

The Days Following Pentecost

Our brother Luke explains what happened next in the subsequent verses of ACTS 2. Luke actually explains several years of what happened next in ACTS 2:42-47. ACTS 2:42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

We will dig into some of the details revealed in these verses in a little bit, Lord willing, but let's first notice the first mention of the word "church" found in the book of ACTS, which is in verse 47. ACTS 2:42-47 tells of the first church founded there at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and ACTS 4:32-35 adds some more facts that tell of the state of the first church in Jerusalem. ACTS 4:32 *And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.* Please note that "the church" mentioned in ACTS 2:42-47 and ACTS 4:32-35 was the church at Jerusalem, which was exclusively Jewish, and for all the house of Israel. The Gentiles were not yet included in the church. We will explain this further shortly.

Here is what Brother Copley pointed out in his commentary on the book of ACTS chapter 2. "The conduct of the saints as expressed in these verses with the fulfillment of Leviticus 25. Every 50th Jewish year was a jubilee year, which pointed forward to the millennium. That very year in which Jesus died and the Holy Spirit was poured out was a Jubilee. The disciples supposed that the millennial reign of Christ was due and that He would return very soon. Indeed, it was due, and He would have come back about seven years later, if the Jews as a nation had received Him. Therefore, they acted in obedience to Leviticus 25 and sold their possessions and had all things common, as they will do again when the Lord returns. However, Jesus did not return then, but introduced a different order of procedure. The Church was never intended to observe that rule of order given to Israel. Hence, the Apostle Paul, the Church Apostle, distinctively never taught the community of goods. For that reason, wherever men have endeavored to introduce such a custom, it always failed. They were not led of the Lord." {End of quoting Brother Copley.} Brother Copley later in his ACTS commentary again points out that the reference to "the church" at Jerusalem mentioned in ACTS 2:42-47 and ACTS 4:32-35 picture a millennial scene. The scene expressed in ACTS 2:42-47 and ACTS 4:32-35 of the church in Jerusalem pictures a different economy than we are familiar with.

Let me further mention a little taught fact concerning the Church Age. There was a transition period of about seven years at the beginning of what we call the Church Age from the previous age of The Law. During these first about seven years the Kingdom message that Jesus preached continued to be preached by the twelve Kingdom Apostles, who were looking for the Kingdom of God on earth to be restored to Israel. {Study again ACTS 1:6.} That will happen during the Millennium, which is the next age after the Church Age we are currently living in. The last seven years of the Church Age will also have a seven-year transition period called the tribulation before the Kingdom of God, called the Millennium will be established. The Church Age has continued now for about two thousand years, and is about to come to a close. There is one purpose for the Church Age, and that is to by the power of the Holy Ghost to make ready a Bride for Christ. The truth of the Bride of Christ is revealed in Paul's gospel message, and Paul was not yet on the scene and filled with the Holy Ghost until ACTS 9. The moment Jesus catches His Bride away will trigger the tribulation, the transition

period of about seven years between the Church Age, and the Millennium. The Bride of Christ will rule and reign with Him during the Millennium until Christ hath put all enemies under His feet according to 1 CORINTHIANS 15:25. The Bride of Christ is not the whole church, but rather a rib portion taken out of the whole body of Christ, which is the Church. In ACTS the end of the approximate seven-year transition time from the age of The Law to the Church Age we are still living in ended with the nation of Israel rejecting our risen Saviour Jesus Christ as their Messiah at the stoning of Stephen in ACTS 7. The death of Stephen ushered in the next phase of this Church Age that began on the day of Pentecost. ACTS 8:1 explains: *...And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.* The Kingdom Apostles remained in Jerusalem preaching to the church at Jerusalem, but a large number of believers were scattered abroad during this great persecution. It was a few months after the stoning of Stephen that the Apostle Paul appeared on the scene, who was appointed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to become the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles (ROMANS 11:13). This Church Age we are still living in is also known as the Age of Grace. If the Lord carries this topic of the transition from the Age of the Law to the Age of Grace, this Church Age, will come up again when we get to study further the events of ACTS 7 and beyond.

With this knowledge let's read again ACTS 2:42-47. ACTS 2:42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* On the day of Pentecost the hundred and twenty with the Kingdom Apostles in ACTS 2:41 were added to in ACTS 2:41 about three thousand more souls. This collection of Saints became the nucleus of the assembly of what is called the church at Jerusalem. The Greek word for Church is ekklesia {ek-klay-see'-ah}, number 1577 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and means in the broadest sense an assembly, or a congregation. Ekklesia comes from two Greek words, ek, out of, and klesis, a calling, thus a called-out assembly. We commonly think of church as an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a meeting somewhere. It is interesting to point out that Stephen in his sermon of ACTS 7 mentioned the church in the wilderness, which in that particular case was a "called out" assembly; called out by the Lord from the land of Egypt. The church in Jerusalem spoken of in ACTS 2 through 8:1 was only similar to the church in the wilderness because they were "called out" by the same God. The church at Jerusalem became an assembly of "called out" ones because they all collectively believed that Jesus Christ was the risen Saviour their Messiah. They were all Jews. They were called out from among all the house of Israel.

In ACTS 2:42 we first read that *...they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* What was the Apostle's doctrine? Simply stated the Apostles here were Jesus chosen twelve, whom we call Kingdom Apostles. They proclaimed what they knew, and what they were taught of Jesus Christ Himself that being the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus had taught them in MATTHEW 24:14 *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.* We find in MATTHEW 4:23 *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.* What Jesus taught became the Apostle's doctrine. We just read Peter's first sermon found in ACTS 2, and Peter emphasized that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed *...approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know....* ACTS 2:22. Peter also had emphasized several times in this first sermon that Jesus Christ, the Holy One, and Himself a prophet, was raised from the dead, and the hundred and twenty with Peter had all witnessed this fact that Jesus was indeed very much alive, and risen from the dead! Peter

himself summarized the Apostle's doctrine some years later in his sermon to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, which is found in ACTS 10:34-43. ACTS 10:34 *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (whether Jew or Gentile) 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) 37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, (the Jews) and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever (Jew or Gentile) believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* This was a snapshot of the Apostles doctrine, the Kingdom Apostle's doctrine, and the same message Stephen expounded upon in his sermon of ACTS 7. Stephen was only taught the Kingdom Apostle's doctrine, which was the gospel of the kingdom of God.

The "Kingdom Apostle's" is terminology we have adopted to define Jesus chosen twelve Apostles. We have in past Sunday School lessons defined two distinct group of Apostles; The Kingdom Apostles (Jesus' chosen twelve), and the Church Apostles, of whom there were eight. The Church Apostles taught Paul's gospel message, which included the gospel of the kingdom of God, and the gospel message that our risen Saviour Jesus revealed unto Paul in the desert regions of Arabia after Paul was saved according to GALATIANS 1:15-18. After the stoning of Stephen, down the road a short while, Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, and appointed him to be the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles. The Greek word for Apostle is apostolos {ap-os'-tol-os}, number 652 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, translated 78 times in the New Testament apostle(s). The word apostolos also refers to a delegate, a messenger, or one sent forth with orders, such as Paul was in ACTS 26:17. The Apostle Paul was given his orders from Jesus Christ Himself on the road to Damascus when Jesus answered his question of ACTS 9:6 "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" It took the Apostle Paul around twenty plus years before he himself could fully reveal what the Lord said to him on the road to Damascus, and we find that information in ACTS 26:16-18. ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, (as an Apostle) 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Here we find that on the road to Damascus Jesus sent Paul forth with orders from Jesus Christ Himself that he was going to be the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles. Jesus also told him here that Jesus would be the one to teach Paul His gospel message that he was to preach unto the Gentiles.

The Kingdom Apostle's were sent unto the house of Israel preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God on earth, which teaches of Christ's reign with Israel over the nations. ACTS 2 through ACTS 7 shows the results in Jerusalem of the Kingdom Apostle's doctrine.

The Church Apostles on the other hand were taught Paul's gospel message by the Apostle Paul himself, or in the case of Apollos by those who were taught by Paul. Paul's gospel message was the message that was to be preached unto the Gentiles. Paul's gospel message was revealed unto him by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as we noted in the paragraph above. Simply stated Paul's gospel also taught about the Kingdom of God, but from a heavenly perspective. Paul's gospel taught several things, deeper things of God, that the Kingdom Apostles found hard to be understood. Peter himself even mentions this very point in 2 PETER 3:16 that Paul wrote *...in all his epistles, speaking in them*

of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,... and this was because Peter wasn't taught, nor did the Lord reveal unto Peter the gospel message that the Apostle Paul was given to preach. None of the Kingdom Apostles fully grasped Paul's gospel. Paul's gospel message went way beyond preaching the kingdom of God on earth, for Paul also preached the of His heavenly kingdom in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18, and to *...the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* in PHILIPPIANS 3:14, and he preached about the gospel of His glory in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4, and 1 TIMOTHY 1:11. Paul preached about meeting the Lord in the air in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:17, and reigning with Him in 2 TIMOTHY 2:12. The Kingdom Apostles were not given this message to preach, but the Church Apostles were given Paul's gospel message to preach.

The Apostle Paul became the first Church Apostle sent to preach the gospel message Jesus Christ Himself revealed unto Paul for him to preach unto the Gentiles, which was the gospel of the church. Again we read above in ACTS 26:16–18 how during the early part of this Church Age, after the stoning of Stephen, Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, and told him essentially what is stated in ACTS 22:21-- *Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.* After preaching his gospel message on three missionary tours Paul gave a summary unto the Ephesians elders in ACTS 20 what it was his gospel message included. ACTS 20:20 *And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ...24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.* ACTS 20:32 is almost a quote from ACTS 26:18 repeating the words our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ first spoke to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus the day he got saved.

We have one hundred chapters of New Testament scripture written by the Apostle Paul. The number one hundred is the number of COMPLETION. Note the following concerning Paul's gospel: Paul's gospel message is unique; it was given him to fill up the word of God, one hundred percent complete the word of God in other words, (COLOSSIANS 1:25); Paul's gospel was given him by the revelation of Jesus Christ, (GALATIANS 1:12); Paul's gospel message was given to establish us, (ROMANS 16:25); the gospel of the Apostle Paul was given to show us mysteries not made known in other ages, (EPHESIANS 3:1-10); the gospel of the Apostle Paul was given to build us up, and bring us to our inheritance, (ACTS 20:32); the gospel of the Apostle Paul was given to tell us about the race course: (HEBREWS 12:1); the gospel of Paul was given to tell us who it is that can run on the race course, and to fight the good fight of faith (1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-26 & 2 TIMOTHY 4:7); the gospel of Paul was given to tell us that Christ is the prize for winning the race (PHILIPPIANS 3:14); and the gospel of Paul was for the express purpose that the Bride of Christ would be prepared, and ready to marry Jesus (REVELATION 19:7). Paul wrote in his gospel record: *I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ...* 2 CORINTHIANS 11:2. Paul's gospel is our first class ticket to eternal royalty if we will but let our guide, the Holy Ghost, open it unto us. The full overcomers of this church age are to diligently search the scriptures, are we not? *Search the scriptures...* JOHN 5:39 says, and we of this church age can magnify the scriptures under the magnifying glass of Paul's gospel. The word of God rightly divided by the divine guidance of the Holy Ghost is what we are talking about here. Paul wrote Timothy, a man who knew, and had been taught the holy scriptures from his youngest days: *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth...* 2 TIMOTHY 2:15. This in part is how the Bride of Christ makes herself ready, by learning all she can about The Lamb of God, also know as The Word of God. The Word of God is the Bible, the word of truth that Paul wrote Timothy about. ROMANS 10:17 tells us: *So then faith*

cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Again the word of God is our scriptures. HEBREWS 11:6 adds: *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* We diligently seek God by faith, and faith comes by hearing, and hearing the word of God. When we read, and diligently search the scriptures, we hear a voice in our head, don't we? So reading, and studying scriptures is indeed hearing the word of God, is it not? And our guide, The Holy Ghost, also whispers these words in our hearts of faith as he guides us into all truth. This is how Paul's gospel is our first class ticket to eternal royalty if we will but let our guide, the Holy Ghost, open the deep rich meaning of what Paul was inspired to write unto us.

We have spent a bit of time in this portion explaining some terminology that we should be familiar with concerning the church, and The Church Age that was ushered in on the day of Pentecost. We have talked about the Kingdom Apostles, and the Church Apostles. It was several years after Pentecost before the first Church Apostle came on the scene, as we explained above. It was our brother in the Lord, Luke, who documented how by the power of the Holy Ghost the Church Apostles came into being, and how the Church Apostles were ones the Holy Ghost sent primarily to teach the Gentiles of the grace of God. Thus first few years after Pentecost recorded in ACTS 1 through 12 deals primarily with Peter, and the Kingdom Apostles, and the growth of the early church, which first started on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem. The Apostles spoken of in ACTS 1-12 were Kingdom Apostles.

Armed with this background information let's examine the closing verses of ACTS 2 where Luke begins to explain the growth of the early church. ACTS 2:42 *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* The composition of this church at Jerusalem was exclusively Jewish. We learn here that they continued stedfastly in the Kingdom Apostles' doctrine. Secondly they continued stedfastly in the Kingdom Apostles' fellowship where they could be further taught the Kingdom Apostles' teaching. Third they partook in the breaking of bread, meaning they ate meals together, and also partook of the Lord's supper together. Fourth, they all continued stedfastly in prayers, and we know they prayed speaking in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them the utterance. The Holy Ghost inspired prayer meetings is where they got the power that was found in this early church. The power of Holy Ghost inspired prayers is many times emphasized in each chapter of ACTS going forward. The importance of praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit is a point of emphasis of Paul's in EPHESIANS 6:18. I am thankful for prayer meetings, an under emphasized "thing" in these last days.

ACTS 2:43 *And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

The facts summarized by Luke in ACTS 2:42-47 paints with a broad brush what happened to the early church at Jerusalem for the next several years. Luke will go into more detail explaining the events surrounding the Kingdom Apostles during the subsequent days, months, and years in the next several chapters of ACTS as he continues to give a chronology of what happened after the resurrection of Jesus until the time the Apostle Paul was prisoner in Rome for two years, a period of about thirty more years. Thus one way of looking at it is to view what Luke records from this point forward in ACTS to be a synopsis of Jesus final words spoken before His ascension in ACTS 1:9. Jesus said in ACTS 1:8, which should probably be considered a key verse in the whole book of ACTS: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* At least a hundred and twenty heard Jesus make this statement, but the fact is all that

have received the gift of the Holy Ghost have all received the power of the Holy Ghost in their lives. It was by the power of the Holy Ghost that Peter could preach this Holy Ghost sermon recorded in ACTS 2. But what does this statement mean, *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...* ? We begin to see part of the answer of what receiving the power of the Holy Ghost means in the succeeding chapters of what Luke wrote in the rest of the book of ACTS. Beyond that we have the Apostle Paul's one hundred chapters of scripture that further explains what it means to receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. In short as we have mentioned many times, in many ways previously, it will take the power of the Holy Ghost working in you own life to build you up in Christ Jesus, and make you a full overcomer that will win Christ as Bridegroom! This statement of ACTS 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...* is still in effect today, and will be forever!

One more comment concerning the facts summarized by Luke in ACTS 2:42-47. Brother Copley spent an unusual amount of time covering these verses in his ACTS study book. Additionally Brother Copley wrote a six-page essay at the end of his ACTS study book, which is now a stand-alone tract entitled "The Gospel of the Kingdom." The point of mentioning all of this is to point out that there is a lot of information to be further studied concerning what Luke wrote in ACTS 2:42-47, and these verses really are an introduction to the rest of the chapters in ACTS.

ACTS 3

Some of the "wonders and signs" spoken of in ACTS 2:43 that were "done by the Apostles" are made manifest starting in ACTS 3.

ACTS 3:1 *Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.* We begin to glimpse the daily routine of the Kingdom Apostles since that famous day of Pentecost. Luke recorded in LUKE 24:53, the last verse in LUKE, that they *...were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.* The temple reference is to the temple at Jerusalem. In ACTS 2:46 we learned that they *...continuing daily with one accord in the temple...* . On this particular day in ACTS 3 they, Peter and John, were going together into the temple at the ninth hour of the day, which would be 3:00 pm as we reckon time. We should also note that they also most likely had a morning prayer meeting at 9:00 am. Thus we find that the disciples had daily prayer meetings in the temple at Jerusalem. David noted in PSALMS 55:17 *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.* In DANIEL 6:10 we find that Daniel *...kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and gave thanks before his God.* It seems the Kingdom Apostles also followed this pattern of having prayer meetings three times a day. It is also interesting to note that we find Peter and John mentioned together in eight New Testament scriptures. These fishing partners seemed inseparable during this time in their lives.

Continuing on in ACTS 3:2 we find that as Peter and John went up together into the temple that *...a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.*

We find here that Peter and John entered into the temple at the gate called Beautiful, where sat a lame man asking for alms. Let's learn something here as we begin studying the events of ACTS 3. Do you know that there is a difference between asking alms, and begging? Begging is asking or soliciting for spare change or food. Alms on the other hand is considered something given to the poor as charity, and includes the giving of money, clothes, or food. What is donated to food banks would be considered alms. What is donated to the Arc, or Goodwill would be considered as alms. Alms refers to charitable giving to those in need. According to the Old Testament the poor were entitled to the leavings from the produce of the field, the vineyard, and the olive yard according to LEVITICUS 19:9 & 10; LEVITICUS 23:22; and DEUTERONOMY 24:21. In RUTH 2 we find seven references to Ruth being allowed to glean after the reapers. In ACTS 10:2, 4, and 31 we find that Cornelius, a wealthy centurion Italian Gentile, gave much alms to the people, and his testimony

before God was: *...Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.* Jesus noted in MATTHEW 26:11, and JOHN 12:8 that *...ye have the poor always with you...* . Paul wrote in GALATIANS 2:10 *...that we should remember the poor...* . Thus we find alms refers to charitable giving to those in need. In the days of the Apostles in every city there were three collectors who distributed alms of two kinds: (1) of money collected in the synagogue chest; and (2) of food and money received in a dish, called “alms of the dish.” With all this in mind, let’s read what Jesus said in MATTHEW 6. MATTHEW 6:1 *Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.* Here in ACTS 3 this lame man was brought to the gate of the temple to ask alms of those who were going to the temple, many of whom were going into the temple for the purpose of giving alms in the first place. Simply put this lame man was laid at the point of entry into the temple where the probability of finding those of a charitable mindset was greatest.

We also learn here in ACTS 3:2 that this “certain man” was already famous in his day because he was carried daily to this particular spot *...to ask alms of them that entered into the temple.* This particular “certain man” is now famous for two thousand years, for he becomes the focal point of two chapters in ACTS what the Lord can do in the life of “a certain man.” This “certain man” is referenced in several verses of ACTS 3 & 4 for his testimony (after meeting Peter and John, who introduced him to Jesus) quickly became famous to all in Jerusalem. This terminology “a certain man” is found in Luke’s writing seventeen times; seventeen being the number associated with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. By the time we get finished reading about this particular “certain man” we certainly will see magnified a little more of what VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS means. This particular “certain man’s” name is never told us, but everyone in Jerusalem seemed to know him, or was familiar with him, and had known him for many years. Everyone who has every read ACTS 3 & 4 now knows this “certain man’s” testimony, and in ACTS 4:16 we find that this “certain man” was indeed notable!

ACTS 3:4 *And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.*

The terminology the Holy Ghost inspired Luke to write these two verses is extremely rich in depth of meaning. Let’s first consider the word “fastening” in verse 4. The Greek word used here is *atenizo* {at-en-id'-zo}, number 816 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, and Luke uses this word twelve of the fourteen times we find it in scripture. Fourteen is the number associated with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION, and certainly this “certain man” observed here needed both DELIVERANCE, and SALVATION. *Atenizo* {at-en-id'-zo} always has a strongly intensive meaning, indicating steadfastly beholding, or looking earnestly. Note who was looking earnestly here; it was Peter and John who were steadfastly beholding this helpless lame man, no doubt observing him through the impulse of the power of the Holy Ghost.

Next in verse 4 we find Peter instructing this “certain man” to *...Look on us.* The Greek word translated “look” here is *blepo*, number 991 in the Strong’s Greek Concordance, which itself is found 135 times in the New Testament, usually translated as “see,” and also as “to take heed,” or “to behold” someone, or something. It takes the rest of ACTS 3, and about half of ACTS 4 to fully reveal what this “certain man,” this helpless man, was to “see” or “behold.” In short he was to see Jesus, for as ACTS 4:12 later explains, *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* Furthermore we will also find in ACTS 3:16 more facts about Jesus: *And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.* Thus we find that Peter and John when they encouraged this “certain man” to

...Look on us,... they were really encouraging him to look upon Jesus Christ of Nazareth ...Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;... PSALMS 103:3!

ACTS 3:5 *And he (the lame man) gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.* The Greek word translated “heed” here is *epecho* {ep-ekh'-o}, number 1907 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which here specifically means “to give attention to,” and then “to hold upon.” Literally we find in ACTS 3:11 that this lame man *...held Peter and John.* The Greek word *epecho* {ep-ekh'-o} is only found five times in New Testament scripture, thus again pointing to GRACE, reminding us once again what is written in TITUS 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.* Here in ACTS 3:5 when the “lame man” gave heed unto Peter, and John *...expecting to receive something of them...* he had no idea that he was about to receive of the GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ healing for his sins, and healing of his lame condition. *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...* ROMANS 3:23 tells us, and certainly we all need to receive *...the grace of God that bringeth salvation...* which is obtained *...through faith which is in Christ Jesus...* 2 TIMOTHY 3:15. EPHESIANS 2:8 tells us: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.* Thus we see how we, by faith in Jesus Christ, are healed from the lame condition of sin we are born with. Praise God for sending Christ Jesus into this world, to die upon the cross so that we could obtain eternal salvation. EPHESIANS 2:4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

Back here in ACTS 3:5 we again read that this lame man *...he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.* This lame man intently, and with great eagerness looked on Peter and John *...expecting to receive something of them...* after Peter said in verse 4 “look on us.” The Greek word translated “expecting” here is *prosdokao* {pros-dok-ah'-o}, number 4328 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, with the meaning: to watch toward, to look for, to expect. The lame man expected *...to receive something of them...* but as we will find out as we keep reading his expectations on what he was about to receive was set to low. He was expecting to receive some money, but money couldn't buy what he was about to receive.

ACTS 3:6 *Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.*

Each of us should take a little time to ponder on our own the value of what is stated in these three verses. All the silver and gold in the world couldn't buy what Jesus Christ of Nazareth purchased for us with His own blood on the cross of Calvary! We sometimes sing the song Christ Liveth in Me, but have you ever spent time pondering God's unspeakable gift, who is Christ our Saviour, who resides in the heart of all believers? The value of receiving Christ as our personal Saviour is beyond measure. The adjectives of what He has done for us, and who He is to us is exceeding abundant above all we could ever ask or even think. Our tiny finite minds cannot comprehend of what it will take God ages to come to fully reveal the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to us through Christ Jesus!!! (Study EPHESIANS 2:7.)

The lame man in ACTS 3, if he had all the gold and silver, and all the riches of Solomon, he couldn't buy the ability to walk. And certainly this lame man wasn't expecting to ever rise up and walk. He had spent a lifetime wondering what that would be like, but never in a million years did he expect to rise up and walk. He could only imagine at this point in time what it would be like to “leap.” But God that day sent two Holy Ghost filled fishermen, Peter and John now Apostles, who were being led by the power of the Holy Ghost, to give this lame man something he couldn't buy with money, and something he never expected to receive! And as is noted in ACTS 3:6 Peter and John didn't have any silver or gold either.

ACTS 3:6 ...*Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.* Let's recall something here concerning what Jesus taught His eleven Apostles on the night of the last supper in JOHN 14, 15, and 16. The following scriptures show one of the things Jesus taught them that night. Jesus told them in JOHN 14:13 *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* 14 *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* JOHN 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.* JOHN 16:23 *...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* 24 *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* Jesus had also told them in JOHN 14:26 one of the primary functions of the Holy Ghost, which was: *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* The Holy Ghost in ACTS 3:6 prompted Peter to remember all of this, which is why Peter now full of the Holy Ghost in ACTS 3:6 ...*said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*

Recall again here something we have been pointing out as we continue to study what Luke wrote in ACTS, and that being what Jesus said back in ACTS 1:8 just before His ascension, *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...* . And we have pointed out how those who heard Jesus say this had no idea the far reaching meaning of these words. Well part of that power that they received when the Holy Ghost came upon them on the day of Pentecost was recalling what Jesus had told them of how *...If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it...* and here in ACTS 3:6 we find the Holy Ghost encouraging Peter to do just that, so Peter full of the power of the Holy Ghost, and with the boldness that comes with Holy Ghost power says to this lame man: *...In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.* What happened next is told us in ACTS 3:7 & 8 - *And he (Peter) took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.* 8 *And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.* Oh what power is found in the name of Jesus!

One thing that should be noted in passing here is that there are spiritual gifts given by the Holy Ghost, which the Apostle Paul expounds upon in 1 CORINTHIANS 12, 13, and 14. Paul mention "gifts of healing" in 1 CORINTHIANS 12:9 and 30. We find that this gift of healing was one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost that Peter was given when he was filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, which was part of the power of the Holy Ghost Jesus spoke of in ACTS 1:8. And another thing we should observe, and be aware of, that "gifts of healing" are often manifest in different ways. In other words the Lord doesn't necessarily preform these healing miracles the same way every time. In MATTHEW 20:29 through 34 we read the story of two blind men who asked Jesus that their eyes might be opened. In MATTHEW 20:34 we read that Jesus *...touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight.* In MARK 10:46-52 we find the story of blind Bartimaeus, who asked Jesus that he might receive his sight. In MARK 10:52 we read that *...Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.* Jesus here didn't touch Bartimaeus, because Jesus doesn't necessarily preform these healing miracles the same way every time. In JOHN 9:1-7 we find another blind man that was blind from his birth. In this example of Jesus healing the blind we find that Jesus *...spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing...* ...JOHN 9:6 & 7. So what we find in these examples of Jesus healing blind eyes is that there is no cookie cut pattern that He has to follow to perform the same miracle. We should observe that Jesus seems to enjoy performing the same miracle in different fashions. Christ Jesus is after all Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. Jesus Himself was lead by the Holy Ghost when He was ministering here on earth, and performing these healing miracles. Back in our text of study in ACTS 3:7 we find Peter taking the lame man by the right hand and lifting him up, and the Lord healed this lame man.

Later in ACTS 5:15 & 16 we will read how that just by the shadow of Peter falling over the sick people were healed. Thus again we see that “gifts of healing” are often manifest in different ways. ISAIAH 55:8 & 9 also explains this, stating: *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

ACTS 3:7 *And he (Peter) took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. 11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.*

We find here in ACTS 3:11 another unique statement made by Luke; a Lukeism if you will. Luke uses the Greek word *ekthambos* {ek'-tham-bos}, number 1569 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, to describe the “greatly wondering” that was taking place as all were observing this “lame man” ...*walking, and leaping, and praising God*,... and he certainly wasn't being quiet about it either. *Ekthambos* {ek'-tham-bos} means: to be amazed; to be quite astonished; and to wonder or marvel greatly. This exceeding astonishment prompted Peter to instantly preach his second Holy Ghost inspired sermon, which is found in the remaining verses of ACTS 3, for this healing of the lame man had attracted quite a large crowd on temple goers, who were “greatly wondering” how this lame man was now ...*walking, and leaping, and praising God*.

Peter's Second Sermon

ACTS 3:12 *And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. 14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 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; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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. 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. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 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. 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.*

Let's look at the facts expressed in Peter's second sermon a little closer. ACTS 3:12 *And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?* This healing of the lame man in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth that caused this exceeding astonishment, this great wondering, prompted Peter to quickly answer any question that the people

who witnessed this miracle of healing may have been asking, or pondering in their heart. All these men of Israel now present knew this lame man who always asked alms at the gate Beautiful. And his instant healing in the name of Jesus certainly was a puzzle to them; something they couldn't explain. But in order for Peter to answer their questioning, and silence the noise of there commotion, Peter asked the two questions found here: *...Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?* When someone is asked a question they must give pause to ponder the answer. So when it got quiet, Peter himself began to answer how it was that this lame man stood here perfectly whole.

The children of Israel had the utmost respect for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who is also called Israel, for these were their forefathers. So when Peter says in ACTS 3:13 *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers...* he had their collective undivided attention. I found it interesting that we find the phrase "God of Abraham" seventeen times in scripture, and again seventeen is the number that points to VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. The whole point of Peter's second Holy Ghost inspired sermon was to point these men of Israel to Christ Jesus, so that they too could enjoy in their own lives VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS.

Let's read a little further of what Peter said: ACTS 3:13 *...the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus;...* . The word "glorified" here means: to hold in highest honour the Son in whom God is well pleased, and to make renowned His excellence. Paul in PHILIPPIANS 2:9 expressed "glorified" by stating this concerning Christ Jesus: *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.* That is how here in ACTS 3:13 *...the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus;...* . In this particular account in ACTS 3 it was in the "glorified" name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and in the power of His "glorified" name that enabled this lame man to walk! Peter was further informing these men of Israel that *...the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus;...* by raising Him from the dead. Additionally Peter was establishing the fact to these men of Israel that *...the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus;...* by raising Him from the dead proving that He (Jesus) was indeed the Messiah. The word "glorified" is found fifty times in scripture, the number associated with PENTECOST. The phrase "His Son Jesus" is found seven times in scripture, here showing the DIVINE SPIRITUAL PERFECTION that is in Christ. Peter will again in ACTS 3:26 highlight this point by saying in the last sentence of this sermon: *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.* Thus we find the whole second sermon of Peter's is given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to emphasize to them once again Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that He is indeed glorified, and that He was the Messiah, and He is the Messiah, Christ the Lord, who was sent *...to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities!* Peter had quickly in ACTS 3:13 brought Christ Jesus as the focal point of his sermon.

We must realize that Jesus Christ was front and center in the personal lives of His Apostles, and He should be front and center in all our lives, and the focus of our life. Those that will be found in the bridal company also will have put Christ first in everything in their own life. Have you found the Lord Jesus Christ to be the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords in your own life? {Study 1 TIMOTHY 6:15.}

Each of us could express in our own way what it means to us to have Jesus in our hearts, and for Him to be the focus of our own life. Brother S. M. Lockridge, a very gifted Baptist preacher, like Spurgeon, pondered the same thing, and once wrote the following about our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: "No means of measure can define His limitless Love. He's enduringly strong. He's entirely sincere. He's eternally steadfast. He's immortally graceful. He's imperially powerful. He's impartially merciful. He's the centerpiece of civilization. He's unparalleled. He's unprecedented. He's the only One qualified to be an all-sufficient Savior. He supplies strength for the weak. He's available for the tempted, and the tried. He sympathizes, and He saves. He strengthens, and sustains. He guards and He guides. He heals the sick. He cleansed the Lepers. He forgives sinners. He discharges debtors. He delivers the captive. He defends the feeble. He blesses the young. He serves the unfortunate. He regards the aged. He rewards the diligent. He beautifies the meager. He's the

key to knowledge. He's the wellspring of wisdom. He's the doorway of deliverance. He's the pathway of peace. He's the roadway of righteousness. He's the highway of holiness. He's the gateway of glory. His Mercy is everlasting. His Love never changes. His Word is enough. His Grace is sufficient. His Reign is righteous. His Yoke is easy. His Burden is Light. He's indescribable. He's incomprehensible. He's invincible. He's irresistible. You can't get Him out of your mind. You can't live without Him. Pilate couldn't find any fault in Him. Herod couldn't kill Him. Death couldn't handle Him. The grave couldn't hold Him. Do you know Him?" {End of quote.} And let me add this; is Christ Jesus the center of your life?

So back here in ACTS 3 we find Peter in his second sermon emphasizing Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Jesus Christ had been the center of Peter's life ever since Peter told Jesus in JOHN 6:68 *...Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.* True we have discussed how Peter in JOHN 21 got off track for a short while, but in JOHN 21:19 & 21 Jesus emphasized to Peter to "follow thou me." After this, following Christ Jesus remained the focal point of Peter's life, and after Pentecost by the power, and leading, and the enabling of the Holy Ghost, Peter encouraged others to also follow Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

ACTS 3:13 *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.* We know what facts Peter, by the leading of the Holy Ghost, needed to once again point out to these men of Israel; facts they did know; facts they should have known; and facts they must know in order to be saved. Peter continues informing them in verse 13 that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, *...whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.* These were the facts that these men of Israel should have known, that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah, and that Pilate himself was satisfied of His innocence, and had said in LUKE 23:14 that he *...found no fault in this man.* That is why Pilate *...was determined to let him go.* These men of Israel that Peter was addressing in this second sermon should have also known what Peter says next in ACTS 3:14 & 15 to also be true: *...14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 And killed the Prince of life,...* With these words Peter was bring the cross of Christ to the center of their attention. Certainly they all remembered the day when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified.

Notice the titles of Jesus that the Holy Ghost inspires Peter to mention Him being here in verses 14 & 15. First in order Peter notes that Christ is **the Holy One**, a familiar title for thirty times in the Old Testament Jesus is called **the Holy One of Israel**. Thirty is the number associated with THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, or THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST. Forty times Jesus is called **the Holy One**. In his first sermon Peter quoted from PSALMS 16:10 how that this references Jesus Christ of Nazareth as "thine **Holy One**." Secondly in Peter's sermon of ACTS 3 we find that he also calls Jesus by the title of **The Just**, which term Stephen in ACTS 7:52 will also use calling Jesus **the Just One**. Then the third title Peter uses to point out Jesus in ACTS 3:15 is the **Prince of Life**, a unique term found only this one time in scripture. So by using these different titles Peter was pointing out who Jesus of Nazareth was. The majority of these men of Israel had no doubt witnessed the crucifixion. Peter then emphasizes the one fact they needed to know in order to be saved, which fact is again pointed out in the last part of ACTS 3:15 concerning Jesus, the **Holy One** and **the Just**, the **Prince of Life**: *...whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.*

With these facts clearly laid out on who Jesus Christ of Nazareth was Peter answers their greatly wondering questioning on what has happened to the lame man. ACTS 3:16 *And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.* The literal translation of this verse from the Greek-English Interlinear New Testament reads: "And on the faith of His name, this one whom you behold and know was made strong (by) His name, and through faith in His name gave to him this complete soundness before you all." We read earlier in PHILIPPIANS 2:9 that Jesus has been given a name which is above every name. So we should note here in ACTS 3:16 that by the name of Jesus, which is above every name, and through faith in His name, which is above every

name, hath made this lame man strong; and the faith which is by Him, whose name is above every name, hath given this lame man this perfect one hundred percent soundness, and the ability to leap, and walk, and praise God in the presence of you all. We should also see that the One highlighted in verse 16 is Jesus, the **Holy One** and **the Just**, the **Prince of Life**!

Before we leave ACTS 3:16 there is something further manifested here because this certain lame man by putting his faith in Jesus, the **Holy One** and **the Just**, the **Prince of Life**, and by doing so was given *...perfect soundness in the presence of you all*. This is quite a statement the Holy Ghost inspired Peter to make here, and I am confident Peter didn't even realize the depths of these words. There is a double meaning found in this verse as we will now explain. When the lame man gave heed to Peter and John in verse 5, and by faith believed Peter's words of ACTS 3:6 *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk...* he reached out by faith and took ahold of Peter's hand, *...and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength...* verse 7. Here in ACTS 3:16 we learn that it was *...through faith in his name* (in Jesus name) *hath made this man strong..* ! This lame man who was dead in trespasses and sins couldn't spiritually walk or leap or praise God could he? But the instant he believed in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth he at that moment passed from death unto life, received strength in his soul, leaped in his spirit, and began to spiritually walk with God. Instantly and *...immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength...* verse 7, and he physically leaping up stood, and walked, and went leaping into the temple with Peter and John praising God at the top of his lungs. These were things he had never before done! It was *...through faith in his name* (in Jesus name) that *...hath made this man strong..* both spiritually, and physically. He was given *...perfect soundness...* spiritually, and physically. With this term *...perfect soundness...* we find another unique statement recorded by Luke. "Perfect soundness" comes from the Greek word *holokleria* {hol-ok-lay-ree-ah}, number 3647 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which means perfect health; and of an unimpaired condition of the body, in which all its members are healthy and fit for use. The cure was complete and entire. With this understanding let's read again ACTS 3:16 *And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all*. And notice that this lame man was given was given *...perfect soundness...* spiritually, he was given was given *...perfect soundness...* physically, and he was given was given *...perfect soundness...* mentally. No wonder then that we see him *...walking, and leaping, and praising God...* in verse 8. The most important thing this lame man received here was the gift of Jesus Christ! ROMANS 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*. EPHESIANS 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*. The phrase "gift of God" is found eight times in scripture, and one of the meanings of the number eight is NEW BEGINNING, and certainly this now formerly lame man was given a NEW BEGINNING, and he was also given NEW BIRTH, another meaning of the number eight. I seriously doubt after being lame since birth for more than forty years (as is told us in ACTS 4:22) that this formerly lame man who was healed here in ACTS 3 ever took another step without thanking God. And now that he could walk all indications are that he walked with the Lord the rest of his life. His testimony found in ACTS 3 & 4 is that because of his healing about five thousand more became believers. {Study ACTS 4:4.}

Before moving on here in examining Peter's Holy Ghost inspired sermon of ACTS 3, do you think this lame man was ever told about Jesus before this day? Do you wonder if Jesus during His time on earth ever passed by this lame man before? From the spot he was carried to daily at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, from that viewpoint, did the lame man know anything about Christ? There is no way to answer these questions, but we do know the day these two Holy Ghost filled Kingdom Apostles walked by in ACTS 3 that this lame man learned of the great salvation of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The first sermon the lame man ever heard was the one Peter preached that day. This lame man began to walk that day, and I think we can safely say that he also walked with the Lord from that day forward.

Back to the multitude of the greatly wondering men of Israel who were now gathered to hear Peter's sermon, let's see what happened next. Peter continues expounding, and preaching Jesus unto those men of Israel gathered to Solomon's porch because of the healing of the lame man. ACTS 3:17 *And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, (crucified Jesus) as did also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.* The word "wot" in verse 17 means to know. Peter was expressing the fact that he was well apprised that they were not aware that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah. So in ignorance they crucified Christ, their Messiah. In verse 18 Peter is pointing out that their ignorance was known of God from the eternities past, and that all of God's prophets had predicted that Christ the Messiah should suffer the cruel death He did. Christ suffering the death of the cross was God's divine purpose in order to make atonement for the sin of the world! Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the **Holy One** and **the Just**, the **Prince of Life** did suffer death upon the cross, and hath fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies concerning what took place at Calvary. What these greatly wonder men should do next is stated in the next verses of ACTS 3.

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; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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 an interesting sentence the Holy Ghost inspired Peter to preach here. Often times when I myself come upon a difficult portion of scripture to explain, I go to my 26 translation of the Bible reference book, and come up with an expounded reading of this scripture. An expounded rendering of ACTS 3:19-21 states: 19 *So repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be completely taken away, to the end that in that case there may come seasons of refreshing from the face of the Lord; 20 And he may send forth him who had been fore-appointed for you, your destined Messiah, Christ Jesus: 21 Yet heaven must retain him until the times of the due establishment of all things, of which God has spoken from the earliest ages through the lips of His holy Prophets.*

Now back to the big picture of what Peter by the power of the Holy Ghost was explaining to these men of Israel he was addressing here in ACTS 3. Peter was making it plain and clear here that this lame man was healed, and made whole by the healing power Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom they had recently crucified, who God raised from the dead. By faith in Jesus name made this lame man strong. Peter was emphasizing that Christ Jesus the Messiah, whom you crucified is very much alive. Peter also made it clear to these men of Israel that he (Peter) realized they crucified Christ, the Prince of Life, being ignorant of who He was even though all the Old Testament Prophets had revealed who He was, and even told of the suffering death he must die. Now here in ACTS 3:19-21 Peter was explaining that in order for you men of Israel to receive the benefits Christ provide you by suffering His death upon the cross, that they must repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Let's look at these last facts a little closer.

In his first sermon in ACTS 2:38 Peter also explained that they must repent. We discussed previously that the word "repent" comes from the Greek word *metanoeo* {met-an-o-eh'-o}, number 3340 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and simply means: to change one's mind for better; to heartily amend with abhorrence of one's past sins. There are fourteen red-letter "repent" statements made by Jesus recorded in scripture. Fourteen is the number of DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Thus we find here in ACTS 3:19 that again Peter was preaching to them about SALVATION.

Next we find in ACTS 3:19 that Peter preached that they should be converted. Converted come from the Greek word (*epistrepho* {ep-ee-stref'-o}, number 1994 in our Strong Greek Concordance), and is translated into the following words or phrases in our Bible: turn; be converted; return; turn about; and turn again. The word "converted" is found nine times in scripture, the number associated with FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS. This concept of being "converted" is taught by the Prophet Isaiah in ISAIAH 6:9 & 10, which scripture is also quoted and expounded upon by both Jesus in MATTHEW 13:14 & 15, and again by the Apostle Paul in ACTS 28:25-27. ISAIAH 6:9 *And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye*

indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Jesus said in MATTHEW 13:14 *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* We find here that verses 14 and 15 is a direct paraphrasing of ISAIAH 6:9 & 10 in Jesus own words. In MATTHEW 13:14 we find that the hearer hears without understanding, and sees without perception, thus essentially they are spiritually deaf and blind. In MATTHEW 13:15 we get a clarification of ISAIAH 6:10, where we find that the main cause of this spiritual deaf and blindness is that *...this people's heart is waxed gross*: literally meaning their heart has become fat, and is language denoting one who is foolish in mind. One author notes that here it means that the people were so sensual and corrupt that they did not see nor understand the pure spiritual principles of the gospel. The last half of MATTHEW 13:15 states: *...lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* The reason that they didn't see with their eyes, and hear with their ears was that their heart before God was wrong in that they didn't see their lost condition as sinners. It was not the desire of God that they should not be converted, but rather that was the effect upon them for their rejecting His message to them. Jesus notes that if they could recognize with their eyes, and hear with their ears their sinful condition, He was there to pardon their sin and save them, thus this would be healing for them. The Apostle Paul in addressing the Jews in Rome upon his arrival there in ACTS 28 also quoted the words from ISAIAH 6:9 & 10, from which Jesus also quoted in MATTHEW 13. Here is what Paul said: ACTS 28:25 *...Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* Paul made this statement after 28 years of personal experience as an Apostle; after years of traveling all over his known world testifying to both Jews and Gentiles alike, noting how stubborn some were to receive the gospel message of the saving grace of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Considering the story told in ACTS 3 when Peter was preaching his second sermon we find the results in ACTS 4:4 that about five thousand repented, and were converted that day. Praise the Lord!!! What made all of this possible was the convicting power of the Holy Ghost. Recall on the night of the last supper Jesus had told His Apostles in JOHN 16:8-11 three things about the convicting power of the Holy Ghost. JOHN 16:8 *And when he (the Holy Ghost) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*

Let's read again Peter's words: 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.* We discussed above that these men of Israel present that day to hear Peter's sermon were instructed by Peter to (1) repent; (2) to be converted, and next we find the reason (3) *...that your sins may be blotted out.* The Greek word used here that is translated "blotted out" is *exaleipho* {ex-al-i'-fo}, number 1813 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and in simplest terms it here means to obliterate, erase, wipe out, blot out. Thus we find that when one repents of his sins, that is, asks Jesus forgiveness of his sins, we find that Jesus is *...faithful and just to forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness...* {1 JOHN 1:9}, and our sins are thus obliterated, erased, wiped out, and forever blotted out.

The fourth point Peter was inspired of the Holy Ghost to state in ACTS 3:19 concerns *...when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.* Brother Copley stated the following

in his ACTS commentary concerning this statement: "The Spirit inspired Peter to declare that the "times of refreshing," promised to them in the Old Testament could only come by the personal return, or "Presence of the Lord." How true is that! He uttered also another solemn truth - those refreshing's were dependent upon Israel's repentance. As we shall see by the seventh chapter, their refusal to turn to the Lord, shut up the heavens and penned up their Lord in the regions above. Hence, their cry, like a vexed widow (LUKE 18:3-8), will bring Him back to deliver them and refresh them beyond measure." Brother Copley also pointed out that Peter did not know at that time how long the Lord would be detained in the heavens before His return.

Peter finishes his thought by stating: ACTS 3:20 *And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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.* The restitution of all things speaks to the time when all things are put right as one translator expresses it. Scofield here notes that restitution means "restoration," which speaks to the restoration of the kingdom of Israel to the land. Recall in ACTS 1:6 before Jesus ascension that the Kingdom Apostles asked Jesus: *...Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* Jesus then told them *...It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power...* ACTS 1:7. Thus we find that *...the times of restitution of all things...* was indeed a thought on Peter's mind still, yet Peter also here in ACTS 3:21 also acknowledged that this was something God *...the Father hath put in his own power...* which things were also *...spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

In his concluding words of his short impromptu Holy Ghost inspired sermon Peter points out some of the encouraging truths they were told by the Prophets of old; facts they were to believe, and appreciate. 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. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 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. 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.*

Let's explore these verses in a little more depth. In these sermons Luke recorded in ACTS, sermons by Peter, Stephen, and Paul, we read of the famous patriarchs of Israel, all of whom were held in high esteem. Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Samuel, and all the prophets are highlighted in Peter's second sermon. David was also highlighted in most of these sermons. In these closing verses of Peters second sermon found in ACTS 3 we find mention of Moses, Abraham and Samuel, and of course God the Father, and His Son Jesus, who is the main subject of this sermon. Peter in ACTS 3:22 & 23 both quotes and interprets by the power of the Holy Ghost what Moses said in DEUTERONOMY 18:15, 18 & 19. DEUTERONOMY 18:15 *The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;... ..18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.* The interpretation of this passage is what Peter said here in ACTS 3:22 & 23. 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. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*

Next in ACTS 3:24 the Holy Ghost inspires Peter to say: *Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.* Peter is speaking here to the men of Israel, who were curious as to how the lame man was healed, and were filled with "wonder and amazement" according to ACTS 3:10. And Peter, by the power of the Holy Ghost, was highlighting Jesus Christ of Nazareth to them, for it was by faith in His name that

this lame man was healed. And here in verse 24 Peter was specifically informing them that all the prophets from the time of Samuel *...have likewise foretold of these days*. In other words Christ the Messiah was foretold by the prophets from the time of Samuel, and “these days” of His living on earth, His suffering and dying upon the cross, and His resurrection, and ascension, and these days of the out pouring of the Holy Ghost, are indeed the very days spoken of by the prophets in which they were living! Peter was getting them to reason in their own hearts the following question, even though he never asked them this: ‘since you are living “these days” foretold of the prophets when Christ the Messiah should come, what is your responsibility? What action should you now take to avoid being ... *destroyed from among the people...* ?’ {ACTS 3:23.} Again Peter didn’t ask this, but by the power of the Holy Ghost Peter did get them to think a little more about all of this, reinforcing why they needed to ...*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...* as Peter told them in ACTS 3:19.

Furthermore Peter next pointed out in 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*. In other words Samuel, and all the prophets subsequent to him, were speaking unto you, the children of the prophets, and of Abraham’s seed, “Ye men of Israel” ACTS 3:12. Peter was addressing “Ye men of Israel” meaning blood descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). This *...the covenant which God made with our fathers...* that Peter was referencing here is recorded in the following five scriptures, and is called the Abrahamic Covenant: GENESIS 12:3; 18:18 and 22:18 (to Abraham); GENESIS 26:4 (to Isaac); and GENESIS 28:14 (to Jacob, who became Israel). The passage Peter referenced here in ACTS 3:25 spoken to Abraham is found in GENESIS 22:18 *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice*. This promise, the Abrahamic Covenant, was confirmed by the Lord, and spoken to Isaac in GENESIS 26:4 *And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*. The Abrahamic Covenant was again confirmed to Isaac’s son Jacob in GENESIS 28:13 and 14, the story of Jacob’s ladder. GENESIS 28:13 *And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed*.

Earlier in this study we mentioned a few facts concerning the Jews, Abraham and Isaac’s seed by whom all the nations of the earth are blessed. In modern times at least 178 Jews have been awarded the Nobel Prize, accounting for 23% of all individual recipients worldwide between 1901 and 2008, and constituting 37% of all US recipients during the same period. In the scientific research fields of Chemistry, Economics, Medicine and Physics, the corresponding percentages in the world and US are 27% and 40%, respectively. (Jews currently make up approximately 0.25% of the world’s population and 2% of the US population). The Jews invented the Polio Vaccine, Radiation, Chemotherapy, the Artificial Kidney Dialysis machine, the Defibrillator, the Cardiac Pacemaker, Vaccination against the deadly “Hepatitis B” virus, the Vaccinating Needle, Laser Technology, the Walkie-talkie, the Refrigerated Railroad Car, High-vacuum Electron Tubes, the Incandescent Lamp, Kodachrome Film, the Blimp, the Adding Machine, Stainless Steel, Tapered Roller Bearings, the Atomic Bomb, the Thermonuclear Bomb, Genetic Engineering, the Nuclear Chain Reactor, Virtual Reality, Jeans, Lipstick, the Ballpoint Pen, Instant Coffee, Television Remote Control, Traffic Lights, Scotchguard, the Flexistraw, Sound Movies, Videotape, Color Television, Instant Photography, Holography. This just scratches the surface of Jewish inventions, and is further proof that what we read above in GENESIS 22:18; 26:4, and 28:14 of how all the families of the earth have been **blessed** by the descendants of Israel. And these are just some of the natural **blessing** by which all the kindreds of the earth have been **blessed**.

When Peter made this statement in 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,... he had no idea, nor any thought of the Jewish accomplishments we just noted. There is a deeper meaning here concerning Abraham's seed by whom all the nations of the earth have been **blessed**. The seed the Holy Ghost was highlighting here was Christ. Jesus Christ of Nazareth was of the seed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through the lineage of David that is carefully recorded in scripture. The Apostle Paul goes to great lengths in ROMANS 4 to point out Abraham's claim to fame, which was *...Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness...* ...ROMANS 4:3, a quote from GENESIS 15:6. In GALATIANS 3 Paul again discusses the same points he covered in ROMANS 4, and writes in GALATIANS 3:6 *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.* Paul in ROMANS 4:16 also makes this same point, and there calls Abraham the father of us all, meaning the father of the faithful. Now back to Peter's Holy Ghost inspired words here in ACTS 3:25 where Peter noted that God said *...unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed*,... what seed was the Holy Ghost emphasizing here? GALATIANS 3:16 probably best answers this question. GALATIANS 3:16 *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.* The seed by whom *...all the kindreds of the earth...* are blessed is none other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!!

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. 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.*

Above we discussed the deeper things revealed in verse 25, and now considering verses 25 & 26 together we find the Holy Ghost emphasizing the **blessings** of God through our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The children of Israel should have been the first to recognize this divine **blessing** to raise unto Israel a Saviour, which is Jesus Christ our Lord. Many Old Testament scriptures foretold of His coming, and now here in ACTS 3:26 the Holy Ghost inspires Peter to tell these men of Israel that *...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.* In PSALMS 32:1 & 2 we find a similar statement: *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* The Apostle Paul referenced this same scripture in ROMANS 4:7 & 8 -- *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.* There are thirty-seven "**blessed is**" scriptures in the Bible, and thirty-seven is the number that points to THE WORD OF GOD. I believe we find the emphasis here in our text of study in ACTS 3:26 to be upon the benefits we have by accepting Christ Jesus as our Saviour, for He was sent into this world by God the Father to **bless** you, and not only to **bless** you, but to **bless** you above all you could ever ask or think or imagine! Brother Hill used to ask us the question, "how much are you **blessed**? Do you know?" Then he would quote EPHESIANS 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* Note the **blessings** the believer has been **blessed** with from God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, these spiritual **blessing** are to only be found "in Christ," for He is the abundant supply, and supplier of all **blessings**! The lame man that was healed in ACTS 3 was instantly **blessed** with eternal life, **blessed** with the forgiveness of his sins, **blessed** with the new found ability to walk, and leap, and praise God, and further **blessed** with all spiritual **blessings** that are found in Christ Jesus! And now at the conclusion of his impromptu Holy Ghost inspired sermon, Peter was making it plainly known that unto you first, ye men of Israel, *...God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*

So Peter's second sermon can be summed up by noting that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was the Son of God, The Holy One, The Prince of Life, who died upon the cross, whom God hath raised from the dead; that Peter and John were witnesses of this fact, that in His name, and by faith in His name was this lame man healed, and that all who believe in Jesus, who God raised from the dead, can by

Him be **blessed** with the forgiveness of his sins, **blessed** with eternal life, for He was sent ... *to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*