

## Session 13 Repentance, Refreshing, and Restitution

*Acts: The Book That Explains Everything*

Session 13 | Acts 3:17-26



### Before You Read

**Big idea:** Peter calls Israel to repent concerning the Jesus they rejected. He joins that response to sins blotted out, times of refreshing, Christ's return, and the restitution spoken by the prophets, then presses the appeal from Moses, Samuel, and God's covenant with Abraham.

**How to use this guide:** Read verses 17-21 as one connected appeal and verses 22-26 as its scriptural support. Watch the future words, the Israel-centered language, and the repeated emphasis upon what God had already spoken through the prophets.

#### Five movements to keep watching

- **Ignorance and fulfillment** - Israel acted in ignorance, yet God fulfilled what the prophets had announced concerning Christ's suffering.
- **Repent and turn** - Peter calls his hearers to change their judgment about Jesus and turn back to God.
- **Christ sent again** - Peter looks forward to refreshing, the sending of Jesus Christ, and prophetic restitution.
- **Hear the Prophet** - Moses warned Israel to heed the Prophet whom God would raise up.
- **Israel first** - Peter closes with Israel's prophetic and covenant privilege, responsibility, and priority.

**A simple right-division reminder:** Peter is addressing fellow Israelites as “**children of the prophets, and of the covenant.**” His message concerns what God “**hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.**” Let that prophetic kingdom setting stand before comparing it with the mystery later revealed through Paul.

### Acts 3:17

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

#### What does the passage say?

- Peter turns from direct accusation to a merciful appeal.
- He says the people acted through ignorance.
- Their rulers acted in ignorance as well.
- Peter still addresses the hearers as fellow Israelites.

#### Words to notice

- **Brethren** - Peter speaks to his fellow countrymen. The term does not mean that every hearer was already saved.
- **I wot** - This older English expression means “**I know.**”
- **Through ignorance** - Their lack of understanding explains the condition in which they acted, but it does not erase their guilt.
- **Your rulers** - Peter keeps Israel's leadership as well as the people in view.

#### Cross-references worth marking

- Luke 23:34 - Jesus prayed, “**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.**”
- Acts 13:27 - Jerusalem's rulers fulfilled the prophets in condemning the One they did not know.
- 1 Corinthians 2:8 - The princes of this world would not have crucified the Lord of glory had they known God's wisdom.
- 1 Timothy 1:13 - Paul obtained mercy after acting ignorantly in unbelief, though his conduct was still sinful.

#### Do not miss

- Ignorance can leave room for mercy without becoming innocence.
- Peter does not withdraw the charge that Israel denied and killed the Prince of life; he now shows that repentance is still offered.

## Acts 3:18

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

### What does the passage say?

- God had announced Christ's suffering beforehand.
- He made that announcement through the prophets.
- The suffering of Christ fulfilled the prophetic witness.
- God's fulfillment stands alongside the responsibility described in the previous verses.

### Words to notice

- **But** - Peter now states the divine side of the same event for which he held his hearers responsible.
- **Before had shewed** - God had announced these things in advance.
- **By the mouth of all his prophets** - The prophets give a united witness; Peter need not mean that every prophet recorded the same explicit prediction.

- **He hath so fulfilled** - The cross accomplished what God foretold; it was not an accidental defeat of God's purpose.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 22:1, 16-18 - The psalm foretells Messiah's suffering and the dividing of His garments.
- Isaiah 52:13-53:12 - The Servant suffers, bears sin, dies, and is afterward exalted.
- Luke 24:25-27, 44-46 - The risen Christ explains from the Scriptures that He must suffer before entering His glory.
- Acts 2:23 - God's determinate counsel and human wickedness are both stated concerning the crucifixion.

### Do not miss

- God's foreknowledge and fulfillment do not excuse the people who rejected Christ.
- Peter's order follows the prophetic pattern: Messiah's suffering is fulfilled before the promised glory and restoration.

## 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;*

### What does the passage say?

- Peter commands his hearers to repent and be converted.
- The appeal concerns the blotting out of their sins.
- Peter looks forward to times of refreshing from the Lord's presence.
- The promised refreshing continues into Christ's return and restitution in verses 20-21.

### Words to notice

- **Therefore** - The command rests upon Israel's rejection of Jesus and God's fulfillment of the prophets.
- **Repent ye** - They must change their mind about the Jesus whom they denied and killed.
- **Be converted** - The expression means to turn or turn again, not merely to adopt a religious label.
- **Blotted out** - The picture is of a written charge wiped

from the record.

- **Times of refreshing** - Peter describes promised seasons of relief and renewal coming from the Lord's presence.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Isaiah 43:25; 44:22 - God promises to blot out Israel's transgressions and calls the nation to return to Him.
- Luke 24:47 - Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- Acts 2:38 - Peter's Pentecost appeal likewise joins repentance and remission of sins in an address to Israel.
- Romans 11:25-27 - Paul later connects the taking away of Israel's sins with the Deliverer's coming out of Sion.

### Do not miss

- Repentance is more than regret; Peter demands a changed judgment about Jesus and a corresponding turn.
- Verse 19 should remain joined to "**he shall send Jesus Christ**" and "**restitution of all things**" in the next two verses.
- Peter is presenting a genuine offer to Israel after the cross and resurrection.

## Acts 3:20

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

### What does the passage say?

- God shall send Jesus Christ.
- Jesus had already been preached to Peter's hearers.
- The sending is future from Peter's speaking.
- The statement continues the prophetic sequence begun in verse 19.

### Words to notice

- **He shall send** - God will send the risen and ascended Christ again.
- **Jesus Christ** - Peter names the person who will return; this is not another description of the Holy Spirit's coming.
- **Before was preached unto you** - The KJV emphasizes

that Christ had already been proclaimed specifically to these hearers.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Acts 1:9-11 - The Jesus taken into heaven will come again in like manner.
- Psalm 110:1 - Messiah sits at the LORD's right hand until the appointed time concerning His enemies.
- Matthew 23:39 - Jerusalem will not see Christ again until it says, "**Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**"
- Acts 2:34-36 - Peter has already proclaimed Jesus exalted at God's right hand.

### Do not miss

- Peter is not describing Christ's first coming, which had already occurred, but His return from heaven.
- Christ's return belongs with Israel's repentance and the restoration described in the surrounding verses.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- Heaven receives Jesus Christ for an appointed period.
- His heavenly reception continues "**until**" the times of restitution.
- The restitution concerns the things God spoke through His prophets.
- This prophetic program has been spoken since the world began.

### Words to notice

- **The heaven must receive** - Christ's ascension placed Him in heaven; it did not cancel His promised return.
- **Until** - His present heavenly absence from earth is not permanent.
- **Restitution** - The word means restoration or reestablishment, not monetary repayment.
- **All things, which God hath spoken** - The relative clause defines the scope of the restoration.

- **Since the world began** - Peter is proclaiming openly revealed prophecy, not truth that had been kept secret.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Psalm 110:1 - Messiah remains at the LORD's right hand until His enemies are made His footstool.
- Matthew 17:11 - Jesus says that Elias shall first come and restore all things.
- Acts 1:6-11 - The apostles ask about restoring the kingdom to Israel immediately before Christ ascends.
- Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:5, 9 - Paul's later revelation of the mystery is described as formerly kept secret or hidden.

### Do not miss

- "**Restitution of all things**" does not teach the eventual salvation of every person or fallen being. Peter limits it to what God spoke by the prophets.
- Acts 3:21 supplies a major dispensational marker: Peter proclaims the prophetic program spoken since the world began; Paul later reveals a mystery that had been kept secret.
- Israel's promised kingdom hope remains identifiable and future at this point in Acts.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- Moses promised that the Lord would raise up a Prophet.
- The Prophet would come from among Israel's brethren.
- He would be like Moses in His divinely authorized role.
- Israel must hear Him in everything He says.

### Words to notice

- **For Moses truly said** - Peter supports his appeal from Israel's foundational prophet and lawgiver.
- **A prophet ... like unto me** - Jesus is the promised Prophet of Deuteronomy 18, not merely one prophet among many.
- **Of your brethren** - The promised Prophet arises from Israel.
- **Him shall ye hear** - To hear means to heed and obey,

not merely to perceive the sound of His words.

- **In all things** - Israel does not have permission to select only the sayings it wishes to receive.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Deuteronomy 18:15-19 - Moses promises the Prophet and warns that God will require an account from those who refuse His words.
- John 1:21, 45 - Jewish expectation included **“that prophet,”** and Philip identifies Jesus as the One of whom Moses wrote.
- John 5:45-47 - Jesus says Moses wrote of Him and exposes the inconsistency of claiming Moses while rejecting Christ.
- Acts 7:37 - Stephen later quotes the same promise in his address to Israel.

### Do not miss

- Jesus does not oppose Moses; He is the One to whom Moses directed Israel.
- **“Like unto me”** should be controlled by the text: the Prophet comes from Israel, is raised up by God, speaks with divine authority, and must be obeyed.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- Every person faces responsibility for responding to the Prophet.
- Refusal to hear Him is deliberate disobedience.
- The refusing person will be destroyed from among the people.
- The promised restoration therefore includes judgment as well as blessing.

### Words to notice

- **Every soul** - Each individual must respond within Peter's national appeal to Israel.
- **Will not hear** - The issue is refusal to heed the Messiah's word.
- **That prophet** - The warning concerns Jesus, the Prophet

promised by Moses.

- **Destroyed from among the people** - Covenant descent does not shield a rebel from removal and judgment.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Deuteronomy 18:19 - God says He will require it of the person who will not hearken to the Prophet's words.
- Leviticus 23:29 - A soul refusing the required response on the day of atonement was cut off from among the people.
- John 3:36 - The person refusing the Son does not see life, and God's wrath abides on him.
- Acts 13:40-41 - Paul later warns Jewish hearers not to despise God's work among them.

### Do not miss

- Physical descent from Abraham does not guarantee the individual Israelite's participation in promised blessing.
- The warning balances the offer: the Prophet brings blessing to those who hear and judgment to those who refuse.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- Peter adds the later prophets to Moses' testimony.
- Samuel marks the beginning of the prophetic succession Peter has in view.
- Those who followed Samuel also spoke of these days.
- Israel's present opportunity and future hope rest upon a broad prophetic witness.

### Words to notice

- **Yea** - The word adds confirmation to Moses' witness.
- **From Samuel** - Moses has just been treated separately; Samuel is a recognized starting point for the later prophetic order associated with Israel's kings.
- **Those that follow after** - The testimony continues through the succeeding prophets.
- **As many as have spoken** - Peter refers to the prophets

who addressed these matters, not necessarily to an identical prediction in every prophetic book.

- **These days** - The phrase includes the events Peter is explaining and the prophetic prospects he has just announced.

### Cross-references worth marking

- 1 Samuel 2:10 - Hannah's prophecy anticipates the LORD's King and Anointed before Israel had a monarchy.
- 2 Samuel 7:12-16 - In the era begun with Samuel, God promises David an enduring seed, kingdom, and throne.
- Acts 13:20 - Paul also uses Samuel as a historical boundary at the transition from Israel's judges to its kings.
- Hebrews 11:32 - Samuel is named with the prophets as a representative figure in Israel's history.

### Do not miss

- Peter's message is rooted in Israel's Scriptures, not invented after the resurrection.
- **"These days"** should not be reduced to the few hours surrounding the healing; Peter has included future refreshing, Christ's return, and restitution.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- Peter identifies his hearers as children of the prophets.
- They also belong to the covenant heritage God gave their fathers.
- Peter names Abraham and quotes the promise concerning his seed.
- God's purpose through Abraham's seed reaches all the kindreds of the earth.

### Words to notice

- **Children of the prophets** - Peter's hearers are heirs and intended beneficiaries of the prophetic promises, with responsibility to heed them.
- **The covenant** - Peter's categories remain covenantal and rooted in God's promises to Israel's fathers.
- **Our fathers** - Peter includes himself with his Israelite

audience.

- **In thy seed** - The promised line reaches its goal in Christ.
- **All the kindreds of the earth** - God's covenant purpose through Abraham and Israel extends in blessing beyond Israel.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Genesis 12:1-3 - God promises to make of Abraham a great nation and to bless all families of the earth through him.
- Genesis 22:18 - God promises that all nations will be blessed in Abraham's seed.
- Galatians 3:8, 16 - Paul later identifies the promised seed ultimately as Christ.
- Romans 9:4-5 - The covenants, promises, fathers, and Christ according to the flesh belong to Israel's privileges.

### Do not miss

- Israel's covenant privilege increases its responsibility to receive the Messiah promised in those Scriptures.
- Blessing to the nations through Abraham's seed is prophetic truth. It should not be confused with the later

revelation of Jew and Gentile created as one new man in the Body of Christ.

- Worldwide blessing does not require the disappearance or replacement of Israel; the nations are blessed through the covenant line God established.

## 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.*

### What does the passage say?

- God addressed Israel first through His Son Jesus.
- God raised up and sent Jesus to bless them.
- The blessing turns people away from their iniquities.
- The appeal reaches every individual within the nation.

### Words to notice

- **Unto you first** - Israel has priority in the offer. Peter is speaking in Jerusalem to the covenant people.
- **Raised up his Son Jesus** - God brought forward the promised Prophet; the chapter's resurrection emphasis also gives the phrase a strong resurrection echo.
- **Sent him to bless you** - Jesus' mission fulfills the Abrahamic promise just cited and begins with Israel.
- **In turning away** - Messiah's blessing confronts wickedness; it is not permission to remain in rebellion.

- **Every one of you** - Each hearer is personally responsible within Israel's national priority.

### Cross-references worth marking

- Matthew 10:5-6 - During His earthly ministry Jesus sent the Twelve to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- Luke 24:47 - Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- Acts 13:46 - Paul and Barnabas later say it was necessary for God's word to be spoken first to the Jews.
- Romans 1:16 - Paul describes the gospel of Christ as God's saving power "**to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**"

### Do not miss

- Israel is not incidental to Peter's message. "**Unto you first**" confirms the audience and covenant setting of the whole sermon.
- The blessing is not an automatic guarantee for every Israelite; it works in turning each one from iniquity.
- Acts 3 ends with the offer still open. The response of Israel's rulers begins to unfold in Acts 4.

## Text And Translation Helps

- **Wot** in verse 17 means "**know.**" Peter is expressing knowledge, not uncertainty.
- **Before had shewed** in verse 18 means that God had announced the suffering of Christ beforehand through the prophets.
- **Be converted** in verse 19 means "**turn**" or "**turn again.**" The phrase calls for a response, not merely the receipt of a religious label.
- The KJV's "**when the times of refreshing shall come**" in verse 19 carries the reader toward the promised seasons from the Lord's presence. Many modern versions read "**that times of refreshing may come.**" The following verses define the promised refreshing by Christ's return and prophetic restitution.
- The Textus Receptus wording behind verse 20 is "**which before was preached unto you.**" The principal crit-

ical text reads "**who was appointed for you,**" which explains the wording in many modern versions.

- **Restitution** in verse 21 means restoration or reestablishment. The phrase "**which God hath spoken**" limits "**all things**" to the prophetic promises under discussion.
- **Soul** in verse 23 means a person in this context; Peter is not limiting the warning to an immaterial part of a human being.
- **Kindreds** in verse 25 means families, clans, or lines of descent.
- The Textus Receptus includes "**Jesus**" in verse 26, as the KJV does. The principal critical text omits the name.
- **Son** in verse 26 translates the Greek *pais*, which can mean child, son, or servant according to context. The KJV's "**his Son Jesus**" is to be preserved while the Servant background remains worth noticing.

## Common Ideas To Test

- “Because Israel acted through ignorance, Israel was innocent.”
  - Peter says they acted ignorantly, but he has already charged them with denying and killing the Prince of life. Ignorance opens the way for mercy; it does not remove the need to repent.
- “The times of refreshing describe only an inward spiritual feeling.”
  - Peter joins refreshing to God sending Jesus Christ and to the restitution spoken by the prophets. The context is larger than a private emotional experience.
- “The restitution of all things means that every person and fallen being will finally be saved.”
  - The verse itself defines the restoration as the things **“which God hath spoken”** through His prophets. Peter’s next verse includes judgment upon those who refuse the promised Prophet.
- “Peter is already preaching the mystery of the Body of Christ.”
  - Peter announces what God spoke through the prophets since the world began and addresses the children of Israel’s prophets and covenant. Paul later describes the mystery as previously kept secret.
- “Being children of the covenant guaranteed blessing regardless of Israel’s response to Jesus.”
  - Covenant privilege brings accountability. Every soul must hear the promised Prophet, and the blessing turns each person from iniquity.
- “Israel’s blessing leaves the nations outside God’s purpose.”
  - Peter quotes the Abrahamic promise that all the kindreds of the earth will be blessed in Abraham’s seed. Israel’s priority serves a prophetic purpose extending blessing outward.

## Session Summary

- Peter acknowledges that the people and their rulers rejected Christ through ignorance without declaring them innocent.
- God fulfilled the prophetic witness that Christ should suffer.
- Peter commands Israel to repent and turn so that their sins may be blotted out.
- The promised times of refreshing come from the Lord’s presence.
- God shall send Jesus Christ, whom heaven receives until the times of restitution.
- The restitution concerns the things God spoke through His prophets since the world began.
- Moses foretold a Prophet from Israel whom every person must hear.
- Refusal to hear that Prophet brings destruction from among the people.
- Samuel and the succeeding prophets also foretold these days.
- Peter’s hearers are children of the prophets and Abrahamic covenant, through which all kindreds of the earth are to be blessed.
- God addressed Israel first through His Son Jesus, blessing them by turning each one from iniquity.

## For Long-Term Study

### Mark these themes as Acts unfolds

- Israel’s guilt and the repeated offer of mercy after the cross.
  - Repentance, forgiveness, and Israel’s promised restoration.
  - Christ’s present place in heaven and His promised return.
  - The continuing authority of Moses and the prophets in Peter’s preaching.
  - Covenant privilege joined to personal and national responsibility.
  - Israel’s priority in the proclamation and the promised blessing of the nations.
  - The contrast between prophecy spoken and mystery later revealed.
  - The growing response of Israel’s rulers to the apostolic witness.
- ### Questions to keep asking
1. How can ignorance explain an action without removing guilt?

2. What does Peter command Israel to do in verse 19, and concerning whom must their thinking change?
3. How do verses 20-21 define the times of refreshing?
4. What limits the meaning of **“restitution of all things”**?
5. How does Acts 3:21 differ from Paul’s description of the mystery in Romans 16:25?
6. What does Moses require Israel to do concerning the promised Prophet?
7. How do covenant privilege and individual responsibility stand together in verses 23-26?
8. Why does Peter connect worldwide blessing with the covenant God made with Abraham?
9. What does **“unto you first”** reveal about the audience and program of Acts 3?
10. How does verse 26 define the blessing Jesus brings?

**One sentence to remember**

Peter calls covenant Israel to hear the promised Prophet and repent in view of sins blotted out, Christ’s return, and the restoration God spoke through His prophets since the world began.