

Acts 3

Acts 2:43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

In Acts chapter 3 Luke the author of Acts chooses one of the “many wonders and signs” that “were done by the apostles”, as an example, for his reader Theopolis

Acts 3:1-26 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, [*being*] the ninth [*hour*].

Peter and John ... How great must have been the friendship, of these two men. They had been partners in the fishing business on Galilee when Jesus called them to be "fishers of men," and both of them had earned the distinction of membership in the inner circle of the Twelve who witnessed such events as the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the agony in Gethsemane.

Into the temple ... for some time after Pentecost, Christians continued to frequent the temple, especially at the hours of prayer, not merely for the purpose of praying, but also, it may be supposed, for the opportunities afforded by such occasions for preaching Christ to the people.

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;

The cripple in view here had been disabled from birth, being at the time of his healing more than forty years old (Acts 4:22); the fact of his having to be carried showed how complete was his disability.

Beautiful ... There were nine doors to the temple, all being 45 feet high, except the gate of Nicanor (ni-KA-nor) which was 75 feet high, facing eastward, and very richly adorned.

It is thought by many that this was the door mentioned here.

Of it, Josephus says: It was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold ... it was made of Corinthian brass. The gold had been poured upon it by Alexander, the father of Tiberius

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

The beggar is not represented as having any faith in Christ, or that he had any other concern other than the hope of receiving gifts from those entering the temple. McGarvey flatly declared that "It is evident from the account of the cure that previous to it he had no faith at all."

Acts 3:4-6 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. 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.

Silver and gold have I none ... This clause is not strictly grammatical; and as Campbell noted: None" is an abbreviation of "not one," ... "Silver and gold I have not" was strictly true, and more eloquent.

The legendary story of Thomas Aquinas and Pope Innocent II comes to mind in connection with this verse. Aquinas surprised the Pope and came upon him while he was counting great stacks of silver and gold coins, whereupon the Pope said, "Brother, you see that Peter can no longer say, `Silver and gold have I none.'" Aquinas replied, "Quite true; and neither can he say to the lame man, `Rise and walk!'"

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk ... This means "by the authority of" Christ, showing that Peter and John were acting in a manner consistent with Christ's will, as being representatives or ambassadors of Him.

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

The beggar did not respond by trying to rise up; but the apostle took him by the hand and raised him up, whereupon the strength came. Clearly, the faith of the apostles did the healing in this case, the beggar being absolutely passive in it until the strength came; and, at this point, the miracle had already been accomplished. Such a silly comment as, that "He sprang up and found his feet for the first time in his life." fails to take note of the fact that the beggar did not spring up at all; he was lifted up.

The reference to ankle-bones shows the perceptive and inquiring mind of the sacred historian, physician and medical doctor Dr. Luke.

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

This was the signal for all to behold that the Messianic age indeed had come upon the world. Isaiah had written of the times of Messiah that "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing" (Isaiah 35:5-6ff).

Thus began to be fulfilled the promise of Jesus to the Twelve that great "signs" would accompany them on their apostolic mission

Mark 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

This being another of several such mighty "signs" recorded in Acts, the miracle of Pentecost being the first.

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

These verses report the impression the miracle created among the people who were witnesses of it, the understandable result being the wonder, marvel, and amazement of all; Later even the priestly enemies of Jesus admitted that it was a notable miracle they could not deny (Acts 4:16). They desperately wanted to deny it but could not.

Isaiah 35:3-10 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

The big thing that is promised in this passage is, "Your God will come ... and save you." "This is nothing less than an announcement of the Incarnation!"

Isaiah 35:4-5 Say to them [*that are*] of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come [*with*] vengeance, [*even*] God [*with*] a recompence; he will come and save you. 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Again, we point out that the great promise in Isaiah 35:4 is, "Behold, your God will come ... and save you." Very well, the people who heard that would wish to know, above everything else, **WHEN will it happen? Isaiah 35:5 answers the question. Look at the first word in Isaiah 35:5 and Isaiah 35:6. "THEN," that is, when the "eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped." "When? ... Then," "When the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing!" And when, pray tell, is that? It is, of course, in the times of the Messiah, for there is not a more Messianic message in the entire Bible than these two verses right here. Commentators of every shade of conviction are unanimous:**

Isaiah 35:6 Then shall the lame [*man*] leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, [*shall be*] grass with reeds and rushes.

Isaiah 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it [*shall be*] for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err [*therein*].

How many "ways" are visible in this passage? ... only one. But, does not the text say, "A highway and a way" ... but yet "there is just one way to the pearly gate".

The proof on this is seen in the manner Jesus Christ treated the teaching here. We already know that Christ, and only Christ, is the Highway of this passage; and yet he did not say, "I am the Highway"; but that "I am the Way"

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

For Christ to have said "I am the highway," it might have been interpreted as an implication that there was also another way, or a low way.

"The whole atmosphere of this passage is supernatural." This passage is not referring to any kind of an elevated roadway through a desert, but to the way of Salvation in Jesus Christ. He alone is "the way."

"Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein"... The way is so simple that an inexperienced or unlearned person cannot miss it,

Also another kind of "Fools are not permitted to enter it." The word "fools" here carries a moral rather than an intellectual significance, "Here "fool" stands for the irreligious, and they shall not go to and from in that way of holiness.

Throughout the New Testament, the term "fool" always implies wickedness. The foolish builder who built on the sand, the foolish virgins, the rich fool who mistook his stomach for his soul, "Fools" were always morally deficient persons.

Isaiah 35:9 No lion shall be there, nor [*any*] ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk [*there*]:

Isaiah 35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is not a picture of Jews coming back from Babylon, but a picture of sinners (Jews and Gentiles alike) leaving their sins and coming home to God through Christ. May we come with "songs of everlasting joy" upon our heads, as Isaiah here said, Just think, we are the "heirs of all things through Christ!"

This is the glorious climax of the whole prophecy. Fortunately, we have a New Testament glimpse of some of those redeemed souls coming unto Zion in these words:

Hebrews 12:22-24 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than [*that of*] Abel.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

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.

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.

He held Peter and John ... Clinging to the apostles was a natural expression of the beggar's gratitude; also, perhaps a childish fear had seized him, making him fearful that the healing might not last if he permitted the apostles out of his sight.

All the people ran together ... Thus the miracle and the wonder is apparent in the gathering of a mighty throng of people who would hear the gospel. There was always a design in everything that God did.

Porch that is called Solomon's ... This porch is named twice in Acts, the other place being Acts 5:12, and once in John 10:23. It was located in the court of the heathen on the eastern side of the temple.

The opinion has long been, that this was placed on the spot where Solomon had made the entrance to the old temple, and it still retained its ancient name ...

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?

When God does mighty things through his servants, the natural man is strongly tempted to glorify the servant rather than the Lord.

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let [*him*] go.

Glorified his Son Jesus ... God glorified Jesus repeatedly: In acknowledging him at his baptism and transfiguration, by working through him the mighty miracles, and further by working the present miracle of healing which had been called forth in the "name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

Whom ye delivered up ... denied ... The wickedness of the conduct of God's own chosen people was dramatized by Peter by his emphasis upon their conduct before the heathen governor, and in the face of Pilate's determined efforts of release Jesus.

Acts 3:14-15 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

Desired a murderer ... This was another factor that aggravated the guilt of Israel. The choice of Barabbas by the Jewish populace was as tragic an event as ever occurred, for it was part and parcel of the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus. The consequences of it were also of colossal proportions. Within a generation, an entire company of the most reprobate robbers infested Jerusalem, taking charge of the temple itself, and filling the Holy of Holies with dead bodies.

Acts 3:15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

The Prince of Life ... This beautiful expression is actually a mistranslation, the true reading being "Author of Life Eternal." McGarvey also supported this translation, pointing out that the word here rendered "Prince" also occurs in Hebrews 5:9 & 12:2, where it is properly translated "Author."

Whom God raised from the dead ... As always, the burden of apostolic preaching was the resurrection of the Son of God; and here Peter stressed it, together with the fact of the apostles being eye witnesses of it.

Acts 3:16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

In this verse appears the only mention of faith in this whole narrative; and it is mentioned here, not as a condition of receiving salvation but as an explanation of the power that had healed the cripple, the faith in view being not of the cripple at all, but of the men who healed him.

The power of performing miracles was given to the apostles by virtue of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but they needed to exercise faith before this power could be used

Acts 3:17-18 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did [*if*], as [*did*] also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

Through ignorance ye did it ... This blind ignorance of the people is true ... but as regarding the rulers their ignorance was with their eyes wide open. The leaders of Israel knew that Christ was the long-expected Messiah, a holy and righteous man, and that he was the heir of the theocracy, and the rightful claimant of the throne of David - all this they most certainly knew; because, as Jesus said of them that they said among themselves,

Mark 12:7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

The exact point of the rulers ignorance was the fact of Jesus' being God come in the flesh, the very person who would judge them in the last day; THAT they did not know. The infinite patience and forbearance of God appear in Peter's making every possible allowance in softening the guilt of Israel's rejection of Christ.

That his Christ should suffer, be thus fulfilled ... Moreover, Peter stated here that their ignorant rejection had also fulfilled the prophecies of Jesus' sufferings. Having thus tempered, to the extent it was possible, the guilt of those who rejected and crucified the Christ, Peter at once appealed to them to obey the gospel, announcing the very same terms of salvation which he had previously spoken on Pentecost.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Acts 2:38

Repent

Be baptized

For the Remission of sins

the gift of the Holy Ghost

Acts 3:19

Repent

be converted

sins may be blotted out

times of refreshing shall come

The thought behind "be converted" was nothing short of baptism. The Jews no doubt had witnessed the baptism of persons every day (Acts 2:47); and thus when Peter called upon them to "repent and be converted," they knew exactly what he inferred.

H. Leo Boles also agreed, declaring that: "The blotting out of sins is equivalent to remission of sins; and being baptized is tantamount to be converted"

But the question arises, Why did Peter use this rather indirect way of stating what they must do, especially in view of what he had so flatly said on Pentecost? The answer must lie in the fact of his inspiration. God always gives the skeptic, stiff necked, rebellious and the willful, unbeliever a way out.

Our Lord said shortly before raising the daughter of Jairus (Ja-l-rus), "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth!" (Mark 5:39), thus leaving men room to make their own moral decision. So it is here ...

If one is determined to reject baptism as clearly binding upon all men, this verse gives him a straw to catch at, the excuse to refuse what his own theology has made impossible for him to believe.

For those who desire a fuller discussion of the questions regarding this verse, see J. W. McGarvey's New Commentary on Acts.

Acts 3:20-21 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Whereas in Acts 2:38 Peter had promised that remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit would follow their obeying the gospel, there is here assigned another consequence, namely, that (God) may send the Christ ... Christ had already come and completed the work of his First Advent, making this a reference to the Second Coming, which in this verse is promised as an event that would be hastened by the people obeying the gospel.

As McGarvey said, that: A certain amount of work in the saving of men was to be accomplished before Christ's second coming. This is indicated by the qualifying remark,

Acts 3:20-21 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

There is a definite hint here that Christ's Second Advent will not appear until a certain number of souls have been redeemed; and, that being true, one of the reasons for the severe weeping of Jesus over the fate of Jerusalem due to their rejecting him is evident.

If the Jews had received Christ, there can be no doubt that Christianity would have conquered the world, and God's purpose could have been realized much sooner; and Peter definitely says as much right here. The tragic rejection of Jesus by Israel, had the effect of extending the long agony of mankind, vastly increasing the numbers of men who would be born, and thus fulfilling the curse upon Eve that God would "multiply thy sorrow and thy conception" (Genesis 3:16). Thus, the human race blew its second chance in Israel's rejection of the Christ, this turned out to be a disaster for humanity, fully comparable to the original debacle in Eden. Here, Peter pleaded with the people to obey the gospel that God might send the Christ, in his Second Advent.

Whom the heavens must receive ... means that Jesus will not appear again until a certain time future, at which time "the restoration of all things,"

Until the times of restitution of all things ... The primary and immediate thing in view here is the accomplishment of all those things which had been prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, Acts 3:21b

II Peter 3:12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Despite this, there is the definite suggestion in places like this of a further restoration of "all things," following the judgment.

As most learned men believe: "It means the restoration of the whole universe to its original and planned perfection ... as in the `new heavens and the new earth'"

II Peter 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Acts 3:23 And it shall come to pass, [*that*] every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

THE PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES

Peter pressed his appeal by his presentation of Christ as the mighty Prophet like unto Moses. This quotation is from Deuteronomy 18:15ff, which emphasizes the typical qualities in the life of the great Lawgiver of Israel, Moses.

Significantly, Moses was rejected by Israel, but Moses ruled them despite that; and the inference from Peter's mention of this prophecy is that Jesus, despite the fact of his being rejected, will nevertheless be the ruler of God's true Israel.

Destroyed from among the people ... In its spiritual application, this means that all who do not hearken to that Prophet, who is Christ, shall be lost eternally.

Acts 3:24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

Some have questioned whether Samuel spoke of Christ, but of course he did. It was he who anointed David king and delivered the prophecy of David's perpetual

throne II Samuel 7:12ff, all of which was fulfilled in Christ. Some 333 prophecies of the Old Testament, embracing practically every aspect and feature of Christ's coming and of his life, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, glorification, etc., and of the kingdom he received, - all are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

Children of the prophets ... seems to distinguish among the sons of Abraham, as between the secular descendants like the Pharisees, and those of the true spiritual likeness, here called "sons of the prophets," who were also posterity of Abraham, but in the more meaningful sense.

And of the covenant ... clearly refers to the true Israelites, the spiritual seed of Abraham, such as Jesus spoke of Nathaniel and Zacchaeus (za-KEE-us).

In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed ... The promise to Abraham is recorded in Genesis 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; and 28:14. "All the kindreds of the earth ..." envisions the blessing being poured out upon Gentiles as well as Jews; and "in thy seed" is not a promise that the multitudes of Abraham's posterity will bless mankind, but that the blessing shall come through the seed singular, which is Christ

Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Alexander Campbell commented on the Jews being sons of the prophets, taking a slightly different view, thus:

They were educated by the sixteen Jewish prophets, the same being read in their synagogues weekly. Hence, we presume, they were called sons of the prophets; and therefore ought to have recognized and acknowledged their own Messiah.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Unto you first ... "To the Jew first ..." (Romans 1:16). This was the invariable rule of apostolic preaching; but the words inherently contain a prophecy that others shall receive the gospel also; and Peter's use of this slogan in context is a warning that the right to receive or reject the gospel never pertained to the Jew only, but to the Jew first; and afterward the Gentiles would also be called.

In turning ... from your iniquities ... The great blessing Jesus came to deliver was not a re-establishment of the old Solomonic empire, but a spiritual blessing marked by the forgiveness of sins, the reception of God's Spirit, and a turning of the people away from their wickedness.

Sources: KJV, theWord.com, Google images, Coffman's Commentary & World Conquest