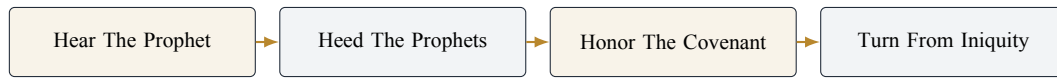


Session 14 Moses, the Prophets, and Abraham's Covenant

Acts: The Book That Explains Everything

Session 14 | Acts 3:22-26



Before You Read

Big idea: Peter brings Israel face to face with its own Scriptures and covenant privileges. Moses commanded Israel to hear the promised Prophet, all the prophets testified of these days, and Abraham's covenant gave Israel a privileged place in God's purpose. Those privileges did not excuse unbelief; they made Israel especially accountable to receive Jesus and turn from iniquity.

How to use this guide: Read verses 22-26 as the conclusion of Peter's sermon. Mark every expression that identifies the audience, every Old Testament witness Peter names, and every statement requiring a response.

Four movements to keep watching

- **Hear the Prophet** - Moses promised a Prophet whom every Israelite must heed.
- **Heed the prophets** - Samuel and the prophets who followed had already announced these days.
- **Honor the covenant** - Peter's hearers were heirs of the prophetic promises and of God's covenant with Abraham.
- **Turn from iniquity** - Israel received the message first, and the promised blessing required each person to turn from wickedness.

A simple right-division reminder: Peter is addressing Israelites as **"children of the prophets, and of the covenant."** He is proclaiming what Moses, Samuel, and the prophets had spoken, not yet revealing the mystery of the Body of Christ later entrusted to Paul.

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 spoke to Israel's fathers about a coming Prophet.
- God would raise up that Prophet from among Israel's brethren.
- The Prophet would be like Moses as a divinely authorized spokesman and mediator.
- Israel was commanded to hear Him in everything He said.

Words to notice

- **For** - Peter connects Moses' promise with the prophetic restitution described in verse 21.
- **Moses truly said** - Peter appeals to the lawgiver whom his hearers claimed to honor.
- **Of your brethren** - The promised Prophet would arise from Israel.
- **Like unto me** - The comparison emphasizes a spokesman raised up and authorized by God; it does not require every event in Moses' life to be repeated.
- **Hear** - This means more than receiving sound. Israel must listen, heed, and obey.
- **In all things** - Israel could not honor selected teachings while rejecting the Prophet Himself.

Cross-references worth marking

- Deuteronomy 18:15-19 - Moses promises the Prophet and says God will require an account from the person who refuses His words.
- John 1:21, 45 - Israel expected **"that prophet,"** and Philip identifies Jesus as the One of whom Moses wrote.
- John 5:45-47 - Jesus says Moses wrote of Him; refusal to believe Moses' writings exposes refusal to believe Christ.
- Acts 7:37 - Stephen later cites this same promise while confronting Israel's resistance.

Do not miss

- Jesus is not set against Moses. He is the Prophet to whom Moses directed Israel.
- Israel could not claim loyalty to Moses while refusing the One Moses commanded the nation to hear.
- Greater light creates greater accountability: the command was to hear Christ **“in all things.”**

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 must respond to the promised Prophet.
- Refusal to hear Him is deliberate rebellion.
- The person who refuses will be destroyed from among the people.
- The promised restoration therefore includes judgment as well as blessing.

Words to notice

- **Every soul** - The national appeal requires an individual response; covenant ancestry cannot answer for the person.
- **Will not hear** - The issue is refusal to heed, not mere lack of opportunity to hear sound.
- **That prophet** - The warning concerns the particular Prophet Moses promised, identified here as Jesus.
- **Destroyed from among the people** - The rebel is re-

moved from the covenant people rather than sharing their promised blessing.

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 person refusing God's command on the day of atonement was cut off from among his people.
- John 3:36 - The person who does not believe the Son does not see life, and the wrath of God abides on him.
- Hebrews 2:1-3 - Greater revelation brings a corresponding warning against neglect.

Do not miss

- Physical descent from Abraham did not protect an Israelite who rejected Israel's Messiah.
- Peter's message contains a real warning, not only a promise of national restoration.
- Covenant privilege intensifies responsibility. The hearer cannot appeal to belonging to the people while refusing the Prophet sent to the people.

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 continuing prophetic order closely connected with Israel's kingdom history.
- The prophets who followed likewise announced these days.
- Peter's interpretation rests upon Israel's known prophetic Scriptures.

Words to notice

- **Yea** - Peter strengthens the case by adding further witnesses.

- **From Samuel** - Moses has just been treated separately; Samuel now stands at the head of the later prophetic succession.
- **Those that follow after** - The witness continues through the prophets who came after Samuel.
- **As many as have spoken** - Peter refers collectively to the prophets who spoke of these matters, not to an identical prediction in every prophetic book.
- **These days** - The expression includes the events Peter is explaining and the prophetic prospects he has announced.

Cross-references worth marking

- 1 Samuel 2:10 - Hannah looks forward to the LORD's king and His anointed before Israel had a monarchy.
- 2 Samuel 7:12-16 - In the kingdom era associated with Samuel, God promises David an enduring seed and

throne.

- Luke 24:25-27, 44 - Jesus shows that Moses, the prophets, and the psalms spoke concerning Him.
- Acts 10:43 - Peter later says that all the prophets witness that remission of sins is through Christ's name.

Do not miss

- Israel's rejection of Jesus could not be blamed on a lack

of scriptural witness.

- Moses, Samuel, and the following prophets form a united testimony concerning Messiah and the kingdom program.
- Peter is explaining "**these days**" from prophecy already spoken, not from a secret revelation unknown to the prophets.

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 heirs of the prophets.
- They also belong to the covenant God made with Israel's fathers.
- Peter reaches back to God's promise to Abraham.
- God promised blessing to all the families of the earth in Abraham's seed.

Words to notice

- **Ye** - Peter directly identifies the Jerusalem hearers; the audience is not a generic, unidentified group.
- **Children of the prophets** - They are heirs and intended beneficiaries of the prophetic promises, and therefore responsible to heed those prophets.
- **The covenant** - Peter refers to a binding promise God made with their fathers, not to an arrangement invented by the apostles.
- **Abraham** - The promise reaches behind the law of Moses to the covenant father of Israel.
- **Thy seed** - The promised line finds its ultimate fulfill-

ment in Christ.

- **All the kindreds of the earth** - God's purpose through Abraham and Israel extends in blessing beyond Israel to the nations.

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 22:15-18 - God promises that all nations will be blessed in Abraham's seed.
- Romans 9:4-5 - The covenants, promises, fathers, and Christ according to the flesh belong to Israel's privileges.
- Galatians 3:8, 16 - Paul later identifies the promised seed ultimately as Christ and calls the promise gospel preached beforehand.

Do not miss

- Peter does not say that Israel's covenant identity has disappeared or been transferred to another people.
- Worldwide blessing through Abraham's seed was already prophetic truth. It is not the same thing as the later-revealed formation of Jew and Gentile into one Body.
- "**Children of the prophets**" describes both privilege and accountability. Those who inherited the promises were responsible to believe the prophetic witness.

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 sent His Son Jesus to Israel first.
- God had raised up the One Moses promised.
- Jesus was sent to bless the covenant people.
- The blessing operated by turning each person away from iniquity.

Words to notice

- **Unto you first** - Israel has priority in the offer; Peter is speaking in Jerusalem to the covenant nation.
- **Raised up** - The wording recalls God's promise to raise up the Prophet like Moses and also fits the chapter's repeated emphasis upon Christ's resurrection.
- **His Son Jesus** - Peter plainly identifies the promised Prophet and source of blessing.
- **Sent him to bless you** - The mission to Israel fulfills the Abrahamic promise just cited.
- **In turning away** - Blessing is not permission to remain in rebellion; it involves a decisive turn from wickedness.

- **Every one of you** - National priority does not replace personal accountability.

Cross-references worth marking

- Matthew 10:5-6 - In 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 that the word of God had to be spoken to the Jews first.
- 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

- **"First"** confirms Israel's central place in the chapter's audience and covenant setting.
- The blessing is moral and spiritual as well as prophetic: Messiah turns people away from their iniquities.
- The verse does not promise automatic salvation to every Israelite. Peter addresses **"every one"** and presses the need to turn.
- Acts 3 closes with Israel still being offered mercy. The response of Israel's leaders unfolds in the chapters that follow.

Text And Translation Helps

- In verse 22, **truly** emphasizes Moses' statement. It does not suggest a contrast between Moses and an untruthful speaker.
- **Hear** in verses 22-23 means to listen with obedient attention. The warning concerns refusal to heed Christ's authority.
- **Soul** in verse 23 is an ordinary biblical way to speak of a person; the judgment is not limited to an immaterial part of man.
- **Destroyed from among the people** is strong covenant language. It describes removal from the people rather than participation in the promised blessing.
- **Kindreds** in verse 25 means families, clans, or groups sharing a common ancestry.
- In verse 26, the Textus Receptus includes **"Jesus,"** as reflected in the KJV. The principal critical text omits the name, so many modern versions read simply **"his servant."**
- KJV **"Son"** in verse 26 translates a word that may mean child, son, or servant according to context. Here the KJV identifies Jesus as the One God raised up and sent.

Common Ideas To Test

- “Anyone who honors Moses may reject Jesus and still be faithful to the Old Testament.”
 - Moses himself commanded Israel to hear the coming Prophet. Jesus said Moses wrote of Him. Refusing Jesus is therefore a refusal to believe Moses’ witness.
- “Israel’s covenant status guaranteed blessing to every Israelite.”
 - Peter warns that every soul refusing the Prophet will be destroyed from among the people. Covenant privilege does not cancel personal accountability.
- “The Abrahamic promise means Israel no longer has a distinct place in God’s purpose.”
 - The nations are blessed through the covenant line established with Abraham. Peter still addresses Israel as the children of that covenant and says the offer came to them first.
- “Peter is preaching the later-revealed mystery of the Body of Christ.”
 - Peter explicitly grounds his message in Moses, Samuel, the prophets, and the covenant with Abraham. This is the prophetic program; the mystery revealed through Paul was previously kept secret.
- “Blessing means God will improve a person’s circumstances without confronting sin.”
 - Verse 26 defines the blessing as turning each person away from his iniquities. God’s blessing does not approve continued rebellion.

Session Summary

- Moses promised that God would raise up a Prophet from Israel whom the nation must hear in all things.
- Every person refusing that Prophet faced covenant judgment and removal from among the people.
- Samuel and the prophets who followed had already testified concerning these days.
- Peter’s hearers were heirs of the prophets and of God’s covenant with Abraham.
- The promise of blessing to all kindreds of the earth comes through Abraham’s seed, ultimately Christ.
- God sent Jesus to Israel first, and His blessing called every person to turn from iniquity.
- Israel’s accumulated privileges created accumulated accountability: the nation had Moses, the prophets, the covenant, the promised Prophet, and a renewed offer of mercy.

For Long-Term Study

Mark these themes as Acts unfolds

- Israel’s covenant privilege and its corresponding accountability.
- The repeated summons to hear Jesus as the promised Prophet and Messiah.
- The continuing witness of Moses and the prophets in apostolic preaching.
- Israel’s priority in the offer and the later movement of the word to the Gentiles.
- The distinction between prophetic blessing through Abraham’s seed and the mystery of the one Body later revealed through Paul.

Questions to keep asking

1. Why does Peter appeal specifically to Moses in verse 22?
2. What does “**hear**” require, and what happens to the

person who refuses?

3. How do Samuel and the later prophets add to Israel’s accountability?
4. What privileges belong to Peter’s hearers as children of the prophets and covenant?
5. How does “**unto you first**” identify the audience and program of this sermon?
6. How does verse 26 define the blessing Jesus was sent to bring?
7. Why does covenant privilege increase rather than remove responsibility?

One sentence to remember

Israel’s possession of Moses, the prophets, and Abraham’s covenant made the nation especially accountable to hear Jesus, receive God’s promised blessing, and turn from iniquity.