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Peter Speaks at the Temple

3: 11-26

31-33 AD

The events of Acts 3-8 transpire with mounting concern on the part of the Jews, and especially the Jewish authorities in Yerushalayim. The rising tension resulted in vigilante action taken against Stephen, and then an authorized effort under Rabbi Sha'ul to disrupt and destroy that new Messianic movement, involving persecution and even death of the believers. The persecution led various believers such as Philip to go to Samaria and bear witness of Yeshua.

Peter speaks at the Temple DIG: How is this situation like the one earlier (to see link click [A1](#) - The Ruach ha-Kodesh Comes at Shavu'ot)? List all the facts about Jesus that Peter mentions here. How does this profile of Jesus compares to the one in 2:22-24? A person's name meant his or her whole character. Hence, what does Peter mean by verse 16? What does Peter say about the people? How would you feel as one of them when you heard verse 15? From Peter's second recorded proclamation, how would you sum up what it means to be saved? In spite of what Peter says about them in verses 13-15, how does he give the people hope in verses 24-26? How are blessing and turning related?

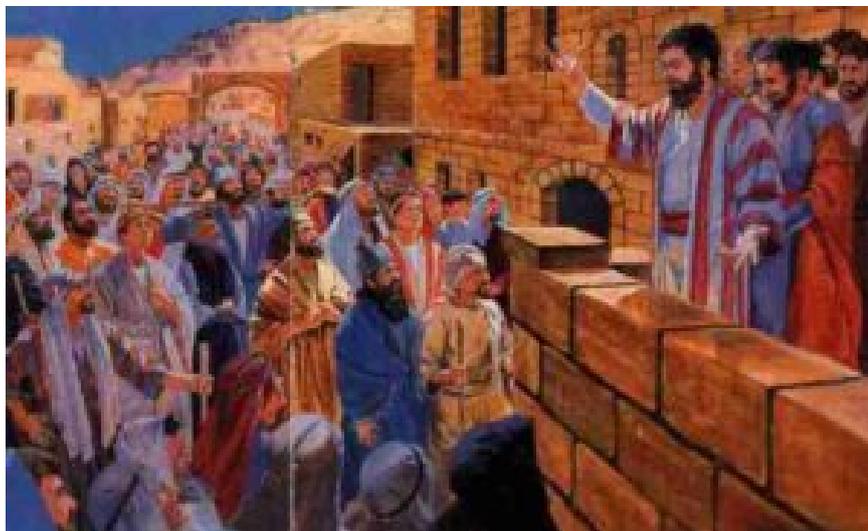
REFLECT: Of all the truths about Yeshua that Peter emphasizes here, which one especially impacts you? Why? When is it proper to come on strong against a person's sin, like Peter did in verses 13-15? How were you saved? If you had to explain the meaning of Messiah just using the TaNaKh, what passages would you use? What does Peter's use of the TaNaKh indicate how valuable it is to your faith? How has repentance and turning to ADONAI brought times of refreshment to you? How can that be used as a means of encouraging others to step over the line from knowledge to faith?

The pattern of incidents on Shavu'ot repeats itself here as the miraculous healing of **the lame beggar** from birth (to see link click [Ap](#) - **Peter Heals a Lamb Beggar**) is followed by a speech by **Peter** to the astonished crowd. In this case **Peter** again begins by dealing with a possible misunderstanding of the situation and then proceeds to explain how the

power of **Yeshua, raised from the dead, had healed him**. Then, seizing on the opportunity, **Peter** pressed home the point that it was **Messiah**, whom **the Jews had killed**, and who **had** been glorified by **ADONAI**, was still active and alive.⁷¹

The healing of the lame beggar drew a crowd around **the three men**. **While the healed beggar was clinging to Peter and John, all the people together came running toward them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade (3:11)**. It was a corridor where our **Lord** had ministered (**John 10:23**) and where the community worshiped (**5:12**). As **He** did for **Peter's** first speech, **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** provided a dramatic introduction for **his** second speech. All of the sudden, **Peter had** huge gathering and **he** grasped the opportunity to explain the significance of what **had** happened. **He** stood with the other **apostles** on **Solomon's Colonnade** in the Temple, a living illustration that the power of **ADONAI** rested on **them**. Of course, this posed a serious threat to the authority of the Sanhedrin (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Lg - The Great Sanhedrin](#)).

When **Peter** saw **the crowd** gathering and the look of **amazement** on **their** faces, **he** was not about to miss the opportunity to witness to **them**. **But** before launching into **his** speech, **he** asked two questions. First, **he** asked: **Men of Isra'el, why are you amazed at this?** A mild rebuke. As the covenant **people**, **they** knew **YHVH** to be a miracle-working **God**. Miracles **had** played an important role in their history. More recently, **Yeshua had** performed miracles to authenticate that **He** was **the Messiah**. That **God** should work another miracle through **His apostles** shouldn't have been a surprise to **them**. Secondly, **Peter** inquired: **Why do you stare at us - as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk (3:12)?** **They** should have known that two Galilean fishermen **had** neither the **power** nor the **godliness** to perform such a miracle on **their** own. But whatever **the crowd** thought, **Peter** wanted to direct **their** attention to the source of the miracle. The greatness of **his** speech was that it was all about **Yeshua**.



The immediate explanation does not come until **3:16** below; but first of all, **Peter** needed to set the scene. **He** took the theme of **his** speech and matched the name of **Yeshua Messiah** to it. **He presented several of the many names of our Lord, all of which have messianic implications.** The Covenant God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His **Servant** Yeshua by His resurrection and by His ascension - the **One** you handed over (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Ln - The Civil Trial](#)) and disowned before Pilate, though he had decided to release Him (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Lq - Jesus Sentenced to Be Crucified](#)). Then **Peter** pressed **his** point against the Jews. **But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One** and asked for a murderer to be granted to you (bar-Abbas, which means *salvation, son of the father*). So, while bar-Abbas was actually guilty, true *salvation*, **God's Servant Yeshua**, was not guilty. Nevertheless, **you killed the Prince of life** (see the commentary on [Isaiah Iy - The Death of the Suffering Servant](#)) - the **One** God raised from the dead! **We are eyewitnesses of it (3:13-15).**

Then after pointing out that **they had** nothing to do with the miracle, and that **God had** sent **them the Messiah** whom **they had rejected**, **Peter** puts together the two concepts together to explain the healing. **Now through faith in the name of Yeshua, His name has strengthened this man whom you see and know.** At some point, we do not know when, **the beggar** believed in **Yeshua** as the **Messiah**. **Indeed, the faith through Yeshua has given this man perfect health in front of you all (3:16).**

But **Peter** did not leave **the people** without hope as **he** drew **his** conclusion: **Now brothers** (fellow Jews), **I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your leaders did (First Corinthians 2:8).** In the commandments of the Torah, there was a difference between

deliberate **sins** and **sins** of **ignorance (Leviticus Chapters 4 and 5; Numbers 15:22-31)**. The person who **sinned** boldly was a rebel against **YHVH** and was guilty of a great **sin** and would suffer the most severe judgment. He would be declared *cherem*, means *to be devoted to destruction*. Such a one was to be “cut off” from the community (**Numbers 15:30-31**), which could mean excommunication and even death. The defiant brazen **sinner** was condemned, but the person who **sinned** unwittingly and without deliberate intent was given the opportunity to **repent** and seek forgiveness.⁷²

But their ignorance did not pardon **their** guilt, for **what God foretold through the mouth of all His prophets** in the TaNaKh - **that His Messiah was to suffer - so He has fulfilled (3:17-18)**. Not giving the specific passages in the TaNaKh, **Peter** 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.⁷³ This was a totally **Jewish** audience, there was **Judaism** with **Yeshua** and **Judaism** without **Him** (the same choice, along with the possibility of rejecting both, faces **Jews** today).

In light of what happened, what should **Isra’el** do now? **Repent** and change **their** minds about **Jesus**, that **He** was not demon possessed, but **He** is the long waited for **Messiah** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ek - It is only by Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons, That This Fellow Drives Out Demons**). If **they** do this, certain results will follow.

ADONAI will forgive your sin: Having announced the crime, presented the evidence, and explained the nature of **their sin**, **Peter** then offered them a pardon. What a strange thing for a prosecuting attorney to become the defense attorney and the pardoning judge! **Peter’s** burden was to encourage **his** fellow **Israelites** to trust in **Messiah** and experience **His** gracious salvation.⁷⁴

What did **he** tell **them** to do? **Repent, therefore, and return so your individual sins might be blotted out (3:19a)**. Ink in the ancient world had no acid content and didn’t “bite” into the paper. It could almost always be wiped off with a damp cloth. **Peter** says that **ADONAI** will wipe away our record of **sin** just like that!⁷⁵ This phrase is used in the book of **Revelation** both of **ADONAI** who **wipes away our tears: God shall wipe away every tear from [our] eyes (Revelation 7:17 and 21:4)**; and of **Messiah** who refuses to **erase the names of overcomers from the Book of Life: The one who overcomes thus will be dressed in white clothes; I will never blot his or her name out of the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5)**.

Repentance, however, involves more than a mere intellectual decision. It is a change of mind that results in a change of behavior. **God's** design is for people to **repent (17:30)**. To accomplish that purpose, **He** uses at least four prompters. First, the knowledge of **YHVH's** revealed truth in the Scriptures should cause people to repent (**Matthew 11:21-24; Luke 16:30-31; John 20:30-31**). Second, our **Lord** uses sorrow for **sin** to lead **people** to **repentance (Second Corinthians 7:9-10)**. Third, **God's** goodness and kindness are to motivate **people** to **repent**. And a final motivation to **repent** is the fear of final judgment (**17:30-31**).⁷⁶

The message of **repentance** was not new to **the Jews**, for John the Immerser had preached **it** as did **Yeshua (Matthew 3:2, 4:17)**. In one sense, **repentance** is a gift from **God (Acts 11:18)**; in another sense, it is the heart's response to the convicting ministry of **the Ruach ha-Kodesh (26:20)**. The person who sincerely **repents** will have little problem putting his **faith in the Savior**.⁷⁷

In the first part of **his** speech **Peter** gave **his** hearers abundant evidence that **Isra'el had** reached the wrong conclusion about **Yeshua Messiah**. Then **he** called on **them** to **repent** and reverse **their** verdict concerning **Yeshua** and place **their faith** in **Him**. To help persuade **them**, **he** gives **them** promised results: **God** will forgive **their sin**, the Kingdom will come, **Messiah** will return, their individual judgment will be avoided, and blessing will be realized.

The Kingdom will come: Nationally, **Isra'el's** national repentance will usher in the Messianic Kingdom. The phrase, the **times of relief**, is a **Jewish** figure of speech meaning the Messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on **Isaiah Cz - The Reign of Immanuel**), **it [will] come from the presence of the Lord** (Greek: *kurios*). **Jesus** will not come bringing the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on **Isaiah Gj - The Restoration of Isra'el**), apart from **Isra'el's repentance (3:19b)**.

The Messiah will return: And God the Father, may send **Yeshua** (see the commentary on **Isaiah Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah**), **the Messiah appointed for you, for Isra'el (3:20)**. **Peter** was actually calling for the national repentance because **Isra'el's** leaders had denied **her Messiah** and condemned **Him** to **die**. Thus, **Peter** declared that **just as the Jewish leadership once led the nation into rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, they must one day lead the nation to accepting Jesus as the Messiah** (see the commentary on **Revelation Ev - The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**). But **the nation** did not repent (and this was certainly no surprise to **YHVH**) so the message of the gospel would eventually also include **the**

Samaritans in Acts 8 and the Gentiles in Acts 10. But, presently, heaven must receive Him (1:9-11), and there He must stay until the time of the restoration of all the things (Matthew 19:28), the Messianic Kingdom, that God spoke about long ago through the mouth of His holy prophets (3:21).

Individual judgment can be avoided: As an example of a prophet through which God spoke, Peter cites Moshe, Isra'el's first and greatest prophet. Moses spoke of the coming Messiah, "Adonai your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your brothers. Hear and obey Him in all that He shall say to you (3:22)." In what way was Moshe different than all the other prophets? It's spelled out in Numbers 12:8. Whereas YHVH spoke to other prophets by dreams and visions, but in the case of Moshe, He spoke face to face. The point here is that Jesus is a prophet like Moses whom God would speak face to face. And just as Moshe commanded, Yeshua is now the One to be obeyed. Moshe warned of the consequences of rejecting the Messiah, "And it shall be that every soul that will not listen to that Prophet shall be completely cut off from the people (3:23)." Again, in this context the Prophet applies to Yeshua. But to those individuals in that generation who rejected the Messiah, judgment was coming (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Mt - The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple on Tisha B'Av in 70 AD](#)). Luke quotes the TaNaKh almost always in a form either corresponding to the LXX or close to it, and not according to the Hebrew Masoretic Text. Here Deuteronomy 18:15 and 19 are quoted close but not exactly corresponding to the LXX.⁷⁸ Not only did Moses prophesy about the coming of Jesus, but, indeed, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel (the last judge and the first prophet) on have announced these days (3:24).

Blessing will be realized: Peter closes on a positive note. In spite of their sin of rejecting the Messiah, they were still the covenant people (Romans 9:3-5). You, you indeed, are the sons of the prophets, in other words, you are the heirs of the promises made by ADONAI through the prophets. Because of God's mercy, grace and love for Isra'el, He did not permanently reject them even when they rejected His Son (Romans 11:2). And also, you are the sons of the covenant that God cut with your fathers, saying to Abraham, "In your seed shall all the [Gentile] families of the earth be blessed (3:25)." This is the foundational promise of the TaNaKh. Once again, Luke quotes Genesis 22:18 close to, but not exactly corresponding to, the LXX.⁷⁹

Therefore, God raised up His Servant (3:13) and sent Him first to you, to bless you all by turning each of you from your wicked ways (3:26). We have already seen this theme of the Jew first in the coming of the Spirit of God to the Messianic community at

Shavu'ot (see [AI - The Ruach ha-Kodesh Comes at Shavu'ot](#)). **He had** just pointed out that the Gentiles would benefit from **Christ's** coming, but there would be a divine order and that would be to **the Jew first**. Rabbi Sha'ul would write: **For I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of god that brings salvation to everyone who believes; first to the Jew, and then to the Gentile (Romans 1:16)**. This sermon is not a re-offer of the Messianic Kingdom, but states the requirements for the establishment of the Kingdom. That is **Isra'el's** national salvation.⁸⁰

As you review this section of **Acts**, you cannot help but be impressed with some practical truths that should encourage all of us in our witnessing for **Christ**.

God is longsuffering with lost sinners. The leaders of **Isra'el** had rejected the ministry of John the Immerser (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ FI - John the Baptist Beheaded](#)) and the ministry of **Yeshua**, and yet **ADONAI** gave **them** another opportunity to **repent** and be saved. **They** had denied and slaughtered **their own Messiah**, and yet **God** patiently held back **His** judgment and sent **His Ruach** to deal with **them**. Today, **God's** people also need patience as we witness to a lost world.

True witness involves the "bad news" of sin and guilt as well as the "Good News" of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. There can be no true faith in **Messiah** unless first there is **repentance** from **sin**. It is the ministry of **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** to convict lost **sinners (John 16:7-11)**, and **He** will do this if we witness faithfully and use **God's** Word correctly.

The way to reach the masses is by helping the individual sinner. **Peter** and **John** won **the crippled beggar**, and **his** transformed life led to the conversion of **two thousand men** (not counting the women), growing to **five thousand (4:4)** from **three thousand** at last count (**2:41**)! The servant of **God** who has no time for personal work with individual **sinners** will not be given many opportunities for ministering to great crowds. Like **Jesus**, **the apostles** took time for individuals.

The best defense of our faith is a changed life. The healed beggar was "exhibit A" in **Peter's** defense of the resurrection of **Yeshua Messiah**. In his evangelistic ministries, the Methodist preacher Samuel Chadwick used to pray for "a Lazarus" in every campaign, some "great sinner" whose conversion would shock the community. He got this idea from **John 12:9-11**. **God** answered his prayers in meeting after meeting as infamous wicked men and women trusted in **Christ** and became witnesses through their changed lives.

Whenever God blesses, Satan shows up to oppose the work and silence the

witnesses, and often the devil uses religious people to do his dirty work. Just as the Sanhedrin (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Lg - The Great Sanhedrin**) opposed the ministry of **Messiah**, it also opposed the ministry of **the apostles**, and **the god of this world (Second Corinthians 4:4)** will oppose you today. The important thing is not that we are comfortable, but that the name of **the Lord** is glorified through the preaching of the gospel.

ADONAI has promised to bless and use His Word, so let's be faithful to witness. **Yeshua** even prayed that our witness would have success: **I pray not on behalf of [the apostles] only, but also for those who believe in Me through their message (John 17:20).** Therefore, we have every reason to be encouraged. There is power in the name of **Jesus**, so, we don't need to be afraid to witness and call **sinners to repent.**

The name of Yeshua Messiah still has power! While we may not perform the same miracles today that were seen in the days of the early Messianic Community/Church, we can still claim the authority of **Jesus Christ** as **He** has commanded us in **His** Word. We can **proclaim repentance for the removal of sins (Luke 24:47)** so that people might believe and have **life through His name (John 20:30).** We can give someone **a cup of cold water in His name (Mark 9:41)**, and we can receive **a child in His name (Matthew 18:5).** These ministries may not seem as spectacular as **healing a cripple**, but they are still important to the work of **God.**

We can **ask in His name** as we **pray (John 14:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-26).** When we **ask the Father** something in **the name of Yeshua Messiah**, it is as though **the Lord Himself** were **asking** it. If we remember this, it will help to keep us from asking for things unworthy of **His** name. Yes, **the name of Jesus Christ** still has authority and power. Let us go forth into the world with **His** mighty **Name.**⁸¹