this charge the sanhedrim had condemned him, without proof. But of this charge Pilate would not take cognizance, and hence *before him* they charged him with sedition, Luke 23:2. Neither of these charges were made out; and, of course, in the eye of the law he was innocent and just. It greatly aggravated their crime that they demanded his death still, even after it was ascertained that they could prove nothing against him; thus showing that it was mere hatred and malice that led them to seek his death.

[murderer] Referring to Barabbas (Matthew 27:15-26).

Clarke: And desired a murderer—Barabbas: the case must have been fresh in their own remembrance. Like cleaves to like, and begets its like: they were murderers

²⁰ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

themselves, and so Christ calls them, Matthew 22:7, and they preferred a murderer to the holy and righteous ONE of God.

Clarke: Ye denied the Holy One A manifest reference to Psalm 16:10: Thou wilt not suffer thy HOLY ONE to see corruption; where the original word thy HOLY ONE, is translated by the Septuagint, with a word of the same import with that used by Peter.

Holy One and Righteous One are messianic terms (cf. Isa. 53:11; Mark 1:24).

Acts 3:15

And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

Pharisees are the legalists, the literalists. They, to a fault, tried to take every detail of the Law and make a burden out of it. They were the extremists.

Sadducees were the opposite kind, they were the modernists, the liberals. They did not believe in the resurrection, and did not believe in angels, and did not believe in the supernatural.

So during the life of Christ His conflict seemed to be in large measure with the Pharisees, because that was the power ruling block at the time.

In the time shift here between that era and now, the primary power group were the Sadducees in the Sanhedrin. They were the ones that got unglued with a display of the supernatural. Certainly, the healing was a problem; but even more so the presentation that Jesus Christ rose from the dead was something that the Sadducees clearly could not handle. It went completely contrary to their whole position.

“Killed the Prince of Life” - “Prince” really means file leader or author, or originator. “The one who goes first” is part of the thought behind that.

[Prince] Greek: archegos (GSN-747), leader, or author; one who stands at the head or at the beginning of a list or rank. Christ is:

1. Prince (Author) of peace (Isaiah 9:6)
2. Prince (Leader) of Princes (Daniel 8:25)
3. Messiah the (Anointed) Prince (Daniel 9:25)
4. Prince (Author) of Life (Acts 3:15)
5. A Prince and a Savior (Acts 5:31)
6. Prince (Leader or Ruler) of the Kings of the Earth (Rev. 1:5)
7. Captain (Prince, Author) of Salvation (Hebrews 2:10)
8. The Author (Prince) and Finisher of our Faith (Hebrews 12:2)

Clarke: Whereof we are witnesses—They had now wrought a most striking miracle in the name of Christ, and immediately proposed themselves as witnesses of his resurrection from the dead; the miracle which they had thus wrought being an unimpeachable proof of this resurrection.

The religious leaders thought they had put an end to Jesus when they crucified him. But their confidence was shaken when Peter told them that Jesus was alive again and that this time they could not harm him. Peter's message emphasized that (1) the people and their religious leaders killed Jesus (Acts 3:17), (2) God brought him back to life, and (3) the apostles were witnesses to this fact. After pointing out the sin and injustice of these leaders, Peter showed the significance of the resurrection, God's triumph and power over death.

killed the Prince of life—Glorious paradox, but how piercing to the conscience of the auditors.²¹

you killed . . . God raised . . . we are witnesses. Peter's emphasis on the veracity of Jesus' death and resurrection is a recurring theme in the speeches of Acts (see 2:23–24; 4:10; 5:30–32; 10:39–41; 13:28–29; see also 1 Cor. 15:1–4).

God raised him up

Continuing with his sermon, Peter said his hearers had disowned Jesus and "killed the author of life." But "God raised him from the dead" (3:15). The Greek word translated "author" has a range of meanings, including leader, founder, cause, originator, pioneer. Jesus is the *founder* of eternal life in the sense that he is its giver (John 10:28; 1 John 1:4). He is also the *leader* in that he has paved the way by being the first-born of many who will follow him in resurrection (Romans 8:29). Ultimately, Jesus is the source and perfecter of salvation, the *pioneer* who paves the way and accomplishes the task (Hebrews 2:10; 5:9; 12:2).

By virtue of his resurrection, Jesus is the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Thus, Jesus is representative of the total harvest. His resurrection is the beginning of the entire episode. Jesus' rising to life is part of the same event as the general resurrection of believers, though the two are separated in time.²²

Acts 3:16

And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

[his name through faith in his name] This is the secret of power with God and of all divine miracles (Matthew 1:21; Mark 16:17-18; John 1:12; John 14:12-15; John 15:16; John 16:23-26, notes; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:6; Acts 4:12; Acts 9:34; Phil. 2:9-11). Through faith in the Prince or Author of life has this man been given life (John 10:10).

²¹ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Ac 3:15). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

²² Grace Communion International, Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

[perfect] Greek: *holokleria* (GSN-3647), wholeness. Only here, but the adjective *holokleros* is translated whole in 1 Thes. 5:23, and entire in James 1:4.

Clarke: And his name—JESUS, the Savior: through faith in his name, as the Savior, and author of life, and all its concomitant blessings, such as health, etc. It is not quite clear whether the apostles refer to their own faith in Jesus, or to the faith of the lame man. It is true Christ had promised that they should perform miracles in his name, Mark 16:17, 18. And that whatsoever they asked of the Father in his name, he would grant it, John 16:23. And they might have been led at this time to make request unto God to be enabled to work this miracle; and the faith they had in his unlimited power and unchangeable truth might have induced them to make this request. Or, the faith might have been that of the lame man; the apostles, in the time they desired him to look on them, might have taught him the necessity of believing in Christ in order to his healing; and the man's mind might have been prepared for this by the miracle of the gift of tongues, of which he must have heard; and heard that this mighty effusion of the Spirit had come in the name and through the power of Christ. However the faith may be understood, it was only the means to receive the blessing, which the apostles most positively attribute, not to their power or holiness, but to Jesus Christ alone. Faith always receives; never gives.

Barnes: Through faith in his name. By means of faith in him; that is, by the faith which Peter and John had in Jesus. It does not refer to any faith that the man had himself, for there is no evidence that he believed in him; but it was by means of the faith which the apostles exercised in him that the miracle was wrought, and was thus a fulfillment of the declaration in Matthew 17:20, "If ye have faith-ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence," etc. This truth Peter repeats two or three times in the verse, to impress it more distinctly on the minds of his hearers.

Barnes: In the presence of you all. You are all witnesses of it, and can judge for yourselves. This shows how confident the apostles were that a real miracle had been performed. They were willing that it should be examined; and this is conclusive proof that there was no attempt at imposture. A deceiver, or one who pretended to work miracles, would have been cautious of exposing the subject to the danger of detection.

JNTC: His name is not a magic word. Greek *onoma* corresponds to Hebrew *shem*, which, biblically, means not just a name but everything that the named individual is and represents—his work, personality, power, authority and reputation. See 2:38N, Mt 28:19N.

Trust, Greek *pistis*. "belief, trust, firm reliance, firm conviction, faith," corresponding to Hebrew *emunah*. The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, though he honored Yeshua his "elder brother," tried in his book, *Two Types of Faith*, to demonstrate that the *pistis* of the New Testament and the *emunah* of the *Tanakh* are different. He claimed that *pistis* is primarily mental assent to doctrines and facts, while *emunah* is a heart attitude of trust that expresses itself in righteous acts. In fact, however, the latter is the only kind of faith God honors, in both the Old Testament and the New. True Messianic faith is not different in character from that of the *Tanakh*; it means acknowledging who God is and what he has done, believing his promises, relying on him for power to live a holy life, and then living that life.

The *Jewish New Testament* generally uses the word “trust” instead of “faith” to translate “*pistis*,” because “trust” more clearly signifies to English-speakers the confident reliance on God that generates holy deeds, as opposed to mere mental acknowledgement of facts and ideas. The book of Galatians uses the awkward phrase, “trusting faithfulness,” because the message of that book is so dependent on keeping the correct meaning of “*pistis*” in the forefront of consciousness (see Section (1) of Ga 2:16cN).²³

Here “name” appears twice: once as the subject of the sentence, and again as the object of the preposition “in.” Early in their history the Hebrews ceased pronouncing their God’s name lest they take it in vain. Instead, they would simply say “the Name” which meant to them the God of the Hebrews. To the early Christians, Jesus’ name was considered equivalent to the name of YAHWEH.

13–16 For the Jews' refusal to take Pilate's advice and their request for a murderer instead, see Luke 23:13–25. The reference to Jesus as God's servant (Acts 3:13) recalls Isa. 52:13–53:12. you delivered over and denied . . . you denied . . . you killed. Peter directly and repeatedly tells these Jewish people that they were responsible for Jesus' nonrelease and consequent death, and that they needed to repent (but see also Acts 3:17).

His name, in the full biblical sense of “name,” means everything that is true about the person, and therefore, in a sense, the person himself. **By faith in his name** refers to Peter's faith rather than to any faith on the part of the lame man. Jesus healed the man, and faith (or trust) in Jesus also healed the man, because Jesus worked through Peter's faith. **the faith that is through Jesus**. Jesus himself imparts this kind of miracle-working faith to people's hearts.

We are witnesses (3:15-16)

In his sermon, Peter proclaims that he and John are witnesses to Jesus’ resurrection. Peter then points to an example of God’s power to “raise up.” It was the crippled beggar standing right beside them (3:16). The one who was raised to eternal life, Jesus, had “given this complete healing” to the beggar (3:16). Peter insisted that the cripple had been cured on the grounds of “faith in the name of Jesus” (3:16).

There is a question regarding the nature of the faith Peter was referring to. According to Luke’s account, the beggar did not show any particular “faith.” He had simply asked Peter and John for money. The possibility of his being healed apparently didn’t enter his mind.

Seemingly, God had bestowed a gracious gift on the man through the two apostles, apart from any work of faith on his part. Once the beggar saw what happened to him, he believed not only in his healing but understood the *source* of his healing. It was God whom the beggar praised for his good fortune (3:8).

However, the beggar’s faith was expressed only *after* the miracle occurred. His healing was by grace—a totally unmerited gift—given to the man apart from his expressing any faith beforehand. If anything, it was Peter’s faith that made the healing

²³Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:16). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

possible. He had walked up to the beggar and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (3:6).

There is another dimension of faith that helps us understand what Peter meant when he said the beggar had been healed by faith. The origin of the believer's faith does not originate from within the person but comes from the gift that the calling of God provides (Romans 4:17; 11:29; Ephesians 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 1:9).²⁴

Acts 3:17

And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as *did* also your rulers.

Peter is saying that they are accountable, responsible, yet done through ignorance. Remember Jesus prayed, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do..."

The significance behind this idea is that ignorance makes the difference between premeditated murder and manslaughter. For manslaughter the remedy is a City of Refuge (Numbers).

[wot] Greek: *oida* (GSN-1492), know, as in Acts 3:16.

I know. Wot is from the Anglo-Saxon, *to know*; and hence wit, science or understanding.

[ignorance] Their ignorance was highly criminal, for it was prejudice against evidence, a very willful ignorance. Peter used it as an argument for repentance, not an excuse for former sin. He pointed out that their sin was pardonable so they had no reason to despair of salvation if they would yet turn to God.

Clarke: Through ignorance ye did it—This is a very tender excuse for them; and one which seems to be necessary, in order to show them that their state was not utterly desperate; for if all that they did to Christ had been through absolute malice, (they well knowing who he was), if any sin could be supposed to be unpardonable, it must have been theirs. Peter, foreseeing that they might be tempted thus to think, and consequently to despair of salvation, tells them that their offense was extenuated by their ignorance of the person they had tormented and crucified. And one must suppose that, had they been fully convinced that this Jesus was the only Messiah, they never would have crucified him; but they did not permit themselves to receive conviction on the subject.

Barnes: And now, brethren. Though they had been guilty of a crime so enormous, yet Peter shows the tenderness of his heart in addressing them still as his *brethren*. He regarded them as of the same nation with himself, as having the same hopes, and as being entitled to the same privileges. The expression also shows that he was not disposed to exalt himself as being by nature more holy than they. This verse is a remarkable instance of *tenderness* in appealing to sinners. It would have been easy to have reproached them for their enormous crimes; but it was not the way to reach the heart. He had indeed stated and *proved* their wickedness. The object now was to bring them to repentance for it; and

²⁴ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

this was to be done by *tenderness*, and *kindness*, and *love*. Men are melted to contrition, not by reproaches, but by love.

you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers (cf. 1 Cor. 2:8). “In ignorance” probably means that they did not fully understand that Jesus was the true Messiah and also the true Son of God. But such ignorance, in Scripture, while it may diminish punishment, does not fully absolve people of responsibility for their actions.

Acted in ignorance (3:17)

As Peter continues speaking, he softens his earlier, more strident rhetoric. Before, he accused his listeners of being murderers. Now comes a more conciliatory tone. Peter says, "Brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders" (3:17).

Peter had declared God’s judgment on his countrymen for crucifying the One who had been designated Savior. Now, he stresses God’s foreknowledge of what they would do to Jesus. The "killers" were merely God’s instruments. In the spirit of Jesus, Peter offered God’s mercy to them (Luke 23:34).

The mood changes from devastating reproof to pleading conciliation. Peter is not interested in bringing an accusation against the Jews for their crime. Rather, he hopes his listeners will act on the hopeful message of salvation God makes available to his people Israel. Peter is being charitable to his listeners, especially when exonerating their leaders. This is especially true when compared with John’s matter-of-fact condemnation of the people who were responsible for having Jesus crucified (John 9:41; 15:22).

It may be thought that Peter’s words were surprisingly lenient to people like Caiaphas and the other chief priests, whose determination to have Jesus put to death is underscored in all the Gospels. Nevertheless, here is the proclamation of a divine amnesty, offering a free pardon to all who took part in Jesus’ death, if only they acknowledge their error, confess their sin, and turn to God in repentance. (F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, revised edition, page 83)²⁵

Acts 3:18

But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

[suffer, he hath so fulfilled] The many prophecies of the sufferings of the Messiah by all the prophets have now been fulfilled, beginning with the seed of the woman having His heel bruised (Genesis 3:15), and continuing with all the sacrifices pointing to His sufferings which are also described by David (Psalm 22); Isaiah (Isaiah 52:14; Isaiah 53:1-12); Daniel (Daniel 9:25-26) and others. He has literally fulfilled the prophets.

Clarke: But those things—he hath so fulfilled—Your ignorance and malice have been overruled by the sovereign wisdom and power of God, and have become the instruments of fulfilling the Divine purpose, that Christ must suffer, in order to make an atonement for the sin of the world. All the prophets had declared this; some of them in express

²⁵ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

terms, others indirectly and by symbols; but, as the whole Mosaic dispensation referred to Christ, all that prophesied or ministered under it must have referred to him also.

Their past deeds call for a course of action. That action is repentance and conversion. This was not a new message to them. “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isa. 43:25).

JNTC: After inculcating his fellow Jews in vv. 13–15 (see 2:22–23&N, 2:36&N) Kefa again calls them **brothers** (as at 2:29; also see 2:37–41&N) and mitigates his words: **you did not understand the significance of what you were doing**. In the *Torah*, atonement avails only for unintended sins; for sins committed presumptuously there is no atonement (see Numbers 15:22–31, Leviticus 4–5). Even the *cohanim* and *P.rushim* involved in the events leading up to Yeshua’s execution may be forgiven through trusting Yeshua, and some availed themselves of the opportunity (6:7, 15:5). Also compare 7:60, Lk 23:34.

A second cushion for the shock: **this is how God fulfilled what he had announced in advance**. The Messiah’s death does not end all hope; on the contrary, God intended him to die, be resurrected and return. See 2:22–23&N.

God ... announced ... through ... all the prophets ... that the Messiah was to die. In not specifying the *Tanakh* passages Kefa assumes his audience is aware of the relevant passages already and has their agreement that they apply to the death of the Messiah; otherwise at this point he would have lost his audience. See Mt 26:24N for a list of these *Tanakh* prophecies and their New Testament fulfillments.²⁶

Foretold by the mouth of all the prophets and fulfilled by God indicates that there is no contradiction between divine sovereignty and human responsibility (cf. notes on 2:23; 3:13–16; 3:17; 4:27; 4:28).

Sufferings foretold (3:18, 21)

Continuing his sermon, Peter cites a second mitigating factor regarding his listeners’ guilt in the murder of Jesus. Not only did they act in ignorance (3:17), it had been foretold beforehand that Jesus had to suffer at their hands. God was guiding events so that the predictions about the Messiah suffering persecution and martyrdom would be carried out (3:18). God had willed the Servant’s shameful crucifixion (3:21).

The Messiah was to be one who suffered and died. This was precisely why the vast majority of Jews would not accept Jesus as Messiah. Jesus of Nazareth had been executed as a common criminal. In the eyes of the Jews, he was under the curse of the Law (Deuteronomy 21:33; Galatians 3:13). Thus, they reasoned, he could not have been their Messiah.

Peter was claiming that quite the reverse was true. It was only *because* Jesus was crucified that he qualified to be the Savior. He was saying that the witness of the prophets, when properly understood, actually focused on the Messiah’s suffering. Of course, the Scriptures don’t specifically say that it was the Messiah who would suffer. (Messiah is actually a rare word in the Old Testament.) Isaiah spoke of the Servant (not the Messiah) as the one who would suffer and die for the sins of others. It is not clear that

²⁶Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:17). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

the Jews understood the Servant and the Messiah to be one and the same. This perhaps was where faith entered. One had to accept Jesus' own claim that his messianic mission was fulfilled in terms of the Servant sufferer.

Nevertheless, Peter claims that "all the prophets" contain promises of the Messiah's suffering (3:24). Today, we are unable to find references, literally, in *all* the prophets to a suffering Messiah. On the other hand, there are passages in several prophets and Psalms that could be taken to refer to a suffering Messiah (Psalm 22, 69; Jeremiah 11:19; Zechariah 13:7; Daniel 9:26). We can probably understand "all the prophets" in a collective sense. What is written down from one or a few prophets can be attributed to all of them as a class.²⁷

Acts 3:19

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

"Therefore" - all that Peter has said up to this point, supports what he is about to say.

"Therefore" - because of this...

[Repent ye therefore, and be converted] Two things necessary for forgiveness:

1. Repent. Greek: *metanoeo* (GSN-3340), to change the mind for better morally; to change the attitude toward sin (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19; Luke 13:1-5, note). Now you are convinced that Jesus was the Messiah so change your minds and let your hearts be contrite for your crimes against Him.
2. Be converted—change your conduct; turn right about face; make a change in direction and begin a new walk toward God and with Him (Psalm 19:7; Psalm 51:13; Matthew 18:3; James 5:19).

[sins] Greek: *hamartia* (GSN-266), John 1:29.

[blotted out] Wiped out; your life washed clean from missing the mark, or from all sins. Here; Col. 2:14; Rev. 3:5; Rev. 7:17; Rev. 21:4 (cp. Rev. 1:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; Isaiah 1:18).

[when] Greek: *hopos* (GSN-3704), in order that, or so that, denoting a purpose and is so used 15 times in this sense in Acts alone; when or that (Acts 3:19); that (Acts 8:15,24; Acts 9:2,12,17; Acts 15:17; Acts 23:15,20; Acts 24:26; Acts 25:3,26); to (Acts 9:24; Acts 23:23); and because (Acts 20:16). It should read, "that times of refreshing shall come," meaning if one becomes truly converted he will have times of refreshing from God (1 Cor. 5:17-18; Ephes. 1:3; Galatians 5:22-23; Isaiah 28:11-12).

Clarke: Repent ye therefore—Now that ye are convinced that this was the Messiah, let your minds be changed, and your hearts become contrite for the sins you have committed.

²⁷ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

Clarke: And be converted Turn to God through this Christ, deeply deploring your transgressions, and believing on his name; that your sins may be blotted out, which are not only recorded against you, but for which you are condemned by the justice of God; and the punishment due to them must be executed upon you, unless prevented by your repentance, and turning to him whom ye have pierced. The blotting out of sins may refer to the ceremony of the waters of jealousy, where the curse that was written in the book was to be blotted out with the bitter water. See the note on Numbers 5:23. Their sins were written down against them, and cried aloud for punishment; for they themselves had said, His blood be upon us, and upon our children, Matthew 27:25; and unless they took refuge in this sacrificial blood, and got their sins blotted out by it, they could not be saved.

Clarke: When the times of refreshing shall come—Dr. Lightfoot contends, and so ought all, that this should be translated, THAT the times of refreshing MAY come. This signifies a breathing time, or respite, and may be here applied to the space that elapsed from this time till the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This was a time of respite, which God gave them to repent of their sins, and be converted to himself. Taking the word in the sense of refreshment in general, it may mean the whole reign of the kingdom of grace, and the blessings which God gives here below to all genuine believers, peace, love, joy, and communion with himself.

Barnes: May be blotted out. May be forgiven, or pardoned. The expression, *to blot out sins*, occurs also in Isaiah 43:25, Psalms 51:1,9 Jeremiah 18:23, Nehemiah 4:5, Isaiah 44:22. The expression, *to blot out a name*, is applied to expunging it from a *roll, or catalogue, or list*, as of an army, etc., Exodus 32:32,33, Deuteronomy 9:14, 25:19, 29:20, etc. The expression, *to blot out sins*, is taken from the practice of creditors charging their debtors, and when the debt was paid, cancelling it, or wholly removing the record. The word used here *properly* refers to the practice of writing on tables covered with wax, and then by inverting the stylus, or instrument of writing, smoothing the wax again, and thus removing *every trace* of the record. This more entirely expresses the idea of *pardoning* than *blotting* does. It means wholly *to remove* the record, the charge, and every trace of the account against us. In this way *God* forgives sins.

John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus by preaching repentance. The apostles' message of salvation also included the call to repentance—acknowledging personal sin and turning away from it. Many people want the benefits of being identified with Christ without admitting their own disobedience and turning from sin. The key to forgiveness is confessing your sin and turning from it (see Acts 2:38).

3:19-20 When we repent, God promises not only to wipe out our sins, but to bring spiritual refreshment. Repentance may at first seem painful because it is hard to give up certain sins. But God will give you a better way. As Hosea promised, “Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth” (Hosea 6:3).²⁸

²⁸ Life Application Notes

JNTC: Repent and turn to God, literally, “Change your mind and turn.” KJV has “Repent and be converted”; but to the modern reader this suggests changing religions, e.g., from Judaism to Christianity, which is not what Kefa was talking about. For at that time “Christianity” as such did not exist; there was Judaism with Yeshua and Judaism without him (the same choice, along with the possibility of rejecting both, faces Jews today).²⁹

ESV: 11–26 Peter Preaches in the Temple Square. As with his first, Peter's second sermon took place in the temple precincts. His Pentecost sermon emphasized Jesus' messianic status. This one was primarily a call for Jews to repent of their rejection of Jesus as Messiah and focuses the argument on the Torah.

Turn again can also be translated “turn back.” It means to turn back to God instead of continuing to turn away from him.

Acts 3:20

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

[**And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you ...**] The 5th New Testament prophecy in Acts (Acts 3:20-21, unfulfilled but will be fulfilled at the second coming and in the Millennium and the New Earth forever). Next, □ Acts 9:15. Acts 3:20 refers to the second coming (Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thes. 1:7-10; Jude 1:14; Rev. 19:11-21; Zech. 14).

JNTC: Times of refreshing, that is, the Messianic Age. Compare the Mishna: “Rabbi Ya’akov used to say, ‘Better is one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world than the whole life of the world to come; and better is one hour of contentment (*korat-ruach*, “cooling of spirit”) in the world to come than all the life of this world.’ ” (Avot 4:17)

In these “times of refreshing” self-rule will be restored to Israel (see 1:6–8&NN), and **the Messiah appointed in advance for you**, namely, **Yeshua**, will return. Kefa’s audience, like today’s Orthodox Jews, expected the Messiah in the future. Kefa says that the very Messiah they expect will turn out to be Yeshua, and he goes on in the following verses to explain why he doesn’t come at once.³⁰

ESV: Peter promised three results of repentance: (1) The forgiveness of sins (v. 19). (2) **Times of refreshing** (a mark of the messianic age), as people are “refreshed” in their spirits when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within them. (This “refreshing” comes also to the world in general as it is affected by believers who are changed by the power of the

²⁹Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:19). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

³⁰Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:20). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Spirit.) (3) **That he may send the Christ** is a clear reference to the second coming of Christ, since the next verse looks forward to that time.

Acts 3:21

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

[until the times of restitution of all things] Christ must remain in heaven until the time of restoration of all things.

[restitution] Greek: *apokatastasis* (GSN-605) a complete restoration or reestablishment. It refers to the Millennium when Christ will reign 1,000 years for the purpose of gathering together all things in one as before the fall (Ephes. 1:10); of ridding the earth of all rebellion (1 Cor. 15:24-28); of making the new heavens and new earth; and of restoring all things to perfection and sinlessness as before the rebellions of Lucifer and Adam (Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22-24; 2 Peter 3:5-13; Rev. 21:22). When this complete restoration work is finished, then the Son will deliver the restored and perfect kingdom to the Father so that He may be all and all as before rebellion.

Clarke: Whom the heaven must receive—He has already appeared upon earth, and accomplished the end of his appearing; he has ascended unto heaven, to administer the concerns of his kingdom, and there he shall continue till he comes again to judge the quick and the dead.

19-21. Peter's exhortation, as in his Pentecost sermon (2:38), was to **repent**. Was Peter saying here that if Israel repented, God's kingdom would have come to earth? This must be answered in the affirmative for several reasons: (1) The word **restore** (3:21) is related to the word "restore" in 1:6. In 3:21 it is in its noun form (*apokatastaseōs*), and in 1:6 it is a verb (*apokathistaneis*). Both occurrences anticipate the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (cf. Matt. 17:11; Mark 9:12). (2) The concept of restoration parallels regeneration when it is used of the kingdom (cf. Isa. 65:17; 66:22; Matt. 19:28; Rom. 8:20-22). (3) The purpose clauses are different in Acts 3:19 and 20. In verse 19 a **so that** translates *pros to* (some mss. have *eis to*) with the infinitive. This points to a near purpose. The two occurrences of **that** in verses 19b and 20 are translations of a different construction (*hopōs* with subjunctive verbs), and refer to more remote purposes. Thus repentance would result in forgiveness of sins, the near purpose (v. 19a). Then if Israel as a whole would repent, a second more remote goal, the coming of the kingdom (**times of refreshing** at the second coming of Christ) would be fulfilled. (4) The sending of **the Christ**, that is, Messiah (v. 20) meant the coming of the kingdom. (5) The Old Testament "foretold these days" (v. 24; cf. v. 21). The Old Testament **prophets** did not predict the

cf. *confer*, compare
mss. manuscripts
v. verse

church; to them it was a mystery (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:1-6). But the prophets often spoke of the messianic golden age, that is, the Millennium.

This offer of salvation and of the Millennium pointed both to God's graciousness and to Israel's unbelief. On the one hand God was giving the Jews an opportunity to repent after the sign of Christ's resurrection. They had refused the "pre-Cross" Jesus; now they were being offered a post-Resurrection Messiah. On the other hand Peter's words underscore Israel's rejection. They had been given the sign of Jonah but still they refused to believe (cf. Luke 16:31). In a real sense this message confirmed Israel's unbelief.

Some Bible scholars oppose the view that the kingdom was offered by Peter. They do so on the basis of several objections: (1) Since God knew Israel would reject the offer, it was not a legitimate offer. But it was as genuine as the presentation of the gospel to any nonelect person. (2) This puts kingdom truth in the Church Age. However, church truth is found before the church began at Pentecost (cf. Matt. 16:18; 18:17; John 10:16; 14:20). (3) This view leads to ultradispensationalism. But this is not a necessary consequence if this offer is seen as *a transition within the Church Age*. Acts must be seen as a hinge book, a transition work bridging the work of Christ on earth with His work through the church on earth.

In conclusion, Acts 3:17-21 shows that Israel's repentance was to have had two purposes: (1) for *individual* Israelites there was forgiveness of sins, and (2) for *Israel as a nation* her Messiah would return to reign.³¹

JNTC: He has to remain in heaven at the right hand of God (Psalm 110:1, quoted above at 2:35) **until the time comes for restoring everything**, both social and natural (Isaiah 11:1-12, Ro 8:18-23), when Yeshua will come on the clouds of Heaven (Daniel 7:13-14). Yeshua said the same thing at least twice, quoting Daniel (Mt 24:30, 26:64).³²

ESV: The time for restoring all the things looks forward to when Christ will return and his kingdom will be established on earth, and the earth itself will be renewed even beyond the more abundant and productive state it had before Adam and Eve's fall (see note on Rom. 8:20-21).

Acts 3:22

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

[A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you ...] This is the 7th Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Acts (Acts 3:22-23; Deut. 18:15-19). The next one will be in Acts 3:25.

³¹Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:361). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³²Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:21). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Peter ascribes Deuteronomy to Moses.

For Moses truly said. The authority of Moses among the Jews was absolute and final. It was of great importance, therefore, to show not only that they were not departing from his law, but that he had actually *foretold* these very things. The object of the passage is not to prove that the heavens must receive him, but that he was truly the Messiah.

Acts 3:23

And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

(Deuteronomy 18:19) *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.*

The application of this prophecy was to Joshua, who followed Moses immediately. Peter gave a double, futuristic application. He applied it to Christ also. Deuteronomy 18:18, 19 in the Masoretic text (Hebrew Bible) reads, “I Myself will require it of him”; whereas the LXX (Greek version of the O.T.) reads, “shall be utterly destroyed from among the people,” as NKJV has it. The LXX, from which N.T. writers took most of their O.T. quotations, is strongly messianic.

JNTC: The same passage, Deuteronomy 18:15–19, is also cited in Stephen’s sermon at 7:37. The *P.rushim* asked Yochanan the Immerser if he was “the prophet” foreseen in this passage (Yn 1:21&N). The five thousand whom Yeshua fed wondered the same thing (Yn 6:14&N), as did some of the crowd to whom he offered living water (Yn 7:40). Evidently this passage from the Five Books of Moses was widely understood then as Messianic, and people were looking for its fulfillment.

But in later rabbinic literature this passage of the *Torah* is minimized in numerous instances of what I call “defensive theology,” interpretations developed specifically to counter its New Testament application to Yeshua. Here are five:

- (1) The commentary of Rashi (1040–1105) says it means that God will raise up a prophet in Moshe’s place, “and so on, from prophet to prophet.” That is, the passage does not speak of only a single individual prophet to come, but of the *Tanakh’s* many prophets, of whom Malachi was the last.
- (2) The *Midrash Rabbah*, compiled in the 6th to 12th centuries, has nothing on the passage at all, allowing silence to deflect curiosity.
- (3) The Talmud (5th century) has an interesting paragraph (Yevamot 90b) which applies it to prophets in general in order to prove that they could abrogate a command of *Torah* if the need was great enough—using as an example Elijah’s building an altar on Mount Carmel, near present-day Haifa and not in Jerusalem where God authorized one, in order to save Israel from idolatry (1 Kings 18:31ff.).
- (4) Typical in our age is a popular commentary on the *Torah* by the former chief rabbi of England, Dr. J. H. Hertz, who says of the phrase, “like me”: “Not of the same rank as Moses, but of the line of Prophets of which Moses is the ‘father’.” In support he cites

Deuteronomy 34:10, “And there has not risen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom *Adonai* knew face to face.” Of course, that verse was written centuries before Yeshua and therefore is irrelevant in proving whether or not Moses was prophesying about him.

(5) Perhaps the most obvious well-known example is in the 12th-century creed of Maimonides, especially as epitomized in the poem *Yigdal*, recited daily in the synagogue. The seventh of the *Rambam*’s credal statements reads,

“I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moshe *Rabbenu* [Moses our teacher], peace be unto him, was true, and that he was chief of the prophets [literally, “father to the prophets”], both of those who preceded him and those who came after him.”

The *Yigdal* rephrases it,

“There has not arisen in Israel another like Moshe, a prophet who saw his vision clearly.”

Was Yeshua “a prophet like Moshe”? Yes, and more. A prophet speaks for God, which Yeshua did; but he also spoke as God. He spoke what the Father gave him to say, as did all the prophets; but he and the Father are one (Yn 10:31). Moshe explained the sacrificial system for atonement; Yeshua was the final sacrifice for sin, the eternally effective atonement. Moshe established the system of *cohanim*, with his brother Aaron as the first *cohen gadol* of the Tabernacle; the resurrected Yeshua is the eternal *cohen gadol* in the heavenly Tabernacle that served as model for the earthly one (Messianic Jews 7–10). At no point did Yeshua contradict what Moshe said; rather, he clarified and strengthened the *Torah* (Mt 5:17–20), made its application plainer (Mt 5:21–7:29), and sometimes himself *was* the application. See also 2:42.

You are to listen to everything he, Yeshua, the prophet like Moshe, tells you. Everyone who fails to listen to that prophet will be removed from the people and destroyed.

But what if the nation as a whole fails to listen? Then this becomes the kind of *Torah* violation which leads to the curses of Deuteronomy 28:15–68 (see Ga 3:13&N). The destruction of the Temple (70 C.E.), the expulsion from Jerusalem (135 C.E.) and the centuries of exile typify the punishments suffered by the Jewish people not for deicide and not directly for rejecting Yeshua but for violating the *Torah*’s injunction to listen to the prophet like Moshe, who is Yeshua, “the goal at which the *Torah* aims” (Ro 10:4&N). But he can still be heard. He speaks through the *Tanakh* and the New Testament. Those who heed him become part of Israel’s remnant (Romans 9–11&NN) and are not **removed from the people**.³³

Peter quoted Deut. 18:15 to establish that Jesus was the **prophet like me** (i.e., like Moses, a comparison that points to a leader prophet) that God had promised to send. In Acts 3:23 Peter quotes Deut. 18:19 to point out the danger of rejecting the coming prophet (i.e., Jesus).

³³Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:22). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Acts 3:24

Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

Samuel was regarded as the next great prophet after Moses.

All the prophets from Samuel—Dr. Lightfoot observes: “We have Moses and Samuel mentioned together in this place, as also Psalm 99:6, because there were few or no prophets between these two, 1 Samuel 3:1, and the apparition of angels having been more frequent; but, after the decease of Phineas, it is a question whether there was any oracle by Urim and Thummim, through the defect of prophecy in the high priests, till the times of Samuel. But then it revived in Abimelec, Abiather, etc.” The Jews have a saying, Hieros. Chagigah, fol. 77. Samuel was the chief of the prophets. Perhaps it was in reference to this that Peter said, All the prophets from Samuel, etc.

Samuel was considered the next prophet after Moses, and Peter declared that he and the rest of the prophets consistently pointed to Christ. **All the prophets . . . proclaimed these days** affirms that all of the OT prophets (including Moses, which implies all of the OT from Genesis onward) were predicting the coming of Christ and the new covenant age that had begun at Pentecost.

Acts 3:25

Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

[**covenant which God made with our fathers**] The Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3).

[**in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed**] This is the 8th Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Acts (Acts 3:25; Genesis 12:1-3). The next will be in Acts 4:11.

“In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed” - not just the Israelites. The main thrust of Peter’s sermon is that this is the natural outcome of their history. To the extent that they understood the Old Testament, they should not be surprised.

Clarke: Ye are the children of the prophets—This is the *argumentum ad hominem*: as ye are the children or disciples of the prophets, ye are bound to believe their predictions, and obey their precepts; and not only so, but ye are entitled to their promises. Your duty and your interest go hand in hand; and there is not a blessing contained in the covenant which was made with your fathers but belongs to you. Now, as this covenant respected the blessings of the Gospel, you must believe in Jesus Christ, in order to be put in possession of all those blessings.

Heirs of the covenant (3:25)

Peter then speaks in hopeful tones to his Jewish listeners. He says they are the heirs of the prophets and the covenant about which he had been talking. In line with their status as God's people Israel, Jesus was sent to them first (3:25). Peter casts his appeal in terms of the promise to Abraham, quoting Genesis 22:18 and 26:4. Here the Scripture speaks of a future descendant of Abraham in messianic terms: "Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed" (3:25).

Peter insists that the promise to Abraham—one of their revered fathers—was fulfilled in the Messiah, that is, in Jesus. The prophecy implied that the Jews would be only the *first* to receive the message of salvation. But the prophecy speaks of "all peoples" and not just Jews as being blessed.

How clearly did Peter understand that the gospel would go to *all nations*? It's doubtful that at the time Peter understood the scope of God's international plan. He later had to learn through a vision and by personal experience that God was giving salvation to non-Jews. At best, says Howard Marshall, "The reference to the Gentiles is at this stage a quiet hint" (*Acts*, page 96).

Of course, Peter would not be emphasizing a work to the Gentiles before a Jewish crowd. To do so would not have been taken lightly by his listeners, as Paul later discovered (22:21-22).³⁴

Acts 3:26

Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

[**Unto you first**] The gospel was first to the Jews (John 1:11; Matthew 10:6; Matthew 15:24; Romans 1:16).

[**turning away every one of you from his iniquities**] This was the chief purpose of the coming of Christ and of all gospel preaching (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 1:21).

Clarke: Unto you first, God, having raised up—As you are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant, the first offers of salvation belong to you, and God thus makes them to you. The great mission of Jesus Christ is directed first to you, that you may be saved from your sins. God designs to bless you, but it is by turning each of you away from his iniquities. The salvation promised in the covenant is a salvation from SIN, not from the Romans; and no man can have his sin blotted out who does not turn away from it.

1. We may learn from this that neither political nor ecclesiastical privileges can benefit the soul, merely considered in themselves: a man may have Abraham for his father, according to the flesh; and have Satan for his father, according to the spirit. A man may be a member of the visible Church of Christ, without any title to the Church triumphant. In short, if a man be not turned away from his iniquities,

³⁴ Grace Communion International , Worldwide Church of God, www.wcg.org/lit/bible/acts Bible Study

even the death of Christ profits him nothing. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall Save his people From their Sins.

2. If Christ be the substance and sum of all that the prophets have written, is it not the duty and interest of every Christian, in reading the Scriptures, to search for the testimony they bear to this Christ, and the salvation procured by his death?

JNTC:nYou are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant with ... Avraham. The point is that for this very reason **it is to you first that God** sent Yeshua the Messiah. The Gospel is “to the Jew first” (Ro 1:16, KJV). And it is with the Gospel of Yeshua that the promise of v. 25 is fulfilled; for that promise was made to Avraham and his son Yitzchak; and Yeshua is himself, in a midrashic sense, the promised **seed** who brings the blessing (Ga 3:16&N). The blessing consists in **turning each one of you from your evil ways**. On the one hand, you must turn (v. 19); on the other hand, God does the turning. Compare Lamentations 5:21, “Turn us to you, *Adonai* and we shall be turned”; and see Paragraph 2 of 2:22–23 above. Unlike more self-defensive audiences today, the people do not seem to object to being told that their **ways** are **evil**; apparently they accept this assessment of themselves and continue listening to Kefa and Yochanan (4:1).³⁵

Peter noted that the covenant promised to Abraham applied to **all the families of the earth**. The servant Messiah was for all, only being sent to Israel “first” (v. 26). The worldwide mission was already implicit in Peter's message; only later, however, would he fully assimilate its meaning (see 10:1–11:18).

[Iniquities] poneria, Greek 4189, *pon-ay-ree'-ah*; from Greek 4190 (poneros); *depravity*, i.e. (special) *malice*; plural (concrete) *plots, sins* :- iniquity, wickedness.

³⁵Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 3:25). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Notes on Restitution – There may be a relationship between Restitution of All Things and the Year of Jubilee:

21] “Until” - until the times of the Restitution of all things.

Lev 25:8-55; 27:16-25.

(Cf. Num 36:4, daughters of Zelophehad.)

The concept of a Sabbatical year, a week of years (i.e., 7 years) like a decade being 10 years (Lev 25:1-7). The Babylonian captivity was due to the failure to keep the Sabbatical year (2 Chr 36:21). For 490 years Israel failed to keep Lev 25! Thus, God used Nebuchadnezzar as his mechanism of judgment and took them slaves into captivity for 70 years to the very day.

The Jubilee Year

Lev 25:8-55. When is the Jubilee Year? The rabbis can't agree on the formulas to figure it out!

Restitution of all things:

- 1) All debtors forgiven;
- 2) Slaves released from bondage;
- 3) Liberty to all captives;
- 4) All families reunited;
- 5) Land reverts to original owners.

Lev 25:47-55 discusses the role of the Goel, and the kinsmanredeemer.

Num 36:3-6 - the daughters of Zelophehad. The Jubilee Year issue triggers the problem with the inheritance of the land. This exception to the rule, is present in Jesus' lineage through Mary.

The Jubilee year is very important to God. The Sabbatical year was so important the God put Israel into slavery for 70 years for not obeying the law. God cares about this piece of land as it is all tied up in the covenant with Abraham.

(*Yobel*) a ram's horn. It became synonym for the year and for this special kind of trumpet.

The Trump - Isa 27:12-13; Joel 2:15-16; Isa 26:19-21; 1 Thess 4; 1 Cor 15. There is going to be a trumpet which is going to cause some interesting things to occur. There is a major commandment upon Israel by God that relates to trumpets, but it is a different word, the *Yobel*, the Jubilee trumpet.

The Jubilee year starts in the seventh month. The Ecclesiastical year starts with Passover (the 14th of Nisan is Passover, a Mosaic Feast), and Nisan is the first month. In the 7th month of the Ecclesiastical year, Tishri is the 1st month of the Civil year.

The Sabbatical year would be the first of Tishri, Rosh HaShannah. After the 7th Sabbatical year (7 X 7 years) plus one, is the Jubilee year. The Jubilee year would begin on Yom Kippur, the 10th of Tishri.

Ecclesiastical Year	Civil Year
1. Nisan	1. Tishri
2. Iyar	2. Heshvan
3. Sivan	3. Kislev
4. Tammuz	4. Tevet
5. Av	5. Shevat
6. Elul	6. Adar
7. Tishri	7. Nisan
8. Heshvan	8. Iyar
9. Kislev	9. Sivan
10. Tevet	10. Tammuz
11. Shevat	11. Av
12. Adar	12. Elul

Why does the Jubilee Year start on Yom Kippur, 10 days AFTER the beginning of the year?

The Sabbatical year and the Jubilee year make no sense until the Israelites are in the land, ie. Joshua. For a complete study of the book of Joshua, do see our Expository Commentary series on *Joshua*. The Jubilee year is tied to Joshua's conquest of the land.

Jesus opened his ministry in Luke 4:16-20, quoting from Isa 61:1-2. Note that Jesus stopped at a comma. Jesus uses some examples that get the crowd upset, Luke 4:25-27. He is teaching them the doctrine of election. Each example He uses is a Gentile. It appears that this was about the 29th or 30th Jubilee (roughly about 1500 years since Joshua conquered Canaan).

We are about to enter the 70th Jubilee. Is this significant prophetically? 40 is the number of testing, the Church has been on the earth approximately 40 Jubilee years. 70 is the number of fulfillment, Jesus opened his ministry at about the 30th Jubilee year. That puts us about the 70th Jubilee year! However, we are not sure which year will be the Jubilee year. The rabbis have lost count as to which Jubilee we are at. You will see charts, none of them agree, as to when the Jubilee year is. It becomes very technical with part of the problem being do you count the 50th year as part of the next seven.... In any case we should be approaching the 70th Jubilee...

See Rom 8:19-22. There is more to Redemption than just you and I. The Redemption is what the Bible is all about. The whole creation was subject to the curse and the bondage of corruption, so it is not surprising that God would link a prophetic horizon to the land.

