

## ACTS 3

### A Lame Man Healed

This section deals with the healing of a lame beggar, and reactions to the miracle. The miracles were to authenticate the message. Instead of Jesus performing miracles under His own authority, Peter and others heal in the Name of Jesus. In **chapter 2**, a miraculous event occurred, which caught the attention of the people. Peter took advantage of the excitement to proclaim the truth about Christ...leading into a message on repentance and God's plan of salvation. A similar situation happens here, only with a somewhat different reaction.

#### **A. The healing of the paralytic at the Gate Beautiful. READ ACTS 1-10**

##### **1. (Acts 3:1-3) The request of the paralyzed beggar.**

**V1 Peter and John went up together:** Both commissioned by Jesus and recognized as *apostles* – special ambassadors of Jesus. **Acts 2:43** told us, *many signs and wonders were done through the apostles*.

**At the hour of prayer:** Peter and John continued their Jewish custom of prayer at certain hours of the day. They were *not* going to the temple at the hour of sacrifice. **Why would they skip the sacrifice?**

**The ninth hour:** (3 PM...the second of 3 times of prayer.) It was the hour when Jesus cried, '*It is finished*'.

**The gate of the temple which is called Beautiful:** Historian Josephus described this gate as made of Corinthian brass, 75 feet high, huge double doors, so beautiful that it "*greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold.*" (Stott)

**V2-3 A certain man lame...asked for alms:** A lame man would not have been allowed on the temple area, so he sat at the entrance to the temple area. There was a strong tradition of alms-giving in Judaism, as an act of righteousness. But God had something better in mind.

##### **2. (Acts 3:4-6) What Peter said to the lame man.**

**V4 Fixing his eyes on him:** The man must have been encouraged when Peter and John looked at him. He thought he had a gift coming.

**V5 He gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them:** The lame man returned the eye contact, perhaps stretching out his hand to receive a gift. He was correct in **expecting to receive something from them**, but he received much more than money!

**V6 Silver and gold I do not have...What I do have I give you:** Peter didn't have any money, but he had authority from Jesus to heal the sick. (**Luke 9:1-6**). Peter and John had something more for him, than simply supporting him in his condition.

**In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth:** "Jesus was from Nazareth – he was a Nazarene, and this had been used to insult Christ during his life on earth. But now Peter waved it like a banner." - Hughes

##### **3. (Acts 3:7-10) The healing of the lame man.**

**V7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up:** It was one thing to say, "**rise up and walk**," but it was a greater thing to take the man's hand and lift him to his feet. Peter received the *gift of faith* in **1 Corinthians 12:9** – a supernatural ability to trust God in a particular situation...here, under the specific prompting of the Holy Spirit. **Immediately his feet and bones received strength:** The healing was instantaneous and complete.

**V8 Entered the temple... walking, leaping, and praising God:** As soon as he was healed, he did three good things. **First**, he attached himself to the apostles. **Secondly**, he started to use what God had given him. **Finally**, he began to praise and worship God.

**V10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms:** This man was more than 40 years old (**Acts 4:22**), crippled since birth. He was a familiar sight at this temple gate. Jesus may have passed him without healing him. Because of God's timing...perhaps it was for the greater glory of God that Jesus heal this man through His apostles. This was a very public healing, which attracted a crowd of unbelieving Jews.

#### **B. Peter preaches to the gathered crowd.**

Peter seizes the opportunity to proclaim Jesus Christ as God's Glorified Servant in the remainder of this chapter. The servant theme comes from passages in **Isaiah 40-53**. He makes sure they understand where the power came from to perform this miracle and addresses Israel's rejection of Christ. **READ Acts 11-18**

##### **1. (Acts 3:11-12) Introduction: Why do you think we have done something great?**

**V11 Held on to Peter and John:** **Why hold on?** Since he could walk, it wasn't for support. Perhaps he held onto them out of gratitude, because he was used to needing support, not wanting to let them go or out of a combined sense of fear and surprise – since a crowd quickly gathered.

**V12 When Peter saw it, he responded to the people:** Peter took advantage of the gathering crowd. He knew that the miracle got their attention. They were amazed but weren't saved. Peter knew that the crowd needed to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, and a call to repent and believe.

**Why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?**

Peter denied that the healing was due to either his **power or godliness**. Peter knew it was all of Jesus.

**Why do you marvel at this?** Jesus healed all sorts of people when He walked this earth, so why should it seem strange that He continues to heal?

## 2. (Acts 3:13-15) Peter preaches Jesus.

**V13 God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:** Peter made it clear that he spoke to them about the God of Israel, the God represented in the Hebrew Scriptures.

**His Servant Jesus:** The sermon's focus was all about Jesus. Peter drew attention to the idea that Jesus was the perfect **Servant**, spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures (**Isaiah 42** and **Isaiah 52:13-53:12**).

**Whom you delivered up and denied:** Peter boldly set the guilt of Jesus' death squarely where it belonged. **Pilate was determined to let Him go**, but the Jewish mob insisted on the crucifixion of Jesus (**John 18:29-19:16**). **This does not mean** that the Jewish people *alone* were responsible. The Romans were also...but they would not have crucified Him without pressure from the Jewish leaders, and the Jews could not have crucified Him without Roman permission. It was sin that put Jesus on the cross.

**V14 Holy One and Just/Righteous One:** **Holy/Righteous One** is used more than 40 times in the OT as a title for Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel. (**Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2**) and also for the Messiah. (**Psalm 16:10, Isaiah 53:11, Isaiah 32:1, Zechariah 9:9**)

**Asked for a murderer to be granted to you:** While the crowd rejected Jesus, they embraced a criminal and murderer named Barabbas (**Luke 23:13-25, John 18:39-40**). Peter was no longer afraid to confront their sin.

**When Peter spoke of sin**, he used the word **you** several times.

- You delivered up and denied
- You denied the Holy One and the Just (Notice that twice Peter had accused them of *denying* Jesus (**Act 3:13, 14**) – something Peter had himself done.)
- [You] asked for a murderer to be granted to you

**V15 And (you) killed the Prince of life:** A new title for Jesus. The term can also mean “*author*”, as in the source of life. **The Prince of life** could not remain in the grave. The apostles were **witnesses** of the fact.

## 3. (Acts 3:16) How the man was healed.

**16 Through faith in His name, has made this man strong:** The man wasn't healed by his own faith. He expected no more than a coin or two. It was in the **Name of Jesus** that the man had been made whole. This means more than Peter saying, “*in Jesus name*.” Peter did this in the authority and power of Jesus, not in the authority and power of Peter. Peter would not even take credit for the *faith* that was exercised in the healing (**the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness**).

In making clear that it was the Name of Jesus by which the man was healed, the Jews would understand that this power was *the same power as that of God*. And to understand that Jesus was resurrected, alive, and was the promised Messiah.

## 4. (Acts 3:17-18) Explaining the sufferings of Jesus.

**V17 Yet now, brethren:** Though Peter spoke boldly about their sin, he still connected to them as **brethren**.

**I know that you did it in ignorance:** They called for the execution of Jesus in ignorance of God's eternal plan. They were called “*sins of ignorance*”, as adverse to “*intentional sins*”. This did not make them innocent, but it defined the nature of their guilt. If we sin in ignorance, it is still sin; but it is different from sin done with full knowledge. However, their ignorance was not an excuse.

**V18 He has thus fulfilled:** Their evil did not derail God's plan. Joseph could say to his brothers, “*you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.*” (**Genesis 50:20**) That same principle is still at work in our lives!

## 5. (Acts 3:19-21) Peter calls them to repentance. **READ ACTS 3:19-26**

**V19 Repent therefore:** As he did in his first sermon (**Acts 2:38**), Peter called upon the crowd to **repent..**

Peter's goal wasn't simply to make them feel bad. It was to encourage them to repent and believe.

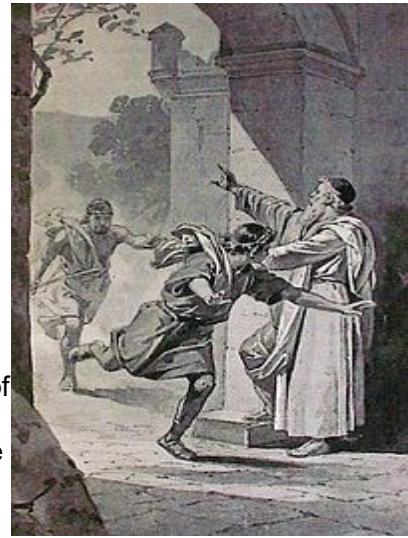
Repentance describes the act of *turning around*. Peter made **repent** a word of *hope*. He told them that they had done wrong; but that they could turn around and become right with God.

**And be converted:** Peter knew the necessity of *conversion*. It's not as simple as "turning over a new leaf"...*in the flesh, anyone can do that*. It is being a *new creation* (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). It is better translated, "*Turn to God or return to God*". One commentator connects this with the imagery of the cities of refuge in the Old Testament, and thinks Peter told them to flee to Jesus as their place of refuge.

**The cities of refuge** were part of the distribution of the Promised Land among the twelve tribes of Israel. The Levites were not given land to develop. They were to be the priests of the Lord and the overseers of the tabernacle. They were to be distributed throughout the land in 48 cities throughout the land (**Numbers 35:6-7**). Six were designated as cities of refuge. The cities were Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan (**Joshua 20:7-8**).

**Mosaic Law** said that anyone who committed a murder was to be put to death (**Exodus 21:14**). But for unintentional deaths, God set aside these cities where a murderer could flee for refuge (**Exodus 21:13**). He would be safe from the avenger (**Numbers 35:19**), until the case could go to trial.

If they found the attacker acted unintentionally, he would return to the city of refuge and live there safely until the death of the high priest in office at the time...then he could return to his property. If the attacker left the city before the death of the high priest, the avenger would have the right to kill him. (**Numbers 35:24-28**)



**That your sins may be blotted out/wiped away:** This was the **first benefit** of the repentance Peter presented to them. The one who repents and converts is forgiven their sins. **Blotted out:** "To remove completely". The idea of wiping ink off of a document. God would wipe away our record of sin just like that.

**So that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord:** This was the **second benefit** of repenting and turning to God. "**Times of refreshing**" and...

**V21 "Times of restoration of all things"** refers to the time when Jesus will return and rule the earth in righteousness (the spiritual & national restoration of Israel). Jesus will remain in heaven **until the times of restoration of all things**. Since the repentance of Israel is one of the **all things**, there is a sense in which the return of Jesus in glory won't happen until Israel repents. (**Matthew 23:37-39, Romans 11:25-27**).

## 6. (Acts 3:22-26) Peter warns of the danger of rejecting Jesus.

**V22 For Moses truly said to the fathers:** The Jews of Peter's day were aware of this prophecy recorded in **Deuteronomy 18:18-19**, but thought that the **Prophet** would be someone different than the **Messiah**. Peter made it clear that they are one and the same.

**V23 Every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed:** (**Leviticus 23:29-30**). The destruction promised would become the legacy of this generation of Jews for rejecting Jesus.

This is the **third benefit** that comes from repenting and turning to God – being *spared* this judgment.

**V25 And of the covenant which God made with our fathers:** **Genesis 12:1-3** In the promise to Abraham (**all the families of the earth shall be blessed**) is included the theme of the extension of the gospel to all the world – even to the Gentiles, through the nation of Israel.

**V26 Sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities:** This is the **fourth benefit** that comes from repenting and turning to God...His desire to **turn us all away from our sins**.

**WRAP UP: The lame man** wanted something in particular; but God wanted to give him something much greater. The same was generally true of the Jewish people, who expected the Messiah *in a certain way*. God wanted to give them something much greater. They looked for a political and military Messiah, not one to turn **them from their sins**. As a result, they never say Him coming.

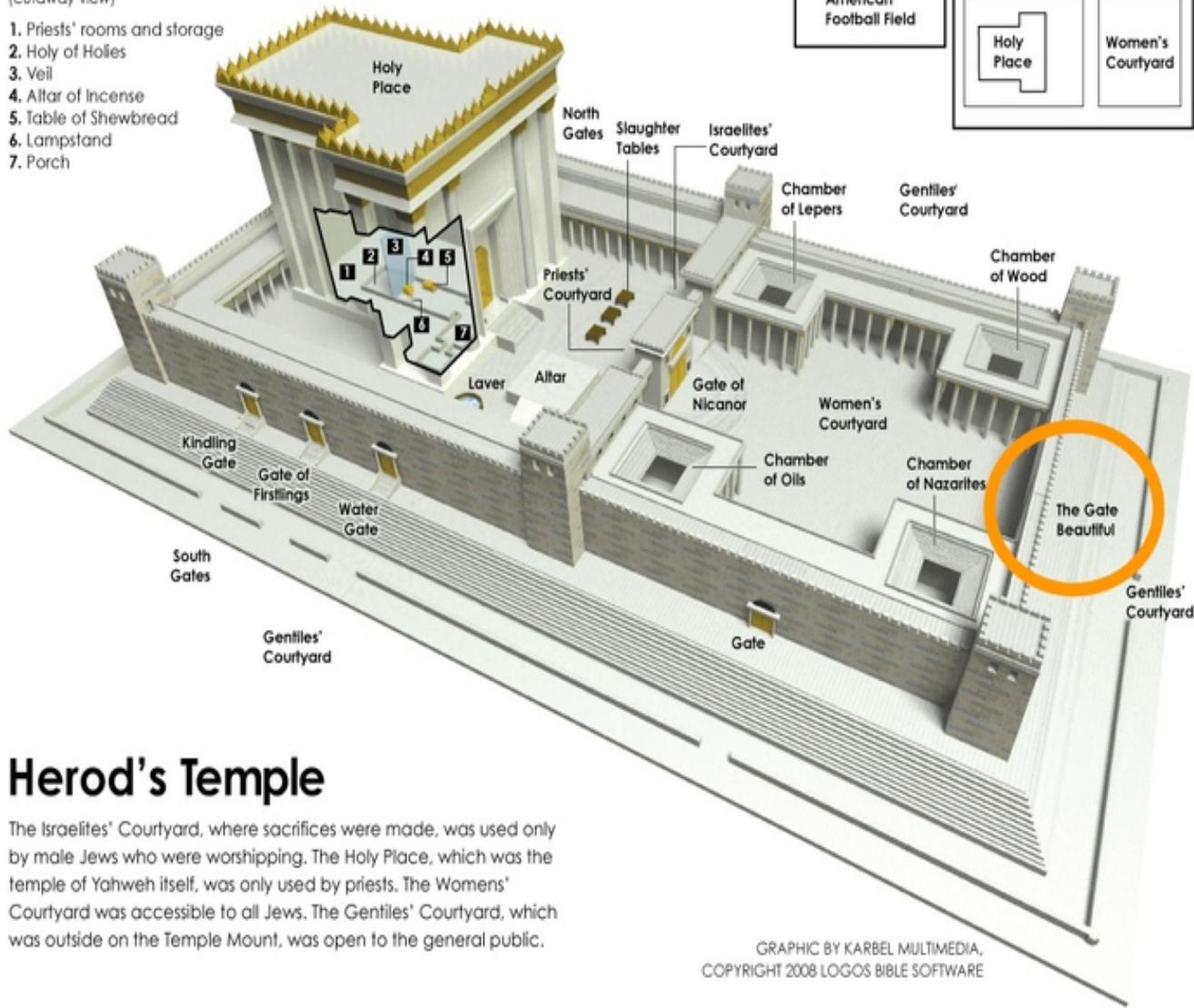
## Do your expectations of God interfere in your relationship with Him?

We think we know Him enough to know how He will act. Yet He challenges those assumptions. He surprises us. The Jews thought they know what Messiah would look like when He finally came. But they assumed He would look differently than what they were confronted with. They paid a high price for their unwillingness to see what was right in front of their eyes. **Can we learn from their mistake?**

## INSIDE THE HOLY PLACE

(cutaway view)

1. Priests' rooms and storage
2. Holy of Holies
3. Veil
4. Altar of Incense
5. Table of Shewbread
6. Lampstand
7. Porch



## Herod's Temple

The Israelites' Courtyard, where sacrifices were made, was used only by male Jews who were worshipping. The Holy Place, which was the temple of Yahweh itself, was only used by priests. The Womens' Courtyard was accessible to all Jews. The Gentiles' Courtyard, which was outside on the Temple Mount, was open to the general public.

## RESOURCES:

**The Moody Bible Commentary;** Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham

**David Guzik Bible Commentary;** [https://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik\\_david/](https://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik_david/)

**11 Assumptions Ruining Your Relationship with God;** <https://www.communewithgod.org/blog/11-assumptions-ruining-your-relationship-with-god/>