

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

Few Christians today have the urgency of the Gospel in their hearts. So, they rarely witness to their own, or to anyone. The falsity of modern life causes them to give up on witnessing truly. I do not count the automatic quoting of scripture 'witnessing'. I mean personal input by people saved and brimming over with Holy Spirit fervour. It is a stark reality that those who now enjoy their falsity without Christ will one day die and come face to face with their Maker. It is true that those elected by God will be saved. But it is also true that we must speak-forth the Gospel in everyday language.

None of us can be assured that our lives will be long. It might end right now, no matter what age we are. Then we will see for ourselves that what we read of in the Bible is real. God help us all to tell others of this eventual and definite end to our lives. And of the only two eventualities after we die – heaven or hell. Someone told you, now you tell others.

### Verse 1

1.

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

At about 3 pm (or mid-afternoon), Peter and John went to the Temple in Jerusalem "at the hour of prayer". The text does not say they went there to pray, only that it was a time of Temple prayer. If they had been away from Jerusalem, the Temple, and synagogues, the term would have been: "a place of prayer", which usually referred to a river-bank or beach by the sea, so that hands could be washed before prayer.

When Jesus dies on the cross, the veil in the Temple was torn from top to bottom, signifying that the Old Testament rites no longer applied to salvation. But, for unbelieving Jews, the Old covenant ways of worship, including prayer, continued as usual in the Temple. The rabbis taught that prayer should be recited three times a day, morning, afternoon and night. This was a rabbinical, not a biblical, requirement. Temple prayers were of this kind, and were mainly set prayers and statutory prayers. Special prayers were said at times of national distress. In these rabbinical activities we cannot help but see modern priestly systems doing the same things, to the same vain ends.

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

Again we must wonder why apostles, saved by grace, should go to the Temple at the usual Jewish prayer time. Though it is just my guess, it would seem that as they were in Jerusalem anyway, and meetings of Christians were still quite loose and very informal, they decided to visit the former place of worship, not necessarily to pray but perhaps to meet with people as a Gospel opportunity. It is true that we can pray anywhere, and maybe this was the simple rationale behind their entering of the Temple. In Christian terms there is no need to gather together to pray unless there is exceptional reason to do so. At other times we are to pray alone ('in your closet').

### Verses 2 - 8

1.

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;

2.

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

3.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

4.

And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

5.

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.

6.

And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

7.

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

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

It was custom for the sick to gather around gateways to the Temple, seeking charitable money (alms). A man born lame was carried to his usual spot near the Beautiful Gate. Friends or relatives carried him there every day to ask for money gifts. Of course, he had a struggle, being just one of many who did so.

When Peter and John were about to go through the gate, the man begged for alms in the usual manner – head down and hands out and raised. The two apostles stopped and looked intently at the man with unwavering stare. “Look at us” Peter commanded.

The man listened and looked up, expecting to have a coin or two. Peter told him they had no gold or silver. But, he said, what I do have, I now give to you... “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk”! Remember, this was a fully-grown man, crippled from birth. His legs would have been thin as matchsticks with wasted muscles, bent at an angle, unable to support his weight. But, God heals completely and the legs were made instantly strong and normal.

Peter clasped the man’s right hand, pulled him to his feet, and he stood! “Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength”. Instant healing, not partial. The amazed man leapt about like a deer, such was his joy! He followed the apostles into the Temple, walking, jumping and twirling. More importantly, he praised God. When God heals it is instant and full, not slow and partial. And He heals today.

Only yesterday I received a note from a man who had depression for many years. With great joy, he told me that his depression had been lifted from him. And this healing he attributes to the Lord. Believe it – God answers prayer!

### Verses 9 - 11

1.

And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

2.

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.

3.

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.

The Temple was always filled with crowds of local and visiting Jews. So, many saw what had happened. Some of them knew the man personally, and all locals would have seen him by the gate every day. They could not dismiss this miracle or say it was a fake! So, they praised God for His love and mercy. At the same time they wondered about what had happened. Their soul-dead priests and Pharisee-rulers did not perform these things. Yet, two Galileans did! (Very often, it is Christians who are disdained or shunned who show the love and mercy of God).

Meanwhile, as the healed man clasped the apostles to himself in wonder and gratitude, they moved towards the outer porch known as 'Solomon's Porch', as the crowds also followed in amazement.

The Porch was a portico, a covered walkway held up by columns at the eastern end of the Temple. Built by Solomon, it was used by Temple visitors as protection against the sun and rain, and was the only part remaining standing after the Babylonians demolished the original Temple. When king Agrippa took the throne he did not dare knock it down, so it was incorporated into the new Temple. Therefore, the oldest part of the new Temple was Solomon's Porch.

### Verses 12 - 16

1.

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?

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

2.

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.

3.

But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

4.

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

5.

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.

It has long been my claim that the apostles did not have power of their own, and this text proves it. When Peter saw the adulation of the crowds, he was quick to put their perceptions right. 'Why do think we have power in ourselves? Or that this miracle was brought about by our own holiness?' Very clearly, and in opposition to the claims made by charismatic leaders, men have no power. Any miracles associated with men are performed through the power of God, not men.

Peter took the opportunity to rebuke the onlookers, It was they who called for Jesus' death, when Pilate wanted to let Him go. It was they who rejected the God of their forefathers, and caused the just and holy Jesus to be killed, preferring the release of a murderer. So, they killed the Prince of Life whom God raised again on the third day. Here we see that many of those Peter was talking to were witnesses to Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Peter says that this same Saviour is the One Who healed the crippled man!

How many charismatic leaders bathe in the warmth of human adulation? How many claim to have great power? They have nothing. They are fakes and frauds. If they display power it is the

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

power of Satan, not Christ. They have no power within. Only God can cause people to be saved or to be healed.

### Verses 17 - 21

1.

And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

2.

But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

3.

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;

4.

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

5.

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.

Peter then told his hearers that they, and their spiritual rulers, acted sinfully because they were ignorant. He told them that whilst they acted ignorantly, they nevertheless acted according to God's will and purpose. Peter then teaches a basic principle about sin – though we might sometimes act out of ignorance, we are still culpable. We are still called to account, even for believing doctrines that contradict scripture.

Today, many Christians hold lightly to the fact of sin. They sin and think nothing of it. Or, they sin and try to forget it. They have unscriptural beliefs and think it is not sin! I must repeat, that

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

texts only have one meaning. We do not have the privilege of believing any interpretation we wish! There is no biblical warrant to say “I hear what you say, but I believe this.” If what I say, or what any other teacher says, is direct from scripture, then that is the end of the matter. You have no mandate to believe something else. God’s word is not democratic, it is theocratic. He says it, and we must obey! He is not interested in your, or my, personal ‘interpretation’. He wants you to believe and accept what His word says. Full stop.

After telling the Jews around him that they killed Jesus through ignorance, and yet were blamed, he commanded them to repent. Repentance is not an option, it is commanded. Peter told the Jews to repent and be saved, or converted. To be converted, *epistrephō*, is to turn back to the true worship of God. For Jews this has an unique meaning – to return to the love and obedience of God. No other nation or gentile can claim this, for only the Jews were chosen by God as a nation. Only they can be called to turn back to what is true. Gentiles cannot claim this, for they never belonged to God in the first place.

So, Peter gave the Jews an unique option: to return to true devotion to God, so that their sins could be ‘blotted out’, *exaleiphō*... to obliterate, to erase, to wipe out. If they repented, “times of refreshing shall come” from God in Heaven. That is, a time when the Messiah would bless or relieve them at His return. “He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” Jesus would return in the skies in power; the same Jesus who you killed and despised. He will remain in Heaven until the time of His return has come and He returns everything to His power and dominion. And it was all prophesied from the beginning.

### Verses 22 - 26

1.

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.

2.

And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

3.

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

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

4.

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.

5.

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.

Peter now confirms the nature of Jesus: He was a prophet raised up from amongst the Jews, and the Jews were commanded to listen to Him, because, God says, He is "like unto me". Jesus was and is God.

Those Jews who did not listen to Christ would be "destroyed", or 'utterly destroyed', judged by God and sent to hell. All the prophets and Samuel prophesied of the coming of Christ, so there was nothing new in what Peter was telling the people. The problem was not that Peter was saying anything new, but that the people had been taught by false teachers for so long, that they did not recognize the One Who God had sent. So, they did not believe. Even so, no man can take comfort from ignorance; he is either saved in eternity, or he is not. It is not for us to reason why.

Peter reminded the onlookers that they were the descendants of the prophets and the promises of God were made to them; they were the seed of Abraham. God sent Jesus firstly to them, to bless them with the Gospel and to turn them from their sins. The word 'firstly' hints at a coming preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Many today do not see it as a blessing, to be turned from their sins! They love their sins and want to keep them. In my town, as in so many towns, whole streets are given over by our local leaders to sin... wanton drinking. These areas contain large drinking premises, where mainly young people gather and become drunken. They stand for hours with rock music blasting in their ears, hear filth or inconsequential chatter, watch as most stagger in intoxication by alcohol or drugs, and as many have violent confrontations. Then they go home to sleep it off. That is their sole reason for existence.

## Acts 3

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 30 July 2009 09:40

---

If that existence was removed we would have a vast number of young people without a reason to live. They have been given sin on a plate and love to consume it in large quantities. Even those who gather on the edges of this fake 'living' are sucked into the lifestyle, which is sexually-charged, often mingled with perversity, so the sexually perverse are accepted as their equal. In other words we are allowing our young people to reinforce a very sinful lifestyle, which permeates their every thought, providing a barrier against the Gospel. That is why Christians must pray for their release from an environment created for them by Satan. If we do not, then we, the older ones, are just as guilty of the same sins.

In earlier days the pubs were the smoky resort of men who wanted to get away from the drudgery of their lives, or what they saw as drudgery. Christ would have been just as unwelcome as He is today, because these people are living a false dream. They have no idea what true Christian life is like. But a life without Christ is sin nevertheless.

The whole world would be blessed by Jesus, through the Jews first. That is how I am able to give you this study. Do not let your friends and relatives think that their sinful lives are all that exists! Show them in your own lives not just that you are saved, but that your morals are pure and you live in joy. Show them a Christ Who lives and Who is in your very soul, responding daily to your prayers. Only then will some be awakened and will be saved. We are predestinated, yet it is our solemn duty and love to show Christ in our lives and to portray what is the very best of Christian living.

© April 2008

---oOo---

{loadposition btm\_address}