

Acts 3

How much time lapse there was between Acts two and Acts three we have no way of knowing. It is possible that the events of Acts three actually occurred during some of the events of Acts two. The apostles continued to fulfill Christ's commission to them to preach and once more a miracle occurred which drew a crowd of folk together to hear them. A man lame from birth sat and begged at the Gate called Beautiful and Peter, with John commanded, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (Acts 3:6). And he did and his joy of actually being able to walk caused him to leap up and down and praise God for His grace! This spontaneous commotion attracted many of the temple worshippers and once more Peter had an audience of people to speak to.

Peter immediately informed the people that the lame man's health was not through any power that he and John had, but rather that it was through Jesus. When we compare Peter's sermon in Acts three with his sermon in Acts two there are many similarities. In both, Peter charges his audience with having killed the Christ Whom God had sent them, but God had raised him up and that forgiveness was possible to the penitent. So, although Peter worded it a bit differently, he command is the same thing. They were to "repent and turn again (be baptized, Acts 2:38) that their sins might be blotted out (remission of sins, Acts 2:38), that seasons of refreshing might come to them from the Lord (the gift of the Holy Spirit, Acts 2:38f)" (Acts 3:19). In both sermons Peter affirms the death of Jesus and his resurrection were fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

There were, however, a few items that were different. In Acts two Peter mentions David and the prediction that his son would be made Lord and Christ. In Acts three he mentions Moses and the prophecy he gave that God would raise up a prophet like him to whom all the people were to hear or be utterly cut off from among the people (Acts 3:22f; Deut. 18:15).

One point of particular interest from Peter's sermon are the following words: "that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus, whom the heaven must receive until the time of restoration of all things whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old." Just what does he mean when he speaks of the "restoration of all things" and is the reference to something yet future or something present?

The passage is held by Premillennialists to be future. They interpret it to mean Christ will remain in heaven until the time for the restoration of all things (to them, an earthly 1,000 year reign of Christ). Their view we must reject for two reasons: there is no promise of an earthly 1000 year reign of Christ and the "time of restoration of all things" is now taking place. The time of restoration of all things is synonymous with the prophet like Moses being "raised up." All the prophets from Samuel onward have spoken of these days (Acts 3:24).

Then Peter said, "Ye are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers..." (Acts 3:25). A son is an heir. When Peter said the Jews were "sons of the prophets," he was saying they were heirs of the promises which had been made through the prophets. And what were those promises? "And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Acts 3:25). Then Peter adds: "Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities" (Acts 3:26).

So, we can sum up the passage in this manner:

1. Jesus is to remain in heaven until the times of restoration of all things (Acts 3:21).
2. God has spoken of these days by the mouths of all His prophets (Acts 3:21).
3. Moses, as one of those prophets, foreshadowed that during those days he would raise up a prophet like unto him, which he has done (Acts 3:22).
4. Not only Moses, but all the prophets have also spoken of these "days of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:24).
5. We are the sons (heirs) of those prophets, we can now inherit the promises made through them (Acts 3:25).
6. That heritage is the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 3:26).

The "times of restoration of all things" began on the day of Pentecost when men were first told how to be free from their sins. It continues today as the gospel message of repentance and remission of sins is still being preached in his name and offered to all men. The times of restoration of all things will continue until the Lord shall come again to

judge the world, welcome the redeemed to the Celestial City and banish the wicked to hell.

"The times of restoration of all things" are now. For nearly 2,000 years men have been and are continuing to be restored to fellowship with God they lost when man sinned in the garden of Eden; for God, through His son Jesus, has removed the barrier of sin!

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