# PART 1

**KEY**

**BOLD ALL-CAPS:** indicates identical wording between Acts 3 and 14  
**underline:** indicates similar wording or concepts between Acts 3 and 14  
**color:** repetitive elements within each passage  
**M**: indicates the Middle segment of the Opening frame

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<td>OPENING – Healing of a crippled man</td>
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| **O**: 1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o’clock in the afternoon.  
2 And a **MAN LAME FROM BIRTH** was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the **GATE of the TEMPLE** called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple.  
3 When he **saw** Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. | **O**: 8 In Lystra there was a **MAN** sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been **CRIPPLED FROM BIRTH**.  
9 He **listened** to Paul as he was speaking. |
| **M**: 4 Peter **LOOKED INTENTLY 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 or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, **stand 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 Jumping up, he **stood** and **BEGAN TO WALK**, and he entered the temple with them, **WALKING and LEAPING** and praising God. | **M**: And Paul, **LOOKING AT HIM INTENTLY** and **seeing** that he had **faith** to be healed,  
10 **SAID** in a **loud voice,**  
“**Stand upright on your feet.**”  
And the man **SPRANG UP** and **BEGAN TO WALK**. |
| **C**: 9 All the people **Saw** him walking and praising God,  
10 and they **recognized** him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the **Beautiful GATE of the TEMPLE**; 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 ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s Portico, utterly **astonished.** | **C**: 11 When the **crowds SAW** what Paul had done, they **shouted** in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!”  
12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.  
13 The priest of Zeus, whose **TEMPLE** was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the **GATES**; he and the **crowds** wanted to offer sacrifice. |
| **MIDDLE – Teaching addressed to crowd [narrative elaboration]** | **MIDDLE – Teaching addressed to crowd [narrative elaboration]** |
| **O**: 12 When Peter **Saw** it,  
he addressed the people,  
“You Israelites, why do you **wonder** at this, or why do you **stare** at us, as though by your own power or piety  
| **O**: 14 When the **apostles** Barnabas and Paul **heard** of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, **shouting**,  
15 “**Friends**, why are you doing this? |
we had made him walk?

13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him.

14 But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, 15 and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are WITNESSES.

16 And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

M*: 17 “And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.

18 In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

20 so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, 21 who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets.

22 Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you.

23 And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.’

24 And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days.

C*: 25 You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’

26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.”

M*: We are mortals just like you,

and we bring you good news,

that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and all that is in them.

C*: 17 yet he has not left himself without a WITNESS in doing good

—giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy.”

CLOSING – Results: opposition and vindication

O*: 4:1 While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, 2 much annoyed because they were teaching the
people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead.

**M**: 3 So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

**C**: 4 BUT many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

**M**: 19 But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. Then they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

**C**: 20 BUT when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went into the city.

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**PARTS 2 & 3**

In Acts 3, there are several repetitive topoi that dominate each section of the story. In the opening frame, verbs of perception (see [v. 3, 9, 12], look [3:4, 2x], fix attention [3:5], stare [3:12], and recognize [3:10]) play a significant role in inter-relating the action of various characters. In addition, the transition from what the people saw and how they reacted to what Peter saw and how he reacted functions as a hinge linking the opening and middle frames. In the middle frame, the terms ancestors (3:13, 25) and descendents (3:25, 2x) are clustered around repeated occurrences of prophets (3:18, 22, 23, 24, 25). A major topos in the final frame, though not repeated, is the appearance of opponents to Peter and John's message – in this case, the priests and Sadducees (4:1).

Especially in the case of the perception verbs and references to ancestors/descendents, a progressive texture appears to emerge out, and become more dominant than repetitive textures.\(^1\) For instance, in terms of prominent characters in the story, there seems to be a progression from a focus on the crippled man, to the astonished crowds, to the priests and Sadducees. This progression seems to reflect a decreasing receptivity to the apostles' message:

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\(^1\) Vernon Robbins notes that repetition is, in fact, one kind of progression (Exploring the Texture of Texts [Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1996], 10).
while the crippled man fixes his attention on the apostles (3:5) and has faith in the name of Jesus (3:16), the astonished crowd can't seem to understand what has happened and the priests/Sadducees are incensed not only at what the apostles were teaching but at the very fact that they were teaching at all (4:1-3). In this progression, the ancestors/descendants function as a type of hinge that connects the people/crowd to the prophets: the people to whom Peter and John speak are the descendents of the prophets from long ago. And yet, being a member of this "people" is linked to listening to and following the prophet (3:23). Likewise, progression dominates the use of perception verbs. A cluster of verbs involving sight are found in the opening frame, culminating in the people recognizing, with astonishment, that the lame man they brought to the gate of the temple was the same man they now saw walking and leaping and praising God (3:9-10). Yet, the middle frame makes clear that this people lacks the ability to properly see/recognize who this Jesus is and how they themselves are members of that same people who are descendents of the prophets. That is, while they properly recognize the healed man, they fail to recognize ("do not listen," 3:23) who they are in God's on-going story of redemption. This is evident in the final frame, where both of the above mentioned progressions come together in a climactic moment. It is because the priests, captain of the temple, and Sadducees hear Peter and John speaking to the people and recognize the threat they pose that they put them in custody (4:1-3). Despite their efforts, many people hear the message and believe (4:4).

Acts 14 reflects related, but slightly different, repetitive and progressive textures surrounding certain topoi. As in Acts 3, Acts 14 also contains repeated verbs of perception, though in a different pattern than Acts 3. The crippled man listens to Paul (v. 9), then Paul sees
that he has faith and speaks to him (vv. 9-10); the crowd sees the healed man and shouts (v. 11), and then Paul and Barnabas hear what they have said and respond to the man's faith (vv. 14-17). Thus, there seems to be two repetitions in which people see/hear and the apostles respond. In the first iteration, the crippled man attentively hears Paul's message, and so the apostles respond to his faith by healing him. In the second case, though the crowds see the healed man, they fail to recognize who the apostles are (they think they are gods, v. 11-12). As a result, the apostles respond to the crowd's lack of faith. In the closing frame, the Jews from Antioch arrive, and when they see / hear about Paul, they stone him and leave him for dead. Ironically, Paul survives because those who stoned him fail to recognize that he was not dead. This time, the disciples respond by escorting Paul out of the city so that his mission may continue in Derbe. Here, the repetition of what the people see / don't see and what the apostles say / do, seems to underscore a progression from the crippled man's understanding (faith), to the crowd's lack of understanding (mis-directed faith) to the overt opposition to faith of the Jews who stone Paul. In the responses from the apostles and the disciples, blessings are given (the man being healed) or implied (God doing good for the people by providing rains, fruitful seasons, food, and joy, v. 17; the gospel mission continuing to Derbe, v. 20). As in Acts 3, the progressive texture emerges out of the repetitive structure, though in a less complex way.

Likewise, the opening, middle, and closing frames show a progression of characters that moves from the crippled man (vv. 8-10), to the crowds (vv. 11-13), to past generations (v. 16), and finally to the Jews. One major difference between Acts 14 and 3 is that the topos of prophets is completely absent while the topos of ancestors/descendents is minimized and contained in only one reference to "past generations." However, both stories end by shifting
attention to how priests / Sadducees and Jews respond in an adversarial fashion to the message of the apostles.

While several shared features and topoi found in Acts 3 and 14 suggest that they might draw on a common source (see below), what is perhaps most striking is that their progressive textures move in similar trajectories. As in Acts 3, Acts 14 begins with a miracle story in which a crippled man, positioned at the gate of a temple, is healed by two apostles, with the result that the man can walk and even leap in the air. As Pervo argues, these similarities raise the possibility that both stories derive from a common tradition or are compositions that intentionally parallel Jesus’ healing of a cripple in Luke 5:17-26. In either case, a narrative elaboration of the healing story follows. This elaboration, though more complex in Acts 3, functions as a response to the crowds who misconstrue the source or authority of the miracle they have witnessed. This occasions an opportunity for the apostles to connect the true nature of the miracles with a larger story of God’s work in the world. The formal conclusion of both accounts (4:1-4, 14:19-20) provides a report of a confrontation with the Jewish authorities. Although the apostles are vehemently opposed and are imprisoned (Acts 3-4) and stoned (Acts 14), their mission is not subverted. In Acts 4:4, five thousand hear and believe their message and in Acts 14:20, Paul is rescued from the city and immediately continues his mission in Derbe. Even though these stories are both dominated by this progressive texture, the details surrounding how narratives are elaborated are quite different (see Part 5 below).

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2 Richard I. Pervo, Acts: A Commentary (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 98.

PART 4

As already mentioned, Acts 14 bears witness to patterns of interactions between the crippled man and the crowds and the apostles. In terms of narrative texture, the dominant voice in the text is that of Paul and Barnabas. The crowd's voice only emerges in v. 11, and the crippled man never speaks. This observation underscores the centrality of the apostle's message and response, both to the man's need for healing and the people's need for an explanation of that healing. Nevertheless, the crippled man and the crowds play an important role in moving the narrative forward. For instance, Paul responds to the crippled man because he saw that he had faith to be healed (v. 9b). This faith is evident not in a verbal articulation, but presumably in the manner with which the man listened to Paul (v. 9a). In this sense, his listening functions as a type of silent proclamation of faith. The crowds, on the other hand, offer an even more explicit statement about where they stand. The major, if unspoken, premise of the crowd is that only gods can heal. Thus, because Paul and Barnabas healed the cripple (minor spoken premise), the apostles must be gods in human form (thesis; v. 11). This chreia is subsequently refuted by Paul and Barnabas (vv. 14-18). Rather than arguing that the Greek gods cannot perform miracles (that the gods do perform miracles already seems to be an unspoken premise of the crowd), the apostles instead contend that creation itself bears witness to the true God (v. 15, 17).\(^4\) In this way, the narrative texture, which highlights the exchange between the crippled man and the apostles and then the crowds and the apostles, plays a role in advancing the progressive texture of the passage. Specifically, the progression seems to move from the faith of the crippled man to the misunderstanding of the crowds, to the overt

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\(^4\) Pervo, Acts, 356.
opposition of the Jews. Yet, in spite of this intensifying opposition, which even results in physical violence to Paul, the mission of the apostles is not hindered and, in fact, continues to advance into the Gentile world.

PART 5

Despite their many similarities, the different socio-geographical locations of these two miracle stories results in several key differences, especially with regards to the narrative elaborations that follow the initial miracle account. The narrative elaborations in both accounts are found in the middle frames (3:12-26; 14:14-17) of the discourse. However, in Acts 3, the narrative elaboration is the apostles' response to a group of Jewish people who are confused about whose power or authority (v. 12) lies behind the miracle. The response is characteristic of prophetic discourse, as the apostles try to link the power manifest in Jesus to the power spoken of in the prophetic witness. For instance, the one who has made this man strong (v. 16) is the same one who is glorified by the God of the Jewish ancestors (v. 13). Though the people have rejected this Jesus, the apostles clarify that this rejection fulfills what God had foretold through the prophets (v. 17). The time of restoration, which the apostles say was predicted long ago through the prophets (v. 21) is inaugurated by Jesus. Since these people are descendents of those prophets, they will be blessed first by God through his servant, Jesus (v. 26). In this way, the narrative elaboration uses a prophetic discourse in order to link the power evident in the restoration of this man's ability to walk to the ministry of restoration, predicted by the prophets, which is manifest in Jesus. As descendents of the prophets, the people are called to recognize what their forbearers recognized long ago: that God had appointed a Messiah, Jesus,
to be sent to the people (v. 20). What the people were experiencing that day is shown to be part of a larger story in which the Israelites prophets played a central role. As a result, recognizing Jesus as this appointed Messiah is a way that the Jews people can more fully claim their own heritage as descendents of the prophets.

In contrast, in Acts 14, the audience of the narrative elaboration consists of Gentiles from a Roman colony in Asian Minor. They mistakenly conclude that Paul and Barnabas are the human forms of the same Greek gods who are worshipped in that region. In order to counter this claim, the apostles emphasize that they, too, are mortals (v. 15). Instead of challenging the people to recognize that the power of the God of their ancestors is manifest in Jesus, the apostles persuade the people to turn from "worthless things" to embrace "the living God" (v. 15). Creation itself bears witness to the fact that the God of Paul and Barnabas is the true God. Here, the apostles argue for God's existence not on the basis of prophetic revelation, but on a type of "natural theology" or creation discourse. In doing so, the apostles argue in the manner of Stoic philosophers in pointing to the goodness of creation as a proof of God's existence.  

Whereas in Acts 3 an appeal to the people's common ancestry with the prophets of Israel is a central motif in the apostle's elaboration, in Acts 14 it is the crowd's common humanity with the apostles that plays a central role in the apostles' explanation. However, it remains unclear how this creation discourse might be persuasive to the Gentile audience, since they already presumed that the gods existed and were made manifest in and through creation. In fact, this argument seems to have little effect as the crowds continue to offer sacrifices to them as if they

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5 Pervo, Acts, 359.
were gods (v. 18). In either case, a different logic, and a different mode of discourse, is at work here than in Acts 3.

Nevertheless, both narrative elaborations function as refutations of a misunderstanding of the source and power behind the miracle. In both cases, the apostles contend that the power of the miracle does not reside in themselves but rather in God. In both cases, it is likely that the crowd presumed that miracles reflect a divine power. What is at issue is the identity of the God behind the miracle. Also similar is the formal conclusion to each narrative. Though the teaching of the apostles is met with resistance and opposition in both cases, the overall mission of the apostles continues to advance. Although Acts 14 does not explicitly leverage a prophetic rhetorolect as does Acts 3, the closing frame of Acts 14 is not without prophetic implications. The stoning of Paul by Jewish opponents echoes the stoning of Stephen as a result of his witness to Jesus (Acts 7). Thus, even while the middle frame of Acts 14 explicitly lacks a prophetic rhetorolect in its argumentation, the closing frame offers a type of prophetic rhetography that depicts Paul, like Stephen (Acts 7) and perhaps like Jesus himself (Luke 4:24), as a rejected prophet. Likewise, prophetic rhetography is found in the concluding frame of Acts 3-4. Instead of being stoned, Peter and John are put in custody, perhaps in ways reminiscent of the treatment of Jeremiah (Jer 20:2). In both cases, the imagery of resistance evokes a prophetic tradition. What is striking is that the message of the apostles withstands resistance to the prophets themselves. This reality underscores the very point of both narrative elaborations: the power to heal is not to be located in the apostles themselves, but in the one to whom the apostles' message bears witness. That the apostles are stoned and imprisoned in no way
constrains the message of the gospel only further highlights that the power manifest in healing is to be found in the God of whom the apostles speak.