

The Times of Refreshing

(Acts 3:19-26)

- I. Definitions.
 - A. refreshing: The action of the vb. in various senses; also, an instance of this; refreshment given or received.
 - B. refreshment: The act of refreshing, or fact of being refreshed, in a mental or spiritual respect.
- II. This study has a two-fold purpose:
 - A. To show that the “times of refreshing” (v. 19), the days of which the prophets foretold (v. 24) is not referring to a future dispensation. Some affirm that these verses support the idea
 - 1. that natural Israel will finally enter into their rightful supremacy and glory at Christ's return, and
 - 2. that repentant, converted Jews in the present dispensation (in contrast to believing Gentiles under grace) *do not* have their sins blotted out until that time and *then* all Jews which have repented and turned to Christ shall reign gloriously with Christ on earth for a “millennium,” and
 - 3. that the church age where believing Jews and Gentiles would be fellowheirs of grace and the promises of Christ in the gospel was a mystery not revealed to the O.T. prophets.
 - B. To show that this text does not conflict with the doctrine of elective, predestinating grace and fully accomplished *eternal* forgiveness for the elect through the work of Christ alone.
- III. Two fundamental rules of Bible study are that “no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation” (2PE 1:20), and “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1CO 2:13).
 - A. The word “refreshing” occurs only one other time in Scripture. **ISA 28:11-12.**
 - 1. The prophecy looked to a future condition for Israel.
 - 2. It looked toward a time of rest, a concept obviously consistent with refreshment.
 - 3. However, even though dramatic signs would attend the exhortation to enter rest, those under consideration would not do so.
 - B. Paul applies **ISA 28:11-12** to the rejection of the gospel *in his days* by people who witnessed the miraculous gift of tongues given to the early church. **1CO 14:21-22.**
 - 1. Signs and wonders like the gift of tongues in the early church were primarily for the benefit of Israel's repentance unto faith in Christ. **JOH 4:48; 1CO 1:22.**
 - 2. Thus, **ISA 28:11-12** was a promise of refreshing rest tied with repentance and faith, a message first sent to Israel. **ACT 3:26; ROM 1:16.**
 - C. There is rest in coming submissively to Christ. **MAT 11:28-30.**
 - D. Paul emphasized to the Jews that rest/refreshing depended upon subjection to the gospel message. **HEB 4:1-3.**
 - E. Those who enter into God's rest cease from their own works. **HEB 4:10-11.**
 - 1. They cease doing things their way in deference to Christ's way. **COL 3:9-10.**
 - 2. They cease relying on their works for justification and righteousness. **GAL 2:16.**
 - F. Most of Israel was not doing this.
 - 1. They were not resting in Christ, but *in the law* (**ROM 2:17**), which is not rest.
 - 2. They were clinging to the impossible “do and live” system of the law for righteousness instead of trusting that Christ was their righteousness.
ROM 10:3-5; GAL 3:10; 5:3.

- G. Thus, there were times of rest/refreshing available for Israel from the beginning of the gospel. **LUK 16:16 c/w MAR 1:1-4; ACT 5:31; 3:26.**
 - 1. This rest/refreshing was repentance and conversion to the gospel which the apostles preached.
 - 2. Repentance is a gift in a space of time that must be capitalized upon, lest God turn men over to their own ways or to arresting judgment. **2TI 2:25; PRO 1:22-32; REV 2:21-23.**
 - 3. Think not that an available time of repentance will always be available.
- H. However, some argue that the times of refreshing must refer to a future blessing for converted Jews which will only be realized when Jesus Christ comes back and establishes His "kingdom." This is because of the language of **vs. 20-21** which do point Peter's listeners to Christ's return.
 - 1. But, the second coming of Christ is the basis for ALL present obedience, whether a person is a Jew or a Gentile. **ACT 17:30-31; ROM 14:9-12; 1TH 1:9-10.**
 - 2. Thus, Peter's exhortation to Jews to repent in view of the return of Christ is substantially not one bit different than Paul's parallel exhortation to Gentiles.
 - 3. The gospel message is the same for Jew and Gentile: "Repent and trust in Christ, Who shall return to judge the world." **ROM 1:16; ACT 20:21; 26:20; GAL 1:9.**

IV. Peter makes clear that there is the promise of the blotting out of sins hinged on repentance and conversion (**ACT 3:19**), the same thing Paul was to preach to Gentiles. **ACT 26:18.**

- A. The putting away of the sins of the elect *in eternity* is an *accomplished fact*. **ROM 5:10; HEB 1:3; 9:12; 10:10-14.**
- B. The *eternal* putting away of sins is not hinged upon our works, repentance, conversion or otherwise. God's election of grace is not based upon the sinner's compliance. **ROM 11:28-29; 2TI 1:9; 2:13.**
- C. There is a *conditional* salvation which is *supplemental* to the eternal glory which Christ has won for His elect. **2TI 2:10.**
 - 1. There is an erasing of past error and the promise of the *ongoing* efficacy of the blood of Christ for God's elect when they turn from sin and obey the gospel. **1CO 6:9-10.**
 - 2. The Apostle John addresses people who are obviously children of God and urges them about a conditional provision of the blood of Christ in the ongoing blotting out of sins when they turn away from sin to obey Christ. **1JO 2:12; 1:7, 9.**
 - 3. Thus, we should promptly confess our sins, repent and obey God to experience mercy which is available through the blood of Christ as He mediates for us. **PRO 28:13; HEB 4:16; 12:24.**
 - 4. Those who are hardened against Christ and His gospel do not enjoy this provision of His blood. Rather, they treasure up wrath towards certain judgment or chastening of God. **ROM 2:4-5.**
- D. An appropriate practical example of this concept is seen here in **ACT 3:19-26.**
 - 1. Peter was preaching to Jews who directly or indirectly had killed the Lord Jesus. **ACT 3:13-17.**
 - 2. They were part of a nation which was filling up the measure of the sins of their bloodthirsty anti-God ancestors. **MAT 23:31-36.**
 - 3. Most of national Israel were destroyed in a bloodbath at the hands of the Romans within forty years. **1TH 2:14-16.**
 - 4. But for those who repented and believed the words of Christ---that remnant entered into rest. Their sins were blotted out. God forgave them in a *temporal* sense and

- provided for their deliverance before Jerusalem was destroyed. **LUK 21:20-21.**
- a. The Roman overthrow was a refreshing to the Jewish Christians for it delivered them from their most implacable enemies: the hardened unbelievers of their own people. **HEB 10:32-34.**
 - b. It was also a refreshing in that it eliminated the vestiges of Mosaic service and fully transitioned the kingdom of God from an O.T. model to a spiritual N.T. model.
5. Thus, they *saved themselves from that untoward generation* (**ACT 2:38-40**) who would suffer the consequences of unbelief. **ACT 3:23.**
- F. Peter's exhortation to the Jews is how the *temporal* judgment of God for our sins may be averted and the assurance of eternal life gained. **1CO 11:30-31; 1TH 1:4-10.**