

The Naked Bible Podcast 2.0

Number 41

“Acts 3”

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With

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Acts 3

There are two focus points in this episode. The first is Acts 3:6, specifically the concept of the “name” and the NT understanding of the term “Christ” (Greek: Christos). Is the term merely an adjective (“anointed”)? Is it a proper name, like a last name? Or is it a title—and if so, who can bear that title? The second is Acts 3:18, where Peter claims, via the words of Luke, that “what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.” The concept of a suffering messiah (*mashiach*) is not found in any verse in the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. Peter does not cite a specific verse from the Hebrew Bible here, but makes a blanket statement, as though to say that, as a collective whole, the Old Testament points to a suffering messiah. How is this possible?

Here is the paper referenced in the show:

[Christ – Anchor Bible Dictionary](#)

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 41, Acts 3. I'm your residential layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you?

MSH: Pretty good. Glad to be back again.

TS: Good deal. Well we got a lot of positive feedback from our Q&A episode so that was good.

MSH: Well that's good. We only had four questions but as one e-mailer referred to, at least one of them is an epic rabbit trail, I guess it served the purpose.

TS: Good. Well this week we're going to jump right in to Acts 3.

MSH: Alright. Well, what I'm going to do, I'm going to read through the whole chapter. We'll take a few minutes do that in case people are listening and don't have a copy of the Bible with them, and then I want to focus on two items in the chapter. And I'll tell people what those are after the reading. In Acts chapter 3 we read,

3 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. ³ Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. ⁴ And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." ⁵ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. ⁹ And all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

¹¹ While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's. ¹² And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

¹⁷“And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.
¹⁸But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. ²²Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. ²³And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’ ²⁴And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. ²⁵You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ ²⁶God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

MSH: That's the end of chapter 3, so a pretty dramatic scene. Now, what I want to focus on might seem a little arcane, at least one of them anyway, two focus points in this episode. The first one is in verse, well, verse 6 where Peter says to the lame person, the lame man, ‘I have no silver or gold, but what I do have, I give to you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Rise up and walk’. I want to focus on this line about in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. We had similar language back in Acts 2:38, if you remember again, controversial verse, ‘but repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins’, and so on so forth. This whole thing about the name is a familiar element to Luke's Gospel and also to the book of Acts, the same author, the person of Luke, who, of course, was not one of the 12, was a Gentile. But it's a familiar scene, and not just in his work, but as we're going to see a little bit later on this whole thing about names that are associated with Jesus, the name Jesus, and then the term Christ, as well.

For Luke, the name of Jesus isn't just, again, something that he was called as a boy. It's a reference to the real presence of Jesus himself. So, you put faith in the name in the book of Acts in the New Testament. You're baptized into it. Miracles are worked through it. Salvation is found in the name. The disciples preach the name. They suffer for the name. Again, these are what scholars would call circumlocutions, basically, different ways of referring to Jesus himself. And that links us back, again, for those of you who've read the first draft of my Myth book, the Myth that is True, now it's referred to as the Unseen Realm, which is going to be out in May. I do a lot in that book about what scholars refer to as the name theology. And the focus there is the Old Testament. We do a little bit with the New Testament. But in the Old Testament sense, the name, again, referring to God as the name was another way of referring to God himself. And so, when the New Testament writers are doing this of Jesus, and you have passages in the Gospels like John 17 where Jesus in praying to God says, ‘I have revealed your name to them,’ the point is not that Jesus was informing the Jews that he preached to what God's name was.

They have the Old Testament, God's name, again, I am that I am, Yahweh, is in there thousands of times. So Jesus isn't coming to earth and saying, hey, guess what guys? I know what God's name is. Let me tell you. That's absurd because they had it and they had it over and over again. What he's talking about is that I, again, when he prays in the garden in John 17 and

he says, I have revealed your name to them, to those who follow me, he's saying I've revealed you. The name is God. I have revealed you to them. You are manifest through me. I am, again, God in flesh. I am the name in flesh. It goes back in John chapter 1, 'the word made flesh', and then the name sort of picks up the same idea. And it's familiar from the Old Testament where the name is personified as a person, as God, so on so forth. We do a lot of that in the in the Unseen Realm. Here, again, there's this sense that this phrasing, the name of Jesus, is another way of referring to Jesus himself.

And so there's this conceptual linkage between the idea of the name, again, something you get baptized into, you work miracles through, salvation is found in it, all that sort of thing, that language, the same language, is now present in the New Testament. Except this time, it's directed to Jesus. So I think that's kind of significant. When we look back at Acts though, we have here in this line the name of Jesus Christ, and I want to talk a little bit about both names, *Iésous* in Greek, Jesus, and, of course, Christ, which is Greek for *Christos*. And the audience may not realize but there's actually bit of controversy about the term *Christos* in the New Testament that gets banted about by scholars. They're really three ways to look at it, three ways to understand it both the New Testament and also, since the New Testament is written in Greek, also the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which is the Septuagint. The term *Christos* is found 531 times in the New Testament.

And you will see three kinds of usage in the New Testament. Not so much, a little bit in the New Testament and then also in the Septuagint, and here are the three. Sometimes *Christos* can be a simple adjective that means anointed because *Christos* is the Greek translation of Hebrew *mashiach*, anointed, again, just an adjectival description. When it's used to refer to a person, it would be 'anointed one', but adjectivally it's very common. For instance, in the Septuagint, when you get references in Leviticus to the anointing oil, in Greek in the Septuagint, that would be *elaía te khris'-mahin*. Again, you have the word *Christos* in the accusative case. It's just an adjective. So is that what we're doing here? Is a reference to Jesus in the New Testament is just to someone anointed?

You say well, why is that even an important question? Well, it's because there were lots of people anointed in the Old Testament in Jewish thinking and their anointed status didn't mean they were divine. It just meant that they were sort of chosen, and therefore, anointed for a specific task or service. For instance, prophets would anoint kings. You would have judges that could be anointed. You could have a priest that would be anointed, specially selected for a task. And so some scholars would say, well, this is all that Christ means. It's just some guy that's sort of a prophetic figure that either was picked by God to do a specific thing or was perceived to be picked by God to do a specific thing. There's nothing about a suffering messiah figure, a divine Messiah figure. It's just a guy appointed for task, nothing supernatural to see here. Again, that's why, again, it's a controversial thing.

People just want to say that's just an adjective. The second of the three ways you can look at *Christos* is as a title. And this would typically be a situation where you would translate it as the Messiah or Messiah with the M. For instance, in John 1:41, we read 'we have found the Messiah' and then the text actually adds 'which means anointed one'. 'We have found the *messias*, which means *Christos*, the anointed one. And so, in that particular usage, it's very clearly not just in adjective, and it's not our third alternative, which is a proper name. It's actually a title and a very important title, a very specific title for the Jewish mindset. And we're going to come back to this title thing in a little bit. The third option for *Christos*, which I just

briefly mentioned there, was a proper name, kind of like either a first or last name. Because you'll see in the New Testament the two, a pairing like this, Christ Jesus or Jesus Christ. Well, the first one, Christ Jesus, it almost sounds like Christ has become a proper name alongside Jesus.

And Jesus Christ it almost sounds there like sort of a last name. So is that the way we should understand *Christos*? And if that's the case, again, there's really nothing terribly significant about it because this was a term that was used outside the New Testament and it doesn't really necessarily denote divinity. The only really denotes a specific figure in Jewish theology is the one where it's a title, where *Christos* specifically points to a messianic figure, a deliverer figure, a supernatural deliverer figure. So when it's a title, that becomes important. Now that's the setup. Again, *Christos* 531 times and you get three different possibilities, so the question is, again, this is where the debate always goes, how the early Christians understand *Christos*. Did they understand like modern Christians do now and Bible believers and so on so forth. Again, there you can see sort of the whole debate is, I wouldn't call it skeptical but it sort of veers that direction.

Well, the fact of the matter is that overwhelmingly in the New Testament, *Christos* is used as a title. It has a special theological significance. Now of the 531 occurrences of *Christos* in the New Testament, 383 of them are in Paul's writings. Paul's writings are fairly short, so it's about half of the New Testament, half the New Testament, well over half of the references to *Christos*. And of that 383, 270 are in specific letters of Paul that even critical skeptical scholars don't deny Pauline authorship to those letters. But, again, the audience may not realize that in New Testament scholarship, the letters of Paul there's disputes over several of them. Did Paul really write them, and there are some who say no, some say yes. But then there's this other group that nobody doubts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon, and everybody accepts those as coming from the hand of Paul. And most of the references, again, to *Christos* is a title, are to be found in these epistles. Again, that's an important thing.

So there's a heavy concentration in Paul. In Paul's letters, in fact, are the earliest New Testament writings. Now just because the Gospels come first in our New Testament doesn't mean those are the first ones written. The earliest books of the New Testament are certain letters of Paul. The Gospels come a little bit later, again, toward the end of the life of at least John and you have Mark, of course. Luke, again, is a Gentile who traveled with Paul. He's writing during and after these trips to these churches where Paul's writing letters, so that's going to postdate Paul's letters as well. In the earliest stuff that we have, *Christos*, again, emerges as a really significant title. Now 180 times *Christos* occurs with Jesus as in, again, the combination Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, is there's no apparent difference, by the way, between Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus. It's kind of like Simon Peter, and when Peter gets called Cephas or Simon in the same passage. They're sort of just interchangeable.

But the one oddity to this is the word *Christos* and *Kurios*, which means Lord. They only occur together two time's in the New Testament, in Paul's writings. They only occur two times whereas a 200 times he'll have *Christos* with the name Jesus. So there's this really stilted distribution. Paul almost never refers to *Christos* and *Kurios* alone together, Lord Christ. It's only occurs two times. It's in Romans 16:18 and Colossians 3:24. And both those, because they're the only two times, a lot of scholars think that they are sort of being used there to

contrast the service of Jesus, the worship of Jesus, with other foreign lords. And so they're not really construed as, even there, a proper name, Lord Jesus, Jesus sort of looks like second position. It can function as a proper name, Lord Jesus. Jesus would be like the last proper name. Lord would be a title. But the reverse, Lord Christ, just doesn't work. Christ is not a proper name there. And so, what I'm getting at is the way that the apostles, particularly Paul, use Christ, use *Christos*, telegraphs something.

He telegraphs that it's not a proper name. It's not just an idea of someone anointed to do something. It's a very specific connotation, a very specific designation for one individual. So that's why Christ is used hundreds of times with Jesus and also, throwing in the word Lord, ok? So you get a situation where, overwhelmingly, Paul and others, when they think of the word *Christos*, they think of this man Jesus, who was this thing, this person, this figure. He was the Messiah and that's how they use it. It's not a proper name and it's not just in adjective. It becomes a full-blown theological message, a title. So *Christos*, again, for Paul is used exclusively for Jesus. Paul never finds it necessary, think about this, in all the stuff Paul wrote, you will never see anything in Pauline material where Jesus or where Paul finds it necessary to state, 'now Jesus is the Christ'.

He never says that. He just says Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus or our Lord Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus our Lord or something, this combination of words that's clear that he is just assuming that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Paul never adds any explanation. We never get Jesus the Christ as a phrase at all in Paul. For Paul and early Christians, again, to the people he was writing to, Christ is just inextricably linked to Jesus and therefore, it gets linked. The term gets linked to what happened to Jesus, what Jesus did. He died on the cross. He rose again, so on so forth. So Paul, again, the way he uses it and it's him that using it, the overwhelming number of times, it's unambiguous to the people, again, who were reading the material. Even just using *Christos* in conjunction with the name Jesus or Lord, it telegraphs an idea. And the idea is that this person was the Messiah of the Old Testament who suffered and died for you. All these things get tied together just with one term. Now in the Gospels, you have a little bit of a variation, where sometimes you get a little bit of a proper name feel, but overwhelmingly even there, *Christos* becomes a title.

And I'm going to post another article on this because there's a lot of good material written on this that helps you parse how New Testament writers are using, not only *Christos*, but also the name Jesus in other things as well. I have an article I will post with this episode from Anchor Bible dictionary on Christ by Larry Hurtado, who's a very well-known New Testament scholar who I happen to know. He's a guy. This is his thing. This is where he's at. High Christology is basically his, one of his major focus points. So in Mark, the identification of Jesus as the Christ, again, is coupled in many times with a challenge to the Jewish leaders about who the Messiah is or should be, what they should expect. Matthew, again, does the same thing. Matthew, *Christos* is a major title for this person Jesus. And Luke, as we've just seen, Luke will, sometimes you get something that approximates a name but most often, again, it's a title. And the same thing with John.

John has two instances, John 1:17 in John 17:3 where we have Jesus Christ where it could be, again, sort of a formulaic name. But all the other occurrences, there are dozens of them, all the other occurrences *Christos* is a title. So all your New Testament writers are trying to telegraph something. They're trying to connect through using *Christos* as a title. You're trying to connect Jesus with Messiahship in the Old Testament. You say, well, Mike, that's the most

obvious thing in the world. Actually, it's not. Because to a Jew, why would the New Testament writers bother to do this hundreds of times, connecting Jesus, this guy who was killed and put on a cross and, of course, the apostles say he rose from the dead, why would they over and over and over and over again, trying to reinforce the idea that this guy was the *Christos*, was the Messiah. He is the person who bears this title of the Old Testament deliverer. Why would they do that? The answer is a really simple. The answer is that for a Jew, a Jew did not expect a suffering Messiah.

So our second focus point, and I'm going to return back to Jesus and sort of preview our second focus point. The second focus point is actually verse 18 where Peter says, 'God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ would suffer.' If you look in the Old Testament, you will never find that in a verse. Peter claims, by virtue of what Luke is writing, that God foretold a suffering Messiah but the concept of a suffering Messiah is never found in any verse in the Old Testament. You say, well, Mike, what about Isaiah 53? Guess what? The word *mashiach* never occurs in Isaiah 53. Jews knew this, especially the religious leaders that describe the Pharisees. And so, for them, what happened to Jesus did not fit the messianic profile. The fact that he was put across, and, of course, they don't believe the resurrection, but even if there was a resurrection, the fact that this happened to him and cannot be connected in any verse in the Hebrew Bible with the term *mashiach* to them meant Jesus was not the Messiah. This is why the New Testament writers over and over and over and over again use this term as a title. Every time, they do it, hundreds of times they do it, it is a theological assertion. It's a theological proposition. It's a claim.

It's a truth claim. They need to connect Jesus back to the Messiah of the Old Testament. Now if you've read my blog for any amount of time and if you've read the first manuscript of what is now the Unseen Realm, I actually cover this in the book. This notion, it's actually in chapter 28 of the Unseen Realm. Again, I realize it's not out until May, but if you listen to it after May, you'll know what chapter to look at. It's true that there is no verse that has a *mashiach* in the context of suffering. That's absolutely true. The problem is that you're not going to find the profile of Messiah in one verse. I had this whole chapter on what, and again, a whole blog post I can't remember how many years ago it was, but was in response to an atheist that was bringing this up. And it's like, look, the biblical writers and New Testament writers were not morons. What they're doing is they're not quoting verses. They're not proof texting things. You'll notice Peter never even quotes an Old Testament passage in verse 18. He just makes a blanket statement.

Hey the prophets, plural, knew about this. What does he mean? He doesn't actually quote a verse because he knows there isn't a verse that has *mashiach* with suffering in it. What he's talking about is, look, you have to look at the full orb, what I call the messianic mosaic. The full profile of the Messiah is not in a verse or a set of verses. It's scattered. The elements of the profile are scattered everywhere throughout the Old Testament. You do not quote a verse to get the messianic profile. You have to build it from pieces scattered all over the Old Testament. It's not just about the *mashiach*. There are other terms, other ideas, other themes that are important, and I'm going to return of this in just a second. I want to go back and pick up *Iesus* because I often get e-mails about how *Iesus*, Jesus, is some borrowing from the pagan names Zeus. There's a really good scholarly word for this, and I just want you to be listening here so you don't miss it. And that word is bunk. It is utter nonsense. If you come across someone like a Jordan Maxwell or even if they're in Christian circles, saying that *Iesus* comes from Zeus, you

should just hang a sign around their neck that says I don't know the Greek alphabet and I can't spell any words in Greek.

Jesus comes from Hebrew *Yehoshua* or *Yeshua*, it was the shorter form that was common after the exile. When the Old Testament was translated, put into the Greek of the Septuagint, they retained the short one, *Yeshua*, and then they made it declinable in Greek. That means that you could have a nominative form, an accusative form, so on so forth. They made it declinable by adding an S at the end, and they made *Jesus*. *Jesus*, the S sound there, both of them, are sigma in the Greek alphabet. Zeus is a zeta. So *Jesus* spelled with a sigma, Zeus spelled the zeta. They're not even the same letter in the Greek alphabet. And it's very easy, again, for anyone who knows the language, to know where the *Jesus* came from. It's a transliteration with an S added in Greek to make it declinable. That's all it is. End of hobbyhorse there. I just wanted to throw that in there because I get this e-mail a lot. And it's just bunk to make this argument. So back to the whole thing about the messianic profile, the messianic mosaic, again, our second focus point here, Peter's claim.

Again, there is no verse that gives you the messianic profile. And those of you who know me know what I'm going to say next. This was deliberate. There's no verse for a suffering Messiah because the idea of a suffering Messiah, the thing that the Messiah would have to do, to die on the cross, to die a sacrificial death, that had to be kept secret from, again, the supernatural powers. And I get this from what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2, had the rulers of this world known, again, what was going to happen, had they known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Corinthians 2, around verses 6-8. They don't know what's going on. Yes the, again, demonic forces in the Gospels, Satan himself, knows who Jesus is. They know he's there. He showed up. They know part of the reason he's there, because he wants to kick-start the kingdom of God and reclaim the nations, and all this kind of stuff, but they don't know what the catalyst event for all that is. And they also don't know how doing that would undo the effect of sin that has extended since the fall. They don't know that and that's what has to be kept secret.

And so that's why in the Old Testament, you never get a verse spelling out a specific explanation of what's going to happen and what needs to happen Messiah. Again, *mashiach* never occurs in Isaiah 53. It's deliberately cryptic. This whole idea can only be discerned after the fact. This is why in the road to Emmaus, Jesus has to tell them of all the things that the Old Testament, again, put into this profile. He explains all those things to them. He goes, after the Emmaus road incident, he goes and he, post-resurrection, he goes back to his followers in the upper room there. He appears to them, and it specifically says, point blank, he had to open their minds. So even after he rose from the dead they didn't get it. He had to supernaturally open their minds so that they would realize and look back and see how what he had done, where he had gone, what he said would happen to him, all the stuff, how all of the pieces could be found somewhere scattered in the Old Testament and then reassembled into a complete profile of the Messiah.

The problem with the Jewish view of the Messiah was that it was incomplete. Again, what they were looking for is understandable. I'm not saying that, again, the disciples or any of the Jewish leaders were stupid. What they're looking for is, again, what they're going with, the term anointed, and specifically the king, the anointed King and the promise God made to David in 2 Samuel 7 where the only rightful kings to sit and rule from Yahweh's dwelling place, Jerusalem, would be those from the line of David, the Davidic covenant. Well, when they go into

exile, then after the exile, they get this sense that the monarchy needs to come back. It needs to be revived. And so you get prophets talk about a new David coming back here, a new *mashiach*, a new anointed one. Well, specifically, they're referring to a new anointed King, someone from David's line. And they describe that event of having the Davidic descendent come and rule as King, again, in these idealized apocalyptic terms and they're linking it to the day of the Lord. They're expecting a descendent of David who would come and be a military deliverer, someone to really get them out of exile, to regather the tribes, and we have our kingdom again. The idea of suffering is nowhere on the radar.

The only way you get it on the radar is to go back in the Old Testament and say, okay, what does the Old Testament say about kingship and who gets to be King. Oh we find out that the King is also God's son, and lo and behold, God's Son is also Israel. Back in Exodus, God uses the terminology. There's some sort of alignment, conceptual alignment between the king and the people. Well, that makes sense because the King sort of represents the people. Well now wait a minute. If the nation is God's Son, the nation in the book of Isaiah is also described as the servant, collectively. And you know what? If you read through Isaiah, Israel's not just the servant. Sometimes there's an individual servant that ministers to Israel to take care of their exile problem. So you have a corporate servant and an individual servant. And you know what? That individual servant is spoken of as a prophet, and didn't Moses say that there would be a prophet? Again, you can get these concatenations of ideas, and you wind up in Isaiah 53 and *mashiach* is not there suffering. But the servant is. The servant, the individual, who represents the nation who is the son of God and represents the corporate son of God who is the ruler, and they are, again, the ruling nation.

This is why you get in the later chapters of Isaiah, the idea of the kingdom of God extending over all the other nations. These are dozens of points, these are dozens of biblical theological points scattered throughout the Old Testament about one individual who is related to a corporate entity called the people of God in some way. And there's this whole profile that comes together, this whole picture, that is what Peter was talking about in Acts 3:18, when he says God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, all the prophetic voices, that his Christ would suffer, and he fulfilled that. He's not saying, there's this verse that I know that nobody else knows about that the *mashiach* was suffering. No, the *Christos*, the Messiah, that's only one title for this guy. There are other titles for this guy, and the Jews are only looking at one aspect. They're only looking at one thing. Why? Because they desperately wanted to be delivered and because they're looking back at their Old Testament and they're thinking anointing means someone enabled for a task specifically after the exile, the king. They're looking for a king and kings have kingdoms.

And to have the kingdom means you're not ruled by anybody else. Again, this is what they're looking for. And Peter is saying, look, you missed it. You just missed it. And he can't claim to have figured it out on his own because he was in the upper room where we read at the end of the Gospels that Jesus had open their minds. He had to show them after the fact what was going on. And the reason that they didn't know was because God didn't want them to know because it needed to be cryptic. It needed to be a secret, because had the rulers of this world known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. As it stands, when Jesus shows up and says the kingdom of God is among you, or he does these things, again, I describe in the Unseen Realm, to provoke the powers of darkness into killing him. The whole thing with going up to Caesarea Philippi, the whole rock passage, and then the Transfiguration after that, it's only after

that point, think about it, and the Scripture specifically explicitly say this. At that point he began to teach them about his death. Why? Because he's just gone up and provoked Satan, provoked the powers of darkness there at Mount Hermon and all the baggage that goes with that, the gates of hell, he's going up and he's saying I'm here. Do something about it. He's picking a fight and a week later he's dead.

A week later he is dead. As soon as they get down off the mountain after Transfiguration, he says, well, it's time for the Son of Man to go up to Jerusalem to die. And that's when Peter rebukes him. It's like, what, you know, this is crazy talk. They have no idea. Why? Not because they're stupid and we're just smarter, no. They know because Jesus had to tell them after the fact. And we know because they wrote it down. We have the Gospels and epistles. We have the pictures that they were able to see after the fact. If we were in their shoes, we would have been the same way. We would not have known because we would have been looking at the Old Testament myopically, again, looking for the deliverer. And that just wasn't the point. There is this kind of stuff just lurking. They're subtexts. They're just things going on, again, that aren't spelled out, but they're subtexts to what they were thinking, their theology, what's happening to them, and it leaks out in a phrase they use here and there. Some sort of, again, throwaway line that, to us, just looks like extra material or filler.

But again, some of these things, again, these little throwaway instances telegraph things to someone listening, who again, is part of that world. When they start using *Christos* as a title for Jesus, that's a theological claim. You're asking me, just by using the term that way, you are demanding that I believe something or reject it. And look who he's preaching to. He's preaching to the Jews. They know what, again, Peter's trying to do and it's hard for them to buy it because, again, that's not how they're thinking about the Messiah. But over and over, it's this guy. And if you don't believe it, why is this guy walking? Why can we speak in other languages? That's going to go through the book of Acts. Why is this happening? Why did that happen? How are we able to do this? If what we were saying wasn't true, none of this other stuff should be happening. When Paul comes along, Paul is able to reason with them really in depth in certain ways, certain respects in the Scriptures. He saves a lot for Gentiles because he's writing to churches. But he's going to the synagogue everywhere he goes and that's where he starts his ministry, every place he goes. There's just a lot of subtexting going on that we lose because we're not alive back then. We didn't just live through these events, and they did.

TS: And I think it's very interesting how in the Old Testament, it didn't allude to him suffering like you said because it couldn't because the powers that be would've known and they never would've crucified him.

MSH: Right. The only way you're going to put together is to put together all of the motifs and then think to yourself, now wait a minute. King, Son, prophet, servant, servant, servant. Where have I seen servant before? Anyway, you wind up in Isaiah 53. Oh, I wonder if. Again, it's this concatenation of ideas that if you start following the breadcrumbs and you start, again, it's like putting together a puzzle. Well, this would make sense here, and this one over here. This looks like it goes over here, and after you put enough of them down, a picture starts to form in your mind. And that's what's going on with the Old Testament. And Jesus, again, they didn't get it, again, the road to Emmaus, that whole scene going back to the upper room, opening their minds. Looking back, we can see all that but that's only because we have the benefit of hindsight.

They didn't. They didn't have anything. They had to have their minds opened. They had to be shown. And that became their task, to show the people, especially the Jews listening to them, that this is how it worked. We weren't looking for it, either. But this is how it worked.

TS: I'm curious. You've had some run-ins with people talk about Jesus coming from Zeus. When you break it down for him, do they try to give resistance back to you after you explain to them the completely different spellings?

MSH: Usually when I get the question, it's somebody who hears it who is sort of troubled by the thought. And again, the person giving them the thought is like thinking they've won you some sort of point. So I haven't got any direct push back but I do get, yeah, I told a person this and that was basically the end of the conversation.

TS: People are making a living off that and trying to bring the Greek mythology into the Bible is kind of a big...

MSH: The whole zeitgeist thing there, I like to put it this way. Look, there's a reason why people, even atheist scholars who in some cases don't even believe Jesus existed, just like the zeitgeist people, there's a reason they haven't gotten on the zeitgeist bandwagon, because the arguments don't work. They don't hold up. In other words, the zeitgeist will try to get people to look at only, and that's the key phrase, only the similarities between this divine figure in one religion over against Jesus and the New Testament. They try to get you look at only the points that sort of looks similar, and you never look at the ones that are dissimilar, which are more frequent and more, in many cases, more pronounced that actually demonstrate that a correlation here can't be the intent. Because this difference is actually taking a shot at this other thing over here that you try to compare Jesus to.

You never get into that. And so, scholars, again, whether they have any faith or not, they know the material and they're not just hopping on this bandwagon because they know the material really well. And they know that they would just get shot down by their own colleagues, their own friends if they try to make these arguments. But for the average person watching something like this on the Internet, they don't know that stuff. They're not familiar with the literature. And so, it does generate trepidation and concerns, so that's usually where I hear about it. And I tell people. I'm pretty blunt about it like I was here and I say feel free to quote me. I am not hard to find. Feel free to quote me. If anybody wants to get into it, okay, we'll do that. We'll find some way to engage. But to this point, it hasn't happened. It's not that frequent but I probably get one every few months, you know. Here it comes again, the Jesus Zeus thing. And what I want to say is, look, tell the guy to just go learn the alphabet. And then use a lexicon. That should be the end of that one. Granted it's more complex than that, but on that point, it is that simple. That argument is just nonsense.

TS: Going back to Acts 3:6, when Peter said 'I have no silver or gold', he basically healed that man to walk. In present-day, people talk about having faith beyond a shadow of a doubt and how you can heal if you truly believe 100%. There's been numerous stories documenting, or not documenting, some of these claims of feeling the power to heal and so forth. What's your thoughts on that?

MSH: My first question I would ask is, where's the lame man's faith in Acts 3? Just look at it.

³ Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. ⁴ And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." ⁵ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. [**MSH: They're going to give me alms**] ⁶ But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" ⁷ And he [**MSH: that is, Peter**] took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

MSH: He could feel something happening but there's no faith exercised prior to Peter taking him by the hand and helping him up. He's thinking he's getting money or something. So I raise that to make the point, yeah, I hear these stories, too. I'm not going to be one that says God doesn't heal people today or that God never uses another person to heal someone. I know that's not the case. I know people who had been healed of things that, frankly, there's no explanation for, and their doctors will tell them that to. And I know that happens, and I don't assume everyone who says, hey, I got this impression to go pray for this person and I never met them before, and I prayed for them. And then a week later they called me and said that they were healed from something.

I am not going to say to anyone who has that story is a liar because they're not. They're not looking for personal gain. It's the people who are looking for personal gain that irritate me because, see, then the problem people don't get healed is they just didn't have enough faith. Well, where's the faith of the lame beggar in Acts chapter 3? I want to see it. They do this, again, in answering to his request, he gets a totally different answer than what he thought he was getting. He had no idea of what they had in mind. There was nothing for him to put his faith in. So they just say get up and walk. Here, I'll take you by the hand. And lo and behold, I can walk, Holy Cow. And they don't ask for a faith statement. They don't ask him, what do you believe. They don't do any of that. They just do it. So that would be the way I address those kind of things.

And honestly, I've said it once I've said it 100 times. Look, if I knew I could heal people, I'm not starting a church. I'm not starting TV ministry. I'm not starting anything like that. I am going to the hospital and I'm going to empty the sucker, okay? I'm going to empty it out because if I can really do this, that's what I ought to be doing. That would be why God gave that gift to me, not so that I can make a buck or have a really cool ministry and all this kind of stuff. I would be emptying the place. And then I'd be asking, where's the next one. But I don't see that. I just don't see that in what we think of as this modern healing stuff today. And so I'm critical of it, but at the same time, I know that God is active and can do this. But I think a lot of the people who make these claims are just basically pretenders.

TS: Is there anything else you would like to add?

MSH: No I probably angered enough people in this episode.

TS: Please send your hate mail to ...

MSH: Send it to Trey.

TS: Send it to me and I'll say a prayer for you. How's that?

MSH: There you go.