ACTS 3

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS^4	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Lame Man Healed at the Gate of the Temple	A Lame Man Healed	Healing at the Beautiful Gate	A Lame Beggar is Healed	The Cure of a Lame Man
3:1-10	3:1-10	3:1-10	3:1-10	3:1-10
Peter's Speech in Solomon's Portico	Preaching in Solomon's Portico	Peter's Preaching	Peter's Message in the Temple	Peter's Address to the People
3:11-26	3:11-26	3:11-16	3:11-16	3:11-16
		3:17-26	3:17-26	3:17-24
				3:25-26

READING CYCLE THREE (see "Bible Interpretation Seminar")
FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT PARAGRAPH LEVEL

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects (reading cycle #3). Compare your subject divisions with the five translations above. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

In Acts 3-5 there is tension in Jerusalem over Jesus' teaching and the Apostle's miracles. The time frame for the first five chapters is about one year.

A. Peter and John heal the lame man, Acts 3:1-4:31 (an example of Acts 2:43)
  1. the healing itself
  2. Peter's second sermon explaining the healing
  3. the reaction and trial (Peter's third sermon, given to the Sanhedrin)
  4. the persecution begins

B. An attempt at communal life, Acts 4:32-5:11
  1. the early unity of believers (an example of Acts 2:43-47)
  2. the problems with Ananias and Sapphira

C. The early church's relations with rabbinical Judaism, Acts 5:12-42
  1. the life of the church
  2. the jealousy of the Sanhedrin
  3. the intercession of an angel
  4. Peter's fourth sermon
  5. the reaction and punishment

TITLES FOR JESUS IN CHAPTERS 3-4

A. Jesus Christ the Nazarene, Acts 3:6; 4:10
B. His Servant Jesus, Acts 3:13,26; 4:27
C. The Holy and Righteous One, 3:14 (cf. Acts 2:27)
D. The Prince of Life, Acts 3:15
E. The Christ, Acts 3:18,20; 4:10 (cf. "Lord and Christ," Acts 2:36)
F. Prophet, Acts 3:22
G. Possibly an allusion to the title "Seed of Abraham," Acts 3:25-26
H. The Cornerstone, Acts 4:11

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ACTS 3:1-10

[1]Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer. [2]And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. [3]When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms. [4]But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!" [5]And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. [6]But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene – walk!" [7]And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. [8]With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. [9]And all the people saw him walking and praising God; [10]and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to *beg* alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

3:1 "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)
  3. with believers on Sunday

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.

The Pharisees (the only surviving sect of Judaism) took official action after the fall of Jerusalem and instituted an oath formula (i.e., the Eighteen Benedictions from the Reform of Judaism at Jamma in the A.D. 70's, which specifically rejected Jesus as the Messiah) for the purpose of restricting membership in the local synagogues. This is when the church solidified its day of worship as Sunday (the day to commemorate Jesus' resurrection; the day Jesus appeared three times to the disciples in the Upper Room).

John is often identified with Peter in Acts (cf. Acts 1:13; 3:1,3,4,11; 4:13,19; 8:14). It is surely possible that the early church in Jerusalem had groups of leaders which represented different perspectives and emphases of the gospel. Possibly Peter and John were more open to Gentile evangelism (cf. Acts 3:8,10), while James (the half-brother of Jesus) was more identified with a conservative Jewish element. All this changed to some extent after the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15.

▣ **"at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer"** This would denote nine hours after sunrise. The Jews (i.e., Pharisees) had traditionally prayed each day at 9 a.m., 12 noon, and 3 p.m. (possibly based on Ps. 55:17). This text refers to the time of the evening sacrifice, which was 3 p.m. (the morning sacrifice was at 9 a.m.). Many people would have been in the temple at this time (cf. Acts 10:30).

3:2 "a man who had been lame from his mother's womb" All of the regular attenders of the temple knew of this man's condition ("was being carried repeatedly" is an IMPERFECT PASSIVE); therefore, there was no chance of a trick being involved in the healing (cf Acts 3:10; 4:22). This was a fulfillment of OT Messianic prophecy (cf. Isa. 35:6). The Jews wanted a sign; Jesus gave them many, now they have another if they only had eyes to see.

Here is the shocking paradox of the sick sitting daily at the house of God. As a matter of fact, there was even a prohibition against these kinds of people actively participating in worship as well as serving as priests (cf. Lev. 21:16-24). The gospel offers a new day. Even an Ethiopian (no race barriers) eunuch (no physical barriers) is welcome in the new kingdom (cf. Acts 8:26-40).

▣ **"the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful"** The exact location of this gate is uncertain. It was possibly the Nicanor Gate which was made of Corinthian brass (Flavius Josephus, *Antiq*. 15.11.3; *Wars* 5.5.3). It led from the Court of the Gentiles to the Court of the Women. It was on the eastern side of the temple, facing the Mount of Olives, close to Solomon's Portico.

▣ **"to beg alms of those who were entering"** Almsgiving, or giving to the poor, was a required part of the Jewish faith (cf. Matt. 6:1-4; Luke 11:41; 12:33; Acts 10:2,4,31; 24:17). Usually money was collected weekly in the local synagogues and then food distributed, but apparently some begged daily in the temple area itself.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ALMSGIVING

3:3 The man's motive was originally only monetary (cf. Acts 3:5).

3:4 "fixed his gaze on" See note at Acts 1:10.

▣ **"look at us"** They wanted his undivided attention (*blepō* is in an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE form).

3:5 The Apostles were not monetarily wealthy men, but they had access to the spiritual resources of God (cf. Acts 3:6).

3:6 "In the name of Jesus Christ" "Name" is a Hebrew idiom which speaks of one's character (cf. Luke 9:48,49; 10:17; 21:12,17; 24:47). This must have been shocking to this man. Jesus was a recently condemned and crucified criminal, whom this stranger (i.e,. Peter) was calling "the Messiah" (i.e., "The Christ," which is the Greek translation).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NAME OF THE LORD

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRIST JESUS AS LORD

▣ **"The Nazarene"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: JESUS THE NAZARENE

▣ **"walk"** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Peter and John, like Jesus, used a chance encounter to demonstrate God's love and power and also to confirm the gospel message (cf. Acts 3:9). This healing drew the attention of the Jewish worshipers (cf. Acts 3:12ff).

3:7 This is an eyewitness account of several related events. Someone who was there told Luke about this in vivid, detailed terms.

▣ **"immediately"** This is the Greek term *parachrēma*. Luke uses it ten times in his Gospel and six times in Acts (cf. Acts 3:7; 5:10; 12:23; 13:11; 16:26,33). It is used only twice in Matthew and nowhere else in the NT. It is used several times in the Septuagint. Luke uses idioms and terms from this Greek translation of the Hebrew OT often. He must have known the OT well, possibly from his contact with the Apostle Paul or involvement in Christian catechism with new believers.

3:8 "With a leap he stood upright" This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE (cf. Acts 3:9). This man began walking all around this section of the temple. What an opportunity to share the Good News!

3:10 They knew this man (IMPERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE, they began to recognize him). He was no stranger or visitor. They had seen him at the gate day after day, and passed by! However, Jesus' representatives did not just pass by, they acted in Pentecostal power!

▣ **"they were filled"** Luke uses this term often (see full note at Acts 5:17). Humans can be "filled" with many things (i.e., characterized by):
  1. the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:15,41,67; Acts 2:4; 4:8,31; 9:17; 13:9
  2. rage, Luke 4:28; 6:11
  3. fear, Luke 5:26
  4. wonder and amazement, Acts 3:10
  5. jealousy, Acts 5:17; 13:45
  6. confusion, Acts 19:29

Peter and John wanted these who were amazed (he got their attention) to be filled with the gospel! See full note at Acts 5:17.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FILLED

▣ **"wonder and amazement"** These things are also common in Luke's writings.
  1. wonder, *thambos*, Luke 3:6; 5:9; Acts 3:10 and *ekthambos* in Acts 3:11
  2. amazement
     a. *ekstasis*, Luke 5:26; Acts 3:10; 10:10; 11:5; 22:17
     b. *existēmi*, Luke 2:47; 8:56; 24:22; Acts 2:7,12; 8:9,11; 9:21; 10:45; 12:16

God's love and acts always cause amazement (these Greek words were used in the Septuagint for fear and awe of God, cf. Gen. 15:12; Exod. 23:27; Deut. 28:28).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ACTS 3:11-16

[11]While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. [12]But when Peter saw *this*, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? [13]The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, *the one* whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. [14]But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, [15]but put to death the Prince of life, *the one* whom God raised from the dead, *a fact* to which we are witnesses. [16]And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all."

3:11 "while he was clinging to Peter" This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. I would imagine he was holding on to Peter as Mary Magdalene held on to Jesus in the garden (cf. John 20:16-17).

▣ **"the portico of Solomon"** This was a long covered area along the eastern side of the court of the Gentiles (cf. Josephus' *Antiq*. 20.9.7). The roof was supported by many columns. It got its name from the fact that the old foundations of Solomon's temple were located in the same general area. Jesus taught there often (cf. John 10:23).

3:12 "when Peter saw *this*" They saw the amazement and curiosity of the crowd and took advantage (cf. Col. 4:3; 2 Tim. 4:2) of the opportunity to share the gospel (i.e., the second sermon of the new church).

▣ **"Men of Israel"** Peter called them this in Acts 2:22. Peter is still addressing Jews.

▣ **"why. . .why"** Peter asked why they were surprised by a miraculous healing. Had not Jesus performed these kinds of miracles especially during the last week of His life?

Also, why did they look at Peter and John so admiringly, as if they did it? This was a sign of the trustworthiness of the gospel and the power of the name of the resurrected Messiah.

The Spirit performed this miracle for several reasons.
  1. to confirm the leadership of Peter and John
  2. to help a needy man
  3. to witness to the Jews at the temple

3:13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" This shows that Jesus' ministry and the gospel were vitally connected to the Covenant God and Covenant people of the Old Testament (cf. Exod. 3:6,15; Luke 20:37).

Christianity must be characterized as the true fulfillment of Judaism (cf. Matt. 5:17-19). Many Jews would see it as a perversion, but NT writers saw it as a fulfillment. The followers of Jesus are the promised fruition of the "new covenant" of Jer. 31:31-34 (cf. Gal. 6:16). Israel did not complete her missionary task of being a kingdom of priests for the world (cf. Exod. 19:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6). The church has been given the mandate (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 1:8). God's goal is the restoration of His image in mankind, so that His initial purpose of fellowship can be accomplished. If there is only one God (i.e., monotheism), then there cannot be a special people, only servants to serve God's universal purposes with all humanity.

SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT PROMISES TO THE PATRIARCHS

SPECIAL TOPIC: MONOTHEISM

SPECIAL TOPIC: YHWH'S ETERNAL REDEMPTIVE PLAN

▣ **"has glorified"** This term can be understood in several ways.
  1. the immediate context to the healing of the lame man in His name
  2. the larger context of Peter's sermon to Jesus being resurrected and thereby glorified
  3. the OT context to Jesus as the coming Messiah
  4. in John's Gospel this term is always used by Jesus Himself for His crucifixion (cf. Acts 7:39; 12:10,23; 13:31-32; 16:14; 17:1)

SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY (OT)

▣ **"His servant"** The term "servant" (*pais* used regularly in the LXX)
  1. an honorific title in the OT used for Jacob, Moses, Joshua, and David (cf. Psalm 105; Luke 1:69)
  2. in the Servant Songs of Isaiah (i.e., Isa. 42:1-5; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12)
  3. the nation of Israel (cf. Acts 41:8-9; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1,21; also LXX seen in Luke 1:54)
  4. God's Messiah (cf. Acts 42:1; 52:13; 53:11)
  5. *Pais* is used of Jesus as the Servant/Messiah in Acts 3:13,26; 4:27,30

There is not a clear distinction between the corporate and individual aspect, especially in the last Song (i.e., Isa. 52:13-53:12). In context it cannot refer to Israel.
  1. the nation cannot be the innocent one who brings redemption because the nation deserves the judgment (cf. Isa. 41:18-22; 53:8d)
  2. the Septuagint changes "you" in Isa. 52:14 to "Him" (also in Acts 3:15). The Jewish translators before Jesus' birth (possibly 250-150 B.C.) saw this text as Messianic and individual.

SPECIAL TOPIC: MY SERVANT

▣ **"Jesus"** When the name Jesus is used by itself, it usually emphasizes His humanness (cf. Acts 3:6).

▣ **"whom you delivered and disowned"** The "you" (PLURAL is emphatic! It was not only the Jewish leaders who were responsible for Jesus' death (cf. Acts 3:17; 2:23). Peter makes a specific reference to the crowd's responses before Pilate (cf. Luke 23:18-25). It is possible some of these may have been there, but Peter addresses this crowd as if they were responsible as a group (cf. Acts 3:15). God's chosen people (Jews) "delivered up" and "disowned" God's Messiah (cf. John 1:11).

▣ **"Pilate"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: PONTIUS PILATE

▣ **"when he had decided to release Him"** This refers to Luke 23:4,14,22, where Pilate says three times, "I find no guilt in Him," as well as the three times he tried to release Him (cf. Luke 23:16,20,22). Many scholars believe Acts was written to show that Roman officials did not find Jesus treasonous. Pilate was forced by the Jewish leadership to do that which he was reluctant to do himself.

3:14 "the Holy and Righteous One" This states clearly the innocence and sinlessness of Jesus. The trial was a farce. This is another OT Messianic title (cf. Isa. 53:11; Acts 7:52; 22:14; John 6:69). The demons called Jesus the Holy One of God in Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE HOLY ONE

SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS

▣ **"and asked for a murderer"** It is so ironic that Barabbas was guilty of the exact crime they accused Jesus of—sedition (cf. Luke 23:18-19,23-25).

3:15 "but put to death" It is surprising that in the many texts which mention Jesus' death (cf. Acts 2:23,36; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 7:52; 10:39; 13:28) in Acts very little is developed along the lines of Gen. 3:15 or Isaiah 53.

There is also variety in how His death is phrased.
  1. nailed to a cross – Acts 2:23
  2. crucified – Acts 2:36; 4:10
  3. put to death – Acts 3:15; 13:28
  4. put to death by hanging Him on a cross – Acts 5:30; 10:39
  5. killed – Acts 7:52

The resurrection is emphasized but not substitutionary atonement.

NASB, NKJV, NJB, Peshitta, REB	**"the Prince of life"**
NKJV, NIV	**"the Author of life"**
TEV	**"the one who leads to life"**
Moffatt	**"the pioneer of life"**

This title reflects one of the three possible meanings of *archēgos*:
  1. the author or originator (cf. NRSV, Heb. 2:10; 12:2)
  2. the agent of creation (cf. John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2)
  3. the one who goes first, a trail blazer (cf. TEV, NEB, Moffatt, Acts. 5:31)

The term is an obvious contrast to "murderer" (Acts 3:14). See Special Topic below.

SPECIAL TOPIC: AUTHOR/LEADER (*archēgos*)

▣ **"God raised from the dead"** Usually in the NT it is the Father who raises the Son from the dead as a sign of His approval of Jesus' life, teachings, and substitutionary death. The NT also affirms that all three persons of the Trinity were active in Jesus' resurrection:
  1. the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:11)
  2. the Son (cf. John 2:19-22; 10:17-18)
  3. the Father (cf. Acts 2:24,32; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30,33,34,37; 17:31; Rom. 6:4,9)

This is a major theological aspect of the *Kerygma*. If this is not true, all else is not true (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12-19).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY

SPECIAL TOPIC: RESURRECTION

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE *KERYGMA* OF THE EARLY CHURCH

▣ **"a *fact* to which we are witnesses"** This is either
  1. an emphasis on primary source material; these hearers were eyewitnesses (cf. Acts 2:22)
  2. a reference to the Apostles and disciples in the Upper Room (cf. Acts 1:22; 2:32)

In context number 2 seems best.

SPECIAL TOPIC: WITNESSES TO JESUS

3:16 "on the basis of faith" This same phrase occurs in Phil. 3:9. The Greek term "faith" (*pistis*) can be translated into English as "faith," "trust," or "believe." It is humanity's conditional response to God's unconditional grace (cf. Eph. 2:8-9). It is basically the believer's trusting in the trustworthiness of God (i.e., His character, His promises, His Messiah) or faithing God's faithfulness! It is difficult in the healing accounts of the Gospels and Acts to document the spiritual (i.e., covenantal) side of the event. Those healed are not always "saved" (cf. John 5). See Special Topic below.

The Greek PREPOSITION used in this phrase, *eis* (cf. Phil. 3:9), is rare when used of one's faith in Christ (similar expression in Acts 2:38). Usually one of several PREPOSITIONS is used.
  1. *dia* – Rom. 3:22,25,30; Gal. 2:16; 3:14,26; Eph. 2:8; 3:12,17; Col. 2:12; 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 1:5
  2. *ek* – Rom. 9:30; 14:23; Gal. 3:8,9,22; 5:5; James 2:24
  3. *en* –1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; 1 Tim. 3:13
  4. both *eis* and *ek* are used in Rom. 1:17

There was no standardized phrase to express "saving faith."

SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH, BELIEVE, OR TRUST

▣ The second part of v. 16 is stted in synonymous parallelism, so typical of Hebrew literature.
  1. a. "the name of Jesus" (see SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NAME OF THE LORD)
     b. "has strengthened this man"
     c. "whom you see and know
  2. a. "faiththat comes through Him"
     b. "has given him this perfect health"
     c. "in the presence of you all"

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ACTS 3:17-26

[17]"And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. [18]But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. [19]Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; [20]and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, [21]whom heaven must receive *until* the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. [22]Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. [23]And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' [24]And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and *his* successors onward, also announced these days. [25] 'It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' [26]For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one *of you* from your wicked ways."

3:17 "I know that you acted in ignorance" This reflects Jesus' words from the cross (cf. Luke 23:34). However, even in their ignorance, the people were still spiritually responsible! In some ways this excuse was a way to help people accept their own responsibility (cf. Acts 13:27; 17:30; 26:9; 1 Cor. 2:8). For a good discussion of the concept see Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 2nd ed., pp. 583-585.

▣ **"just as you rulers did also"** Luke often makes a distinction between the people and their rulers (cf. Luke 7:29-30; 23:35; Acts 13:27; 14:5). The real issue in trying to do this may be the mutual responsibility of both groups. Often it is asserted that Jesus does not condemn Jews as a whole, but their illegal (i.e., not of Aaronic descent) leaders. It is surely difficult to know if the cursing of the fig tree (cf. Mark 11:12-14,20-24) and the parable of the unjust vineyard tenants (cf. Luke 20:9-18) are condemnations of Judaism of the first century or only its leaders. Luke asserts it is both!

3:18 "announced beforehand" The gospel was no afterthought with God, but His eternal, purposeful plan (cf. Gen. 3:15; Mark 10:45; Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; Rom. 1:2). The early sermons in Acts (the *kerygma*) present Jesus as the fulfillment of OT promises and prophecies.

There are several aspects of the *Kerygma* (i.e., the major theological aspects of the sermons in Acts) expressed in these verses.
  1. faith in Jesus is essential
  2. Jesus' person and work were prophesied by OT prophets
  3. the Messiah must suffer
  4. they must repent
  5. Jesus is coming again

SPECIAL TOPIC: FOREKNOWLEDGE

▣ **"God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets"** Jesus fulfilled OT prophecy (cf. Acts 3:34, Matt. 5:17-48). I think Jesus Himself showed the two on the road to Emmaus (cf. Luke 24:13-35) the OT prophecies that pertained to His suffering, death, and resurrection. They shared this with the Apostles, who made it part of their preaching (cf. Luke 24:45).

SPECIAL TOPIC: PROPHECY (OT)

▣ **"Christ"** This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word " Messiah," which means Anointed One. This refers to God's special agent whose life and death would inaugurate the new age of righteousness, the new age of the Spirit.

The affirmation that Jesus was/is the Christ/Messiah promised by YHWH becomes a recurrent theme of the preaching of Acts.
  1. Peter – 2:31; 3:18; Acts 5:42; 8:5
  2. Paul – 9:22; 17:3; Acts 18:5,28

SPECIAL TOPIC: MESSIAH

▣ **"suffer"** This was alluded to in several OT texts (cf. Gen. 3:15; Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Zech. 12:10). This aspect of a suffering Messiah is what surprised the Jews (cf. 1 Cor. 1:23). They were expecting a conquering general (cf. Rev. 20:11-16). This suffering Messiah was a recurrent theme of Apostolic sermons in Acts
  1. Paul (cf. Acts 17:3; 26:23)
  2. Peter (cf. Acts 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2:21; 3:18)

SPECIAL TOPIC: A SUFFERING MESSIAH

3:19 "repent and return" The Greek term "repent" means a change of mind. This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE of *metanoeō*. The Hebrew term for repentance means "change of action" ("return" [*emistrephō*] may reflect the Hebrew "turn" *shub*, cf. Num. 10:36; Deut. 30:2,10) in the Septuagint. Repentance is a necessary covenant item in salvation along with faith (cf. Mark 1:15 and Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). Acts mentions it often (cf. Peter – 2:38; 3:19,26 and Paul – 14:15; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). Repentance is indispensable (cf. Luke 13:3 and 2 Peter 3:9). It is basically a willingness to change. It is a both a human volitional act and a gift of God (cf. Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25).

SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE (OT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE (NT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: EASTERN LITERATURE (biblical paradoxes)

▣ **"sins may be wiped away"** This term means "to erase"; "blot out"; or "wipe away" (cf. Col. 2:14; Rev. 3:5; 7:17; 21:4). What a promise! In the ancient world ink was acid and was, therefore, impossible to erase. This is a true miracle of God's grace (cf. Ps. 51:1; 103:11-13; Isa. 1:18; 38:17; 43:25; 44:22; Jer. 31:34; Micah 7:19). When God forgives, God forgets (erases)!

▣ **"times of refreshing"** The Greek term (*anapsuchō, anapsuxis*) basically means "breathing space, relaxation, relief" (Baker, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 63), "refresh by air," or "treat a wound with air" (Kittle, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 9, p. 663). The metaphorical extension is physical or spiritual refreshment or restoration.

In the Septuagint it is used of regaining physical strength after a battle (cf. Exod. 23:12; Jdgs. 15:19; 2 Sam. 16:14) or emotional refreshment as in 1 Sam. 16:23.

Peter's reference seems to be to an OT promise, but this phrase is not used in the OT. For desert people expanse was identified with freedom and joy, while closed in spaces were a sign of distress and trouble. God was going to bring a widening, refreshing period of spiritual activity. This Messianic activity had come in the gospel. The "times of refreshing" had come in Jesus of Nazareth. However, the coming consummation would bring the new age of the Spirit. In this specific context Peter is referring to the Second Coming. This phrase seems to be parallel to "the period of restoration" (Acts 3:21).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE *KERYGMA* OF THE EARLY CHURCH

3:20 "He may send Jesus" This is an AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE, which denotes an element of contingency. The actions of Peter's hearers, in some sense, determined the time of spiritual consummation (cf. F. F. Bruce, *Answers to Questions*, where he links Acts 3:19-21 with Rom. 11:25-27, p. 201).

The juxtaposition of "Jesus" next to "the Christ/the Messiah" seems to imply that Peter is specifically asserting the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. Later in the NT, "Lord," "Jesus," and "Christ" occur often, more as a combined referent to Jesus (i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ) than an emphasis on the title Messiah. This is especially true in predominately Gentile churches.

▣ **"the Christ appointed for you"** This VERB is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. This same term is used of God's fore-choice in Acts 10:41; 22:14; 26:16; Jesus' coming and dying has always been God's eternal redemptive plan (cf. Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 13:29).

In the Septuagint this term reflects a choice, but without the foreknowledge (i.e., for Luke "pro" means before, cf. Exod. 4:13 and Jos. 3:12), which is obvious in this word's usage in Acts. It does convey that sending Jesus was God's choice of blessing and redemption!

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRIST JESUS AS LORD

3:21	
NASB, NKJV, Peshitta	**"whom heaven must receive"**
NRSV	**"who must remain in heaven"**
TEV, NIV	**"He must remain in heaven"**
NJB	**"whom heaven must keep"**

The SUBJECT of this phrase is "heaven"; the OBJECT is "whom" (i.e., Jesus). There are two VERBALS in this phrase. The first is *dei*, from *deō*, which means "it is necessary" or "it is proper." See full note at Acts 1:16.

The second is an AORIST MIDDLE (deponent) INFINITIVE of *dechomai*. Harold K Moulton, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised* says in this context it means "to receive into and retain" (p. 88). You can see how the English translations pick up on the contextual aspect. Luke uses this term more than any other NT writer (13 times in Luke and 8 times in Acts). Words must be defined in light of contextual usage and implication, not etymology. Lexicons (dictionaries) only denote usage. They do not set definition!

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ASCENSION

NASB	**"*until*"**
NKJV, NRSV, TEV, Peshitta, REB	**"until"**
NJB	**"til"**

This word is in the Greek UBS^4 text. I do not know why NASB, 1995 edition, put it in italics, which is the way to show it is not in the Greek text, but supplied for English readers to understand.

In the 1970 edition of NASB, the "the" is in italics and not "until," which is correct.

▣ **"period of restoration of all things"** This refers to recreation (cf. Matt. 17:11; and especially Rom. 8:13-23). The evil of human rebellion in Genesis 3 is nullified and creation is restored; fellowship with God is reestablished. The image of God in mankind, damaged in the fall, has been restored. Fellowship between God and man is restored. The initial purpose of creation is finally fulfilled.

▣ **"about which God spoke by mouth of His holy prophets from ancient times"** Mark's Gospel begins with a quote from Mal. 3:1. Matthew 1:22-23 refers to the prophecy of Isa. 7:14. Luke used this same phrase in Luke 1:70. One aspect of the *Kerygma* (i.e., recurrent theological truths in the sermons in Acts) is that Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection fulfilled OT prophecy (cf. Matt. 5:17-19). Jesus' ministry was not an afterthought or Plan B. It was the predetermined plan of God (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 13:29). All things are working out to the fulfillment of the total restoration of God's will for creation.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE *KERYGMA* OF THE EARLY CHURCH

SPECIAL TOPIC: YHWH'S ETERNAL REDEMPTIVE PLAN

3:22 "Moses said" The title "The Prophet" was used of the coming Messiah (cf. Deut. 18:14-22; esp. 15,18; John 1:21,25). This documentation of Jesus from the Law of Moses (i.e., the most authoritative part of the OT canon for Jews, both Sadducees and Pharisees) would have been very important to these Jewish hearers. Jesus has always been God's plan of redemption (i.e., Gen. 3:15). He came to die (cf. Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21).

SPECIAL TOPIC: MOSES' AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

3:23 This was a serious word of warning. It is an allusion to Deut. 18:19. Rejection of Jesus was, and still is, a serious, eternal matter.

This allusion to Deut. 18:14-22 also has some significant theological insights.
  1. Notice both the individual and corporate aspects. Each individual soul must personally respond to the Messiah. It is not enough to be a part of the corporate body of Israel.
  2. The phrase "utterly destroyed" is an allusion to "holy war." God will prune His own vine (i.e., Israel, cf. John 15; Rom. 9-11). Those who reject "the Prophet" are rejected by God. The issue of salvation is one's faith response to God's Messiah. Family, race, ethics, and meticulous performance of rules are not the new covenant criteria of salvation, but faith in Christ (cf. 1 John 5:12).

3:24 "Samuel" In the Jewish canon he (i.e., 1 Samuel) is considered one of the "Former Prophets," a part of the second division of the Hebrew canon. Samuel was called a prophet in 1 Sam. 3:20 and also a seer (i.e., another term for prophet) in 1 Sam. 9:9; 1 Chr. 29:29.

SPECIAL TOPIC: HEBREW CANON

▣ **"these days"** The "time of refreshing" (Acts 3:20) and "the period of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21) refer to the consummation of the Kingdom of God at the return of Christ, but this phrase refers to the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom, which occurred at the incarnation of Jesus at Bethlehem or at least to the whole period of the latter days, which is the time between Christ's two appearances on planet earth. The OT primarily understood only one coming of the Messiah. His first coming as the "Suffering Servant" (Acts 3:18) was a surprise; His glorious return as military leader and judge was expected.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE KINGDOM OF GOD

SPECIAL TOPIC: THIS AGE AND THE AGE TO COME

3:25 Peter addresses these Jews as the children of Abraham, the covenant people. However, these covenant people must respond in faith and repentance to Jesus and the gospel or they will be rejected (Acts 3:23)!

The NT (new covenant) is focused in a person, not a racial group. In the very call of Abram there was a universal element (cf. Gen. 12:3). The universal offer has come in Christ and is available to all (i.e., Luke wrote primarily to Gentiles. His Gospel and Acts made this invitation repeatedly and specifically).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE GOSPEL

▣ **"sons of"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: "SONS OF. . ." (OT)

▣ **"covenant"** See SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT

▣ **"ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED"** This is a reference to God's promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3. Notice the universal element also in Gen. 22:18. God chose Abraham to choose a people, to choose the world (cf. Gen. 3:15; Exod. 19:5-6; Eph. 2:11-3:13).

SPECIAL TOPIC: YHWH'S ETERNAL REDEMPTIVE PLAN

3:26 "For you first" The Jews, because of their Covenant heritage, have the first opportunity to hear and understand the message of the gospel (cf. Rom. 1:16; 9:5). However, they must respond in the same way as everyone else: repentance, faith, baptism, obedience, and perseverance.

▣ **"raised up His Servant and sent Him"** See note at Acts 2:24 and 3:13.

SPECIAL TOPIC: RESURRECTION

SPECIAL TOPIC: SEND

▣ **"to bless you"** This is what God wants for all mankind (cf. Gen. 12:3). However, He sent Jesus to the lost sheep of the house of Israel first!

▣ **"by turning every one *of you* from your wicked ways"** Salvation involves a change of mind about sin with a resulting change of actions and priorities. This change is evidence of true conversion! Eternal life has observable characteristics!

SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE (OT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE (NT)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What is "the continual"?
2. Why was this healing so powerful"
3. Why was a suffering Messiah so shocking to the Jews?
4. Why does Luke quote Gen. 12:3?
5. Are Jews saved differently from Gentiles?

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