

Acts Chapter 3

Acts 3:1 "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, [being] the ninth [hour]."

"Hour of prayer, being the ninth hour" (3:00 p.m). The Jews had 3 daily times of prayer (Psalm 55:17); the other two were 9:00 a.m. (third hour) and 12:00 noon (sixth hour).

According to Jewish reckoning, the day began at 6 a.m. hence, "the ninth hour" is 3 p.m. The Jewish prayer time was held in conjunction with the evening sacrifices and offering of incense (Luke 1:8-10; Rev. 8:3-4). Peter and John commonly went to the temple to pray at this hour. The Greek imperfect tense could well be translated "used to go up".

Notice here also the closeness of Peter and John. When Jesus was with them, many times He would send Peter, James, and John to do something for Him. It appears that after Jesus returned to heaven, Peter and John were still very close.

Verses 2-16: This passage demonstrates some important truths regarding Bible miracles:

- (1) They always involve demonstrable, physical needs so that they are signs (2:43).
- (2) They involve a complete and perfect work (even in Mark 8:22-26).
- (3) They involve genuine, biblical faith. That is, there is nothing special about the lame man's faith (verses 4-7), nor about Peter's (verse 12). Rather, faith is man responding to God's word and will.

Faith is believing God concerning what He has said, knowing God's will, and then acting on it. This man was healed because God willed it as a sign, and then because Peter acted on what God's Spirit witnessed to him. Salvation is a supernatural work of God, but it is never described in Scripture as a sign or miracle.

Acts 3:2 "And 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;"

"Gate of the temple ... called Beautiful": A large and ornate gate inside the temple mount on the eastern side, separating the Court of the Gentiles from the Court of the Woman.

"Alms": A charitable donation of money.

This Beautiful gate many believe is the same as the Eastern Gate. Some believe this gate to be the entrance to the woman's court. This man was born lame. Whether this was a deformity, or not, the Word does not say.

The people it would be easier to get an offering from, would be the people who loved God. This place would be even more lucrative, since women many times have a softer heart for giving. This was this man's livelihood, since he could not walk. The court of the Gentiles and the women's court was the same.

Acts 3:3 "Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms."

“Into the temple”: Beggars considered the temple the best site to operate because the daily throngs came to impress God with their pious good works, including offerings at the temple treasury.

If we look carefully in the spiritual realm at this lame man lying outside the church door, we can see a society that is crippled by all the sin. Our society seems to have gone mad. Our children are the most confused and crippled of all. They are taught in school that the world revolves around them, and yet they know that they cannot make these giant decisions themselves.

They realize these decisions are too much and they hide in drugs, alcohol, and rock music. They want somebody, somewhere to make these decisions for them. They search for someone who has answers to life's problems. They are spiritually crippled. Looking for solutions, they many times are led off into cults.

As I have said so many times, drugs, alcohol and all these other methods of escape are not the root problem. Mankind is crippled, because we are out of fellowship with God. When I see this lame man above, I see all those struggling people who are crippled by our society.

Jesus Christ is what they are all looking for. Ministers must do as Paul and Peter did here. They must focus in on them and get them to look at what they must offer them. They must show them Jesus in us, so that they can reach out and receive the wonderful healing of not only their body, but spirit as well.

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

Again, here in this lame man we see the crippled world. This man is looking for help wherever he can get it. This searching describes our society so well, ever searching for answers, but many times looking in the wrong places. The only true solution to any problem is in Jesus.

I hear so many people on Television and Radio today trying to figure out what can be done to heal our problems. There is only one answer. The Bible is our handbook for living. All of the instructions for a healthy happy life are explained in its pages. It is the only thing that will work.

Jesus is our Life. All of the other things we do to stop drugs and all other sin is like trying to stop a giant river from flowing with a band aid.

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."

Here, we see Peter giving the lame what he needs, not what he is asking for. This Scripture has been misunderstood by so many. Peter is not saying that there is anything wrong in silver and gold, He is apologizing to the man that he has none to give him. Then he says, I have a much better gift for you.

He says, In Jesus Christ of Nazareth's name you are healed. This says to me that our crippled children in our society are crying for someone to help them. Many want to put them in centers to dry them out, but what they really need is the Lord Jesus Christ to heal them. Give them a brand-new life not centered on self, but centered on Jesus. Then they can walk uprightly.

Acts 3:7 "And he took him by the right hand, and lifted [him] up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength."

We see here, the power of the name of Jesus Christ. When the apostle took this lame man by the hand, he was touching the man as an agent of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that the apostle reaches out to this lame man.

We are an extension of the Lord when we reach out to help those around us who cannot help themselves. This was just the touch this man needed, and strength came, into his feet and ankles, as Peter helped him up by his right hand.

Acts 3:8 "And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."

We must remember that this is the very first time he had ever walked, because he was born lame. Can you imagine his joy as he discovered he could walk? He directed his praise to the correct one as well. He praised God, not Peter. Now he could go into the temple himself.

This reminds me of the overwhelming joy a person has when they are freed from sin and are made alive to follow Jesus.

Acts 3:9 "And all the people saw him walking and praising God:"

Think of all the friends and family who would be overjoyed with him at his miracle. This should stir up their faith in God as well. He has been made new in the name of Jesus Christ.

Acts 3:10 "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."

“Beautiful gate” (see note on verse 2).

Here was a manifestation of Christianity. This miracle was done in the name of the very one, which had been crucified here just a short time before. Perhaps, they had heard of some of the miracles Jesus had done when He was here before. But to have this kind of power in just the mention of His name overwhelmed them.

This miracle would start these people to thinking about the power invested in even the followers of Jesus.

Acts 3:11 "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."

“Porch that is called Solomon’s”: A portico surrounding the temple’s Court of the Gentiles. This was also where Jesus had taught about the Good Shepherd (John 10:23; compare Isaiah 35:6).

This lame man felt that, if somehow, he could hold on to Peter and John his strength would remain. This great number of people ran to marvel at these men. They were confusing this power as if it was in Peter and John, not through the power in the name of Jesus Christ.

This is even a thing to consider today. We must not be too overwhelmed by miracles. We must look beyond the miracle to Jesus.

Verses 12-26: Peter’s second sermon also focuses on the person of Jesus Christ, showing:

- (1) That He is the Healer of this man (verses 12-16);
- (2) That His suffering demonstrates Him to be the Messiah (verses 17-18); and,
- (3) That the delay in His kingdom is due to their unbelief (verses 19-26).

Peter literally commands in verse 19, “Repent” ... [so that] times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

The word translated “when” is used over 50 times in the New Testament and only here is translated “when.”

It should be translated “that,” showing the purpose for or the result of the promised forgiveness. Israel’s nationwide repentance will precede the return of Christ to establish His kingdom (Zech. 13:8 – 14:4; Rom. 11:24-26; Rev. 7:3-10). Peter’s sermon teaches these three things:

- (1) God’s ancient program concerning His kingdom is unchanged.
- (2) This program awaits the return of Christ.
- (3) Israel will share in it.

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?"

We see here, that Peter quickly denies that any power within him is responsible for this miracle. Peter wants the praise directed to the true source of power, the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Peter tells these Israelites that he and John are just men like them.

The only real difference is that they have made a decision to follow Jesus. They have made Jesus their Lord, and in so doing they have allowed His power to operate through them.

Acts Chapter 3 Questions

1. When did Peter and John go to the temple in verse 1?
2. Why were they going to the temple?
3. How often did they go to the temple?
4. Which two disciples were really friendly after Jesus went back to heaven?
5. How long had the man in verse 2 been lame?
6. How did he get to town?
7. Where did he stay every day?
8. Why did he stay there?
9. What is another name for the Beautiful gate?
10. What was this the entrance to?
11. The court of the Gentiles was the same as what?
12. What did Peter and John tell him to do when they looked at him?
13. What is the spiritual meaning of all of this?
14. He gave heed unto them, expecting what?
15. What two things did Peter tell him he did not have to give him?
16. What name did Peter use when he told him to rise and walk?
17. How did Peter help him up?
18. What happened to the man to let him know he was healed?
19. Where did he go when he walked?
20. What did he do besides leap and walk?

21. What did the people see?

23. When the man held Peter and John, what did the people do?

24. What did Peter ask the people?