Acts Chapter 3

Introduction to Act 3

The Book of Acts is where we witness how the Holy Spirit empowers the Church to advance the Kingdom of God. In chapter 3, we witness a continuation of the first aspect of the promise, "*you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem*" (Acts 1:8). Earlier in chapter 2, we left the victorious Peter preaching to crowd drawn to the "Upper Room" by the sound of rushing wind and Galileans speaking in over a dozen foreign languages. The result, 3000 souls were baptized into the Kingdom, with minor opposition. In chapters 3-4, opposition to the Gospel begins. In the process another 5000 become believers, in Christ.

Throughout Acts we will see how the Gospel advances through opposition, deception, persecution, politics and demonic attacks. We see the modeling for the Church of how the spiritual opposition to the Gospel will manifest itself to oppose the Good News. This is a "Template" of how to advance the Kingdom, and an illustration of Satan's tactics to stop it.

To this day, Israel has not received the Gospel, but according to scripture Israel will one day receive the Salvation blessings of the New Covenant. This is a promise reiterated in both the Old and New Testaments, the Jewish people will one day turn to Jesus and be converted, but the opposition to the "Church" beings in Acts chapter 3. Jeremiah said the New Covenant will one day come to the houses of Israel and Judah, it would replace the Mosaic Covenant, and it will be better, because it will be on their hearts and their sins will be forgiven. Acts 3, gave Israel a chance to enact it.

Jeremiah 31:31-33
31 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.
33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

At some point in time, namely in the "End Times" Israel will come to know Jesus as Messiah, Jesus actually hinges his return to Israel's acknowledgement of Him as Messiah. Quoting from the Passover Psalm 118:26, Jesus says Jerusalem would not "*See me again*" until they say "*Blessed is he who come in the name of the LORD*". He made Jerusalem's recognition of Him as a contingent on his "Second Coming".

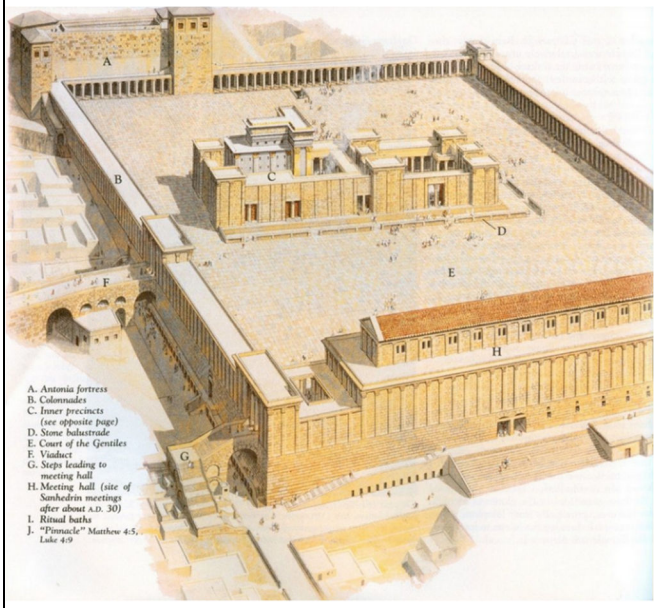
Matthew 23:37-39
37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!
38 See, your house is left to you desolate.
39 For I tell <u>you, you will not see me again</u>, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Paul makes a clear distinction between the *Gentiles*[1] (Nations), *Israel*, we as Gentiles are grafted into the Covenant blessings of Israel, but its at this point in Acts, where Israel rejects the New Covenant. Peter presents to the leadership of the nation, yes, they crucified the Messiah and killed Him, but they could still repent for their actions. It's here in chapters 3 and 4, where the nations choose reject the offer of the New Covenant. This does not end God's plan for the nation. The "Gentiles" are called the "Wild" Olive tree grafted into to the cultivated olive tree, Paul then makes it clear, the same God who cut off the branches, can again restore them to their place original standing. Paul is talking about Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah, and the New Covenant. When Israel returns to Messiah, they will be restored.

Romans 11:24-30
24 For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.
25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**

In Acts, we see how the Holy Spirit deals with this dynamic relationship with the Jewish and Gentile believers as we move through time, remember the Gospel begins in Jerusalem, and expands to the ends of the earth. With the Gospel increasingly accepted by Gentiles but rejected by Jews the tension begins. How do Gentile believers in Jesus integrate with the Jewish faith, is a major focus in Acts.

The Lame Beggar Healed



Acts 3:1-10
1 Now **Peter** and **John** were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the **ninth hour**.
2 And a man **lame from birth** was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple.
3 Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.
4 And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us."
5 And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.
6 But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"
7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.
8 And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.
9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God,
10 and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

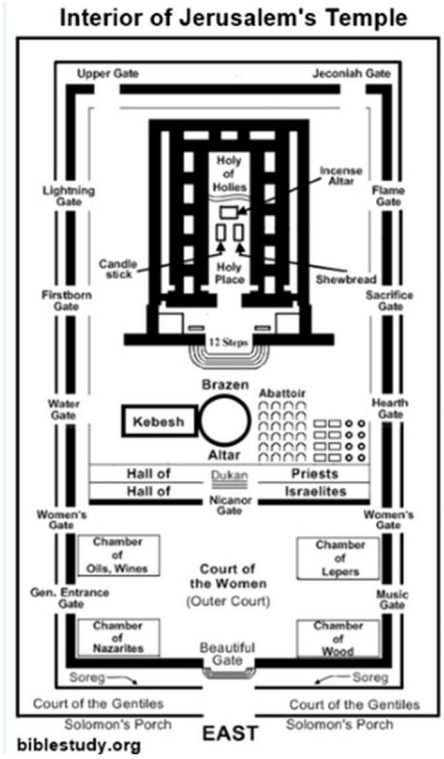
Verse 1 At the Temple

Now the period between Acts 2 and 3 is debated, from weeks to months, since they sold possessions and were being discipled, and more than 3000 were added to the group. Some coming to the Temple and breaking bread, no exact time is given. It would have been enough time to grow in their knowledge and understanding of scripture, chapter 3 was the next phase.

Peter and **John** were leaders in the church, they were both present when Jesus was taken before the High priest (John 18:15-16), John knew him, and Peter was in the court and ran when questioned about his relationship with Jesus. (John 18:25-27). Now Peter was going to stand firm in the face of persecution, the difference, he had the "Power" of the Holy Spirit.

They were witnesses to the injustice of the crucifixion, scripture says for *two witnesses* to be present (Deut 19:15). This is key, for these two witnesses, Peter and John, were present at the rejection of Jesus, and were present High Priest and elders reject the New Covenant (Acts 3-4). After the God demonstrates His affirmation of the New Covenant, with this man's healing. Its a stamp of authority, on

[1] Gentiles is a term which means Nations, translated as Goyim



John and Peter who represent the Church.

Since the "Upper Room" became a base for the early church, there must have been an ongoing interaction with the Jewish leadership in the Temple area with these followers of Jesus. The Temple had courts, the Gentiles had an area, the Woman, Jews males had further privileges, and the Levites and Priesthood had still great access. It was at the gate Beautiful that beggars and sick were placed to raise funds, it was the welfare system of the day. People who wanted to do "good deeds" by giving alms were given the chance. This man placed at the gate would be "Evidence" for God's authority. Much in the same way, Jesus healed the cripple who was lowered from the roof by his friends, (Luke 5:17-25), he was the evidence of Jesus' authority to forgive sin, "*That you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth"*.

It was in the **ninth hour** or 3pm when Peter and John went to the **Temple** to pray, the gate Beautiful was the entrance to the Court of Woman, it was the farthest location a woman could go, but since this man was lame, and from birth, the Beautiful Gate was his limits.

Verse 2-3 The Lame from birth

A man lame from birth, everybody knew this man because he was daily placed at the gate, he made money for himself and his handlers, he was the object of people's compassion and a reminder of human frailty. His conditions from birth, validated God's stamp of approval, because excuses could not be made. The "Beautiful Gate" was central to Temple traffic, his hope like most was monetary, the things of this world. Peter and John would have known to him because he was a fixture, *"day by day attending the temple together"* (Acts 2:46), they must have also had a group around them when they travelled. So**, seeing Peter and John**, he thought it might be a good prospect for **alms**.

Verses 4-5 Peter and John take authority

The **directed gaze** was from the Holy Spirit as they were given "power" to be witnesses of Jesus. God uses the miracles to get attention and establish authority, not only now but also in times past. Moses was given specific signs to demonstrate his authority, turning his staff into a serpent, and having his hand turn leprous and then healed (Exodus 4:1-8). Daniel's three friends were seen walking in the burning furnace; Nebuchadnezzar's opinion was instantly changed (Daniel 3). Through the scripture we see this happen repeatedly. God provides evidence out of mercy, so we can know the event is from Him, and we can trust its source. In this case, the message from Peter to the *Jewish Leadership*, is clear from because the lame man was a miracle, that could not be denied.

Being healed was not on his list, his goal was to collect as much revenue as possible, when they said to him **look at us**, he thought "money", but Peter had something better, it was Salvation and healing through Jesus. He was **expecting to receive something from them**, sometimes God has better plans that we do not know about, from his birth he had no idea how God would one day heal him and use him for a greater purpose.

Verse 6-10 The "Healing"

Jesus gave us authority in the *Great Commission* of Matthew 28:16-20, he has transferred his authority to His Church, and Peter walked in that authority. The world's authority comes by flesh and human strength, summed up in gold and silver. Peter rejected the authority of the flesh by saying "**I have no silver and gold**" vs. "**What I do have I give to you**". Peter had the Spirit of God, which is more valuable then all the silver and gold in the world. We need to remember this when we think the solution is

human power. Human effort and strength are typified by money or Gold and Silver, the question is where do you put your hope?.

In the name of Jesus Christ[2] is the authority of the universe and the earth, since its through Jesus that the world and universe were created. God became man[3], to die for our sins, and take back what Adam lost in the fall (Romans 5:12-21), and now we have received that authority through the His Blood. Peter, demonstrated for the Church and the Jewish leadership the authority of Christ, this is the same authority you and I have as believers in Jesus Christ, we can access the "Power" of the Holy Spirit, for the work of God, in this physical world. The one who created the universe has transferred his authority to us.

> John 1:1-3
> 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
> 2 He was in the beginning with God.
> 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
>
> Philippians 2:5-8
> 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,
> 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,
> 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.
> 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus tells us, we will be able to do things in his Name, we will have direct access because the Holy Spirit is in us, and Jesus has cleared our line of authority directly because of His Blood.

> John 16:26
> 26 In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;

Rise up and walk was the command in the name of Jesus, this man had been lame since birth, and people knew about him since he was being placed by the Gate Beautiful. Peter is healing like Jesus healed, there is no question of the healing because the man is **now leaping** up and **began to walk** and praising God. This sets the "New Covenant" up against the "Old Covenant", here in the Temple the Jewish Leadership, the Priests, Scribes and those in authority must respond to a notable event of healing.

The formerly lame man now **entered the temple**, bringing even more attention, all the people **recognized him** as the lame man. How was the Temple going to respond to this miracle? Everyone wanted to know **what had happened to him**? This is how the world should respond to us, when we are changed by the power of the Gospel, the world should ask, what happened to him. There is physical, emotional, mental and relationship healing in Jesus' name. The Gospel fixes our false perception of the world and reality.

Now's Peter turn to explain what happened to the lame man. We have the same opportunity, we have with our own personal story of how Jesus changed my life.

Peter Preaches to the Temple

> 11 While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in **the portico called Solomon's.**
> 12 And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or **why do you stare** at us, as though **by our own power** or piety we have made him walk?
> 13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of **Pilate**, when he had decided to release him.
> 14 But you denied **the Holy and Righteous One**, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

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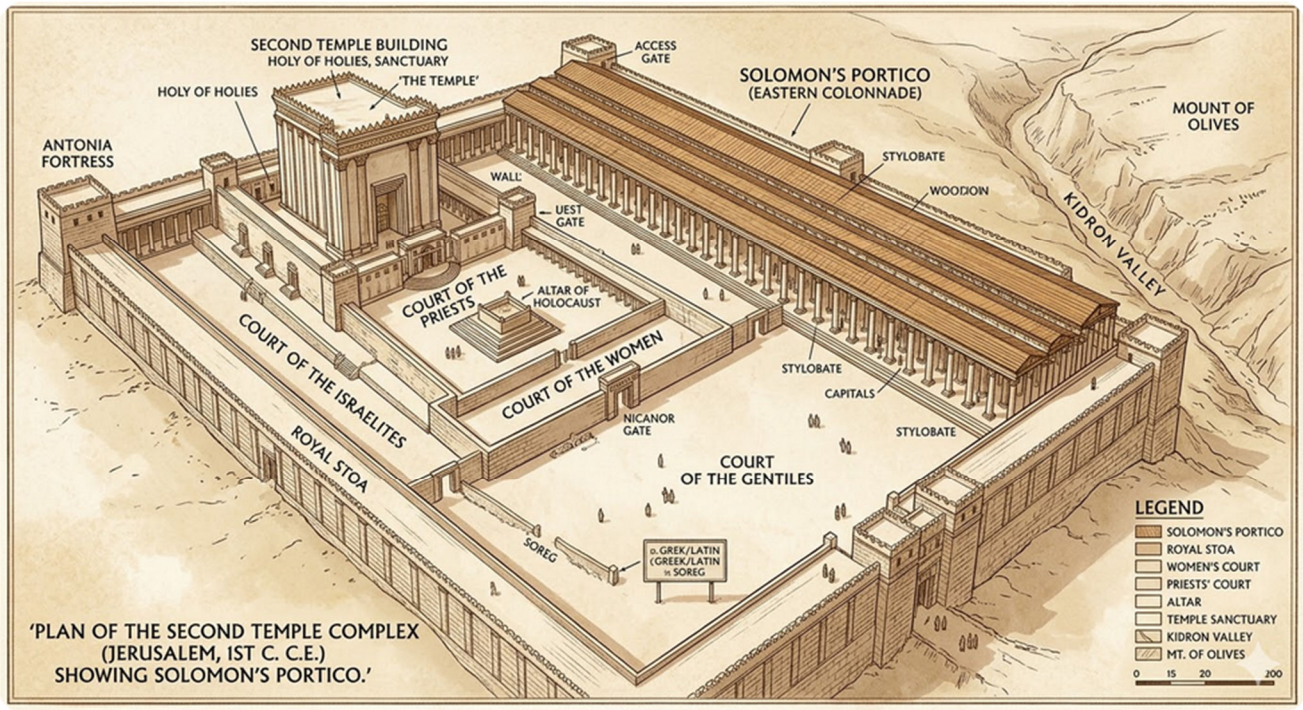
[2] Jesus healed the Paralyzed man to demonstrate His "Authority" Luke 5:24 But that *you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins*"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home."

[3] God became man is demonstrated both in the Old and New Testaments, Isaiah 9:6 says he would be called, "Mighty God", also Zechariah 12:9-10, God is speaking first person and says "They will look on ME, whom they pierced" show Jesus was God incarnate before he entered the world in human form. God became man to die for all our sins.

15 and you killed the **Author of life**, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.
16 And his name—**by faith in his name**—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is **through Jesus** has given the man this **perfect health** in the presence of you all.
17 "And now, brothers, I know that you **acted in ignorance**, as did also **your rulers**.
18 But what **God foretold** by the **mouth of all the prophets**, that his **Christ would suffer**, he thus fulfilled.
19 **Repent** therefore, and turn back, that **your sins may be blotted out**,
20 that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that **he may send the Christ appointed** for you, Jesus,
21 whom heaven must receive **until the time for restoring** all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of **his holy prophets long ago**.
22 **Moses said**, '**The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet** like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.
23 And it shall be that **every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed** from the people.'
24 And **all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him**, also proclaimed these days.
25 You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'
26 God, having raised up his servant, **sent him to you first**, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

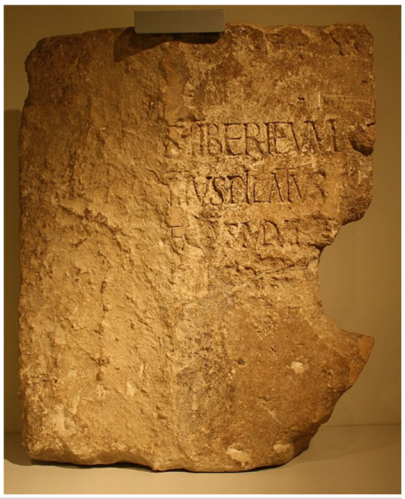


Verse 11-12 The Lame Man

Solomon 's porch, also called the **Portico** , was a large, covered area where people could gather. The miracle healing of the lame man drew a crowd, as many wanted to see the event for themselves. This situation provided Peter with the perfect opportunity to explain God's plan, not only to the leaders but also to all the people present. It is as if God is giving the nation another chance to reconsider their error in killing the Messiah, as seen in Peter's call to repentance in Acts 3:19. Did they truly understand what they had done?

Peter addressed the crowd that had gathered because of the lame man's healing. First, he wanted to ensure that no one attributed credit or glory to himself or John. He asked the obvious question, " **Why do you stare** ?" Peter made it clear that the miracle did not happen through their own power or godliness, but through the power of God and Jesus. This emphasis on giving glory to God is consistent with other biblical figures. For example, even John in heaven had to be restrained twice from worshiping the angel

who guided him (Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9). Similarly, Daniel refused any glory for himself and gave all credit to God for his prophetic revelations (Daniel 2:30). This humility stands in contrast to those who seek personal praise, a trait often exploited by demagogues who mislead others. Peter and John, however, wanted no part of such self-glorification.



*Discovered in **1961** in the ruins of a Roman theater in Caesarea Maritima, this is a piece of carved limestone that served as a dedicatory stone for a building (likely a temple) called a Tiberieum.*

***The Inscription:** It clearly mentions **"[PONTI]US PILATUS"** and his title, **"PRAEFECTUS IUDA[EA]E"** (Prefect of Judea).*

Verse 13-16 The Holy and Righteous One

Peter's courage stands in stark contrast to his earlier fear. Previously, Peter had denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed, terrified in the face of danger (Luke 22:54-62). Now, after witnessing a miraculous healing, he boldly addresses Israel and reminds them of their responsibility in Jesus's crucifixion—even though Pontius Pilate was willing to release Him (Luke 23:20; Acts 3:13-15). Pilate understood that the chief priests acted out of envy when they sought Jesus's death (Mark 15:10).

Peter also wants Israel to understand the true identity of the one they crucified. The Messiah was not merely a man; He was God incarnate, who became human to pay for our sins. Peter refers to Jesus as both the **Holy One** and the **Righteous One**. Each title points to the divine nature of Jesus.

Isa_24:16 From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise, of glory to **the Righteous One**. But I say, "I waste away, I waste away. Woe is me! For the traitors have betrayed, with betrayal the traitors have betrayed."

Isa_53:11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall **the righteous one**, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Isa_43:15 I am the LORD, your **Holy One**, the Creator of Israel, your King."

Isa_45:11 Thus says the LORD, the **Holy One** of Israel, and the one who formed him: "Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands?

Peter also calls Jesus the **Author of Life**, the Greek word is *Archegos* meaning chief, author, captain or prince of life. Peter wants them to understand just what took place over 50-days ago, just who it was that was crucified. Peter and John are stand as "**Witnesses**" against Israel at this point. The lame man is their evidence to the people and nation about this error and sin in killing the Messiah of Israel (Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:25-26).

There is power in the name of **Jesus**, since he has all authority in Heaven and on earth, we can trust in the power of His name, Peter is setting the model for us to follow. The name of Jesus has power both in the physical and spiritual realms. We saw an example of this power when 72 disciples were dispatched on a training mission through Israel. When they returned they reported to Jesus, about the power of His name. This was before the Holy Spirit came upon the Church in the Upper Room.

Peter also refers to Jesus as the **Author of Life** , using the Greek term *Archegos* . This word can mean chief, originator, leader, or captain, and is used elsewhere in the New Testament to describe someone who initiates or leads the way (see Hebrews 2:10, where Jesus is called the "author" or "pioneer" of salvation). Peter's choice of "Archegos" emphasizes Jesus as the source and leader of all life, underscoring the gravity of crucifying Him. Having established Jesus as the Author of Life, Peter now uses the healing of the lame man as evidence for his claim. The miracle stands as clear proof to the people and the nation, and Peter and John serve as " **Witnesses** " against Israel at this point. The healed man is their testimony, showing the serious error and sin in putting the Messiah to death (see Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:25-26).

Luke 10:17-20
17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your

name!"
18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.
19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.
20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

When you operate in through the "**Faith in his name**", you are accessing His authority, the realms are subject to the name of Jesus. Think about when someone tells you to use their name, you get special access because the person is giving you their authority. The owner and creator of the Universe and Life has given you authority to use His name. Peter is demonstrating this point for us in Acts 3. Jesus name made this man whole, Peter exercising the authority and permission of Jesus brought healing on this man, but Peter want the listeners to know its Jesus and not them.

Verse 17-18 The Messiah Would Suffer

Why did the leaders of reject and crucify Jesus, Peter tells them they, **acted in ignorance**, meaning they along with leaders did not have knowledge. They did not understand God's plan, that's why they killed the Messiah, even though **the prophets** literally says they will kill the Messiah, they did not know. The prophets in the Old Testament, the Jewish Bible, clearly taught when the Messiah (**Christ**) comes he would **suffer** and die for the sins of the world. Peter is trying to get his audience to understand, their lack of knowledge of God's plan caused them to commit the sin.

Daniel 9:26
26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Isaiah 52:13-14
13 Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.
14 As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

Not understanding the "Two" portraits of Messiah is one of the major stumbling blocks of Israel to this day. The same Messiah/Christ would first come and suffer at the hands of man, die for the sins of humanity, and then return in glory and power to rule over humanity.

Verse 19-21 Christ Return

This is important testimony to Israel, what can Israel do? They killed the Messiah, what do they need to do now? Peter tells them, "Repent", they need to understand they killed Jesus the Messiah, the must confess this sin, "**your sins may be blotted out".** God will forgive and restore the nation, Peter is giving the leadership a "Second" chance, to accept the Messiah. What would happen then?

If the nation repents and accepts Jesus, then, **he may send the Christ appointed,** Jesus has said he will not return until the say "*blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*" (Matthew 23:39).

Peter further explains, Jesus will remain in Heaven until, "**until the time for restoring",** meaning the Second Coming when Jesus returns to restore all things. We find the focus of the Kingdom is a continual topic of Apostles, it's the "End Game", it's the objective of the nation obtained through Jesus the Messiah.

Matthew 19:28-30
28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his

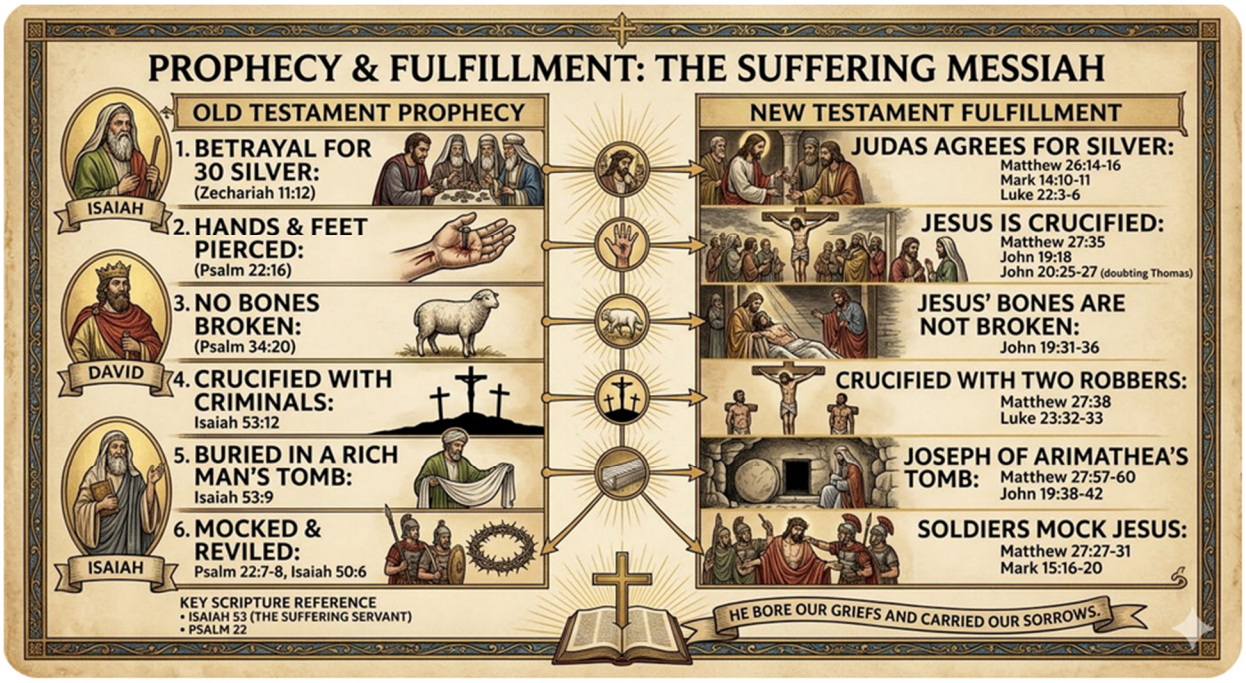
glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.
30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Verse 22-26 Israel is without excuse

What if Israel does not repent and turn to Jesus? Peter quotes from Moses, about a coming prophet like Moses, referring to Jesus. Just Moses brought the Mosaic Covenant, Jesus brought the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31), this would replace the Mosaic Covenant. Peter says Israel rejection of him will be on their own heads. "**every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed",** Peter is saying boldly, Israel has the choice to repent and accept Jesus or face the consequences of their choice.

> Deuteronomy 18:18-19 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.19 And <u>whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak</u> in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Peter clearly shows that his message is not anything new, its what the prophets have said from the beginning, "**all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him"** Using God's Word as his prooftext, Peter is showing his audience the veracity of the prophets. Jesus fulfilled the words of the prophets in His First Coming. God knew what would happen, how the nation would reject the Messiah and kill him, but Israel now had a choice, they could repent and turn to Jesus or face the consequences of rejecting the "That prophet".

All the families: Through the Covenant God made with Abraham and later with Moses, the whole earth will be blessed. Why, because through the nation will come the Messiah, who will redeem Humanity from their sins, and establish the Kingdom of God on Earth.

Sent him to you first: Jesus came to Israel first, the choice was theirs, Peter and John as Witnesses are laying the case before the nation, with the healed "Lame man" right next to them, they are being present with a choice.