

## **ASTOUNDING MIRACLE SHOCKS JERUSALEM !**

**V 1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.**

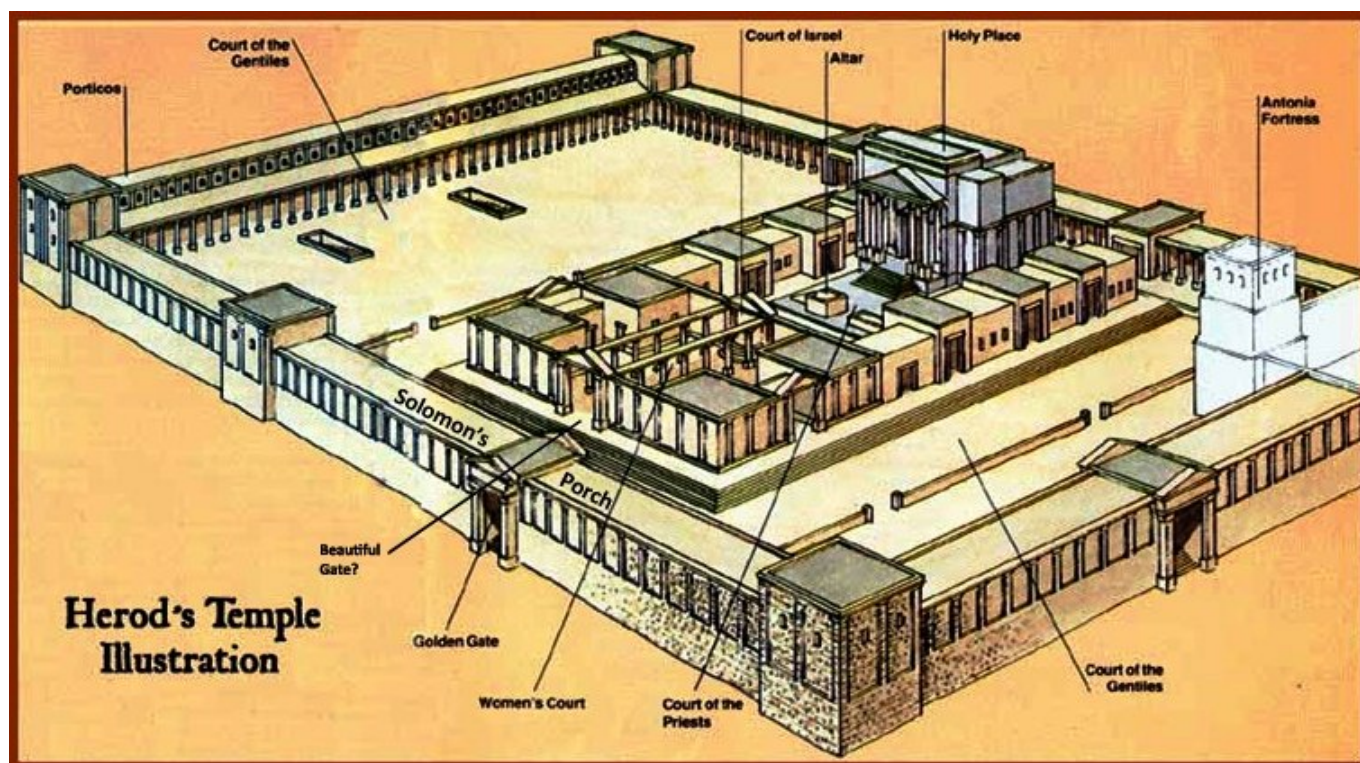
*“Ninth hour.”* 3 p.m. The Jews had three prayer times: 9 a.m., 12 noon, 3 p.m. (Psalm 55:17)

**V 2-3 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 from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms.**

*“Lame from his mother’s womb.”* This man’s physical condition was beyond any hope of repair; to restore a cripple like him to full soundness would take nothing less than an absolute, total miracle of God.

*“The gate... called Beautiful.”* A large ornate gate inside the temple mount on the eastern side, separating the Court of the Gentiles from the Court of the Women.

*“Asked for alms.”* The temple area was a lucrative spot for beggars.



**V 4-10** And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, “Look at us.”

So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

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

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

And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

What an amazing experience! First healing miracle since Jesus' departure. Peter recognized the setup and, not looking at the waves this time, stepped out and took the authority in the Spirit. And what a reaction: firstly, the once lame man “*walking, leaping, and praising God*”, and then amongst the people who “*were filled with wonder and amazement*” at the remarkable transformation of this hopeless invalid

into a whole, healthy individual. Everyone was full of joy and wonder - except for one group who had been thoroughly upstaged by all of this, namely, the priests and Sadducees who were *“greatly disturbed”*. (4:1)



**Then came one of God’s great set-ups: This lame man, sitting by the temple gate. Pentecost was the first set-up God designed to**

get the Word out to a lot of people. Now He picks another which is going to get it out to even more!

He picks somebody that people had seen day after day at the gate of the temple! - Everybody in town knew he was a lame man and a beggar. Along came Peter and John, and what happened? "Sorry bud, we're broke! We haven't got any money for beggars, but we'll pray for you! If you'll trust the Lord and us, God will give you something better than money!" (3:6)

[from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

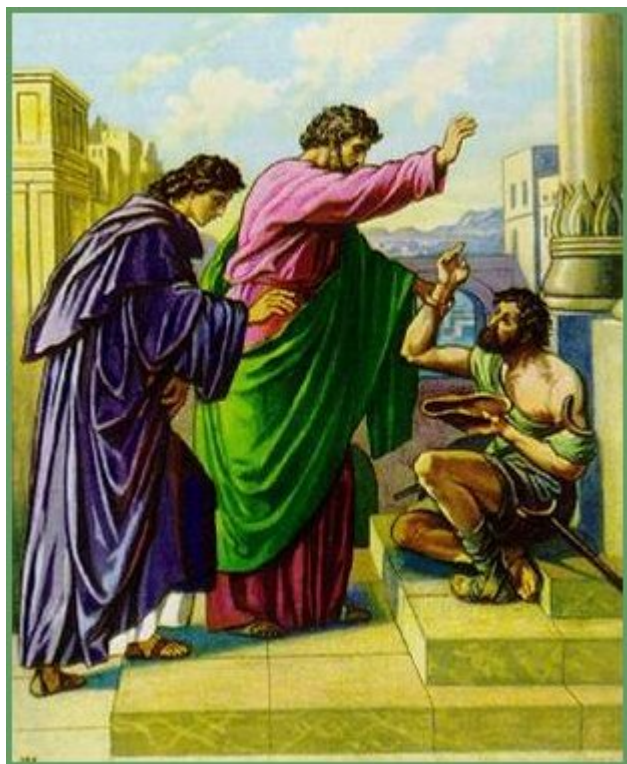
**V 11** Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

*"The porch... called Solomon's."* A portico surrounding the Court of the Gentiles.

*(Jesus:)* Be open to new things in the course of your day. Sense that breeze of My Spirit and let it sweep you along. Follow Me. Peter and John did that, when they went up to the temple one day to witness, and saw a lame man sitting by the temple gate, begging. They felt My nudge of the Spirit, the gentle prompting to touch and heal this man and make him whole, and they did. And the man then went into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God, and his witness and their words won five thousand souls! (See Acts 3-4:4.)

It was just a little thing, a little nudge in the Spirit, a little opportunity to witness and to heal that presented itself as Peter and John were going about the course of their day, a day which seemed like any other to them, but one that led to great things and a great witness because they sensed that nudge and they obeyed. Peter and John had passed that way before and had seen that man before. It was not a new or extraordinary situation. But when they obeyed My check, this nudge of the Spirit, it became an extraordinary experience, because they'd followed Me! It is in obeying Me throughout the course of your day, following Me in the little things, that I am able to do great things through you.

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**V 12** So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: “Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?”

*“Why look so intently at us.”* Giving God the glory is an important prerequisite to exercising any gift of the Spirit, whether it be healing, miracles, or anything else. The power comes from outside, from God, not from ourselves. *“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”* (2Corinthians 4:7)

**So a great miracle happened - the man is healed, and the people were filled with wonder! (3:10) When Peter saw it, he left the temple and kept them wondering? - No! They were wondering what was going on and Peter was ready to tell them! (3:12) He took advantage of the opportunity to preach them a sermon, like he did on the day of Pentecost. So here came another wonderful opportunity for the Word, and what was the result?**

**The most important thing was not the man’s healing, but that Peter saw the opportunity to witness and preach the Gospel! He preached them a pretty stiff sermon, and what happened? (5,000**

were saved!). . .

[from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

**V 13** “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.

“*God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*” Familiar terminology to his Jewish audience, which showed them that Peter was on the same wavelength, talking about the same God and Messiah whom the prophets had proclaimed.

“*Servant Jesus.*” This was a familiar term in the Old Testament for the Messiah: Isaiah 42:1-4, 49:5-7.

“*Pilate... was determined to let Him go.*” Pilate came from a national tradition that valued justice. He knew the crucifixion would be unjust and declared Him innocent six times and repeatedly tried to release Him.

**V 14-15** “But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

“*You denied the Holy One... and asked for a murderer.*” Quite likely many of the same people who had demanded Jesus’ crucifixion were in the crowd that Peter was talking to. The foreigners, who had been targeted on the Pentecost day outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by now had left Jerusalem or else were now part of the newly-established Early Church. Therefore, it is likely that a majority of these people, whom Peter was now addressing, were local Jews, many of whom had approved of Jesus’ crucifixion and so were accomplices to the murderous crime that had been committed against God’s Son on the day of Passover.

Peter’s confident declaration as an eyewitness to the fact that Jesus had been “*raised from the dead*”, along with the healing of the lame man, was proof that the Resurrection had really happened. No one had offered any proof against it, such as Jesus’ corpse. None could deny anymore the Resurrection after all this. How ashamed some people must have felt, knowing they had chosen to set free Barabas, a “*murderer*”, instead of

*“the Holy One”.*

*“Prince of life.” “Prince” translated as “Author” elsewhere. (Hebrews 2:10, 12:2) Jesus is the Source and Author of “life”.*

**V 16** *“And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.*

To make sure the people knew exactly where the power was coming from, Peter stresses again that it was *“through faith in His (Jesus’) name”* that the man was healed and given *“this perfect soundness”*. Peter’s faith was an important part of the equation however. Jesus did the miracle, but His power could not have come through without Peter’s faith in that power.

**V 17** *“Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.*

*“I know that you did it in ignorance.”* As Jesus had prayed on the Cross for the Roman soldiers, *“Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do”* (Luke 23:34), so Peter shows sympathetic understanding for the people, many of whom were probably feeling quite condemned by now.

**V 18** *“But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.*

*“Those things which God foretold.”* As in Genesis 3:15, Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 12:10. It helped for the people to know that the shameful manner of Christ’s death, and their own part in bringing that about, had actually fulfilled God’s plan as outlined before in certain passages of the Old Testament.

**V 19-21** *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*

*and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the*

**world began.**

**“Repent therefore.”** Having got everyone so under conviction, Peter didn’t forget to bring them to the point of decision.

**“Whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things.”** When Jesus returns, this will usher in the Millennial kingdom, a future golden era of peace on Earth. This future era was **“spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets”** - as in Isaiah 11:6-10, 35:1-10; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 20:4,6.

**V 22-23** **“For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.**

**‘And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’**

Peter quotes Deuteronomy 18:15,19. The Jews revered Moses as their first and greatest prophet and interpreted his prophecy about **“a Prophet like me”** as a reference to the Messiah. Peter was warning his Jewish audience they were in danger of losing their covenant blessing because of rejecting their Messiah.

The **“Prophet”** whom Peter spoke of could refer actually to anyone the Lord has raised up to lead His people; **“a Prophet like me”**, Moses said. Moses himself would not have dared equate himself to the Messiah. However, because the Jews had such a respect for Moses, almost to the point of worship, in their minds the **“Prophet”** like to Moses could be none other than the Messiah. In actuality though, all the leaders of God’s people through the ages fulfilled this prophecy, each in his own day. (For more detail see below, **[“Further Explanation”](#)**)

**V 24-25** **“Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.**

**You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’**

Peter quotes Genesis 22:18, 26:4.

**V 26** **“To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”**

**“All the prophets.”** Again Peter reminds the people that their sacred writings had **“foretold these days”**. The Word of prophecy brings assurance in such times of change and uncertainty.

**“And in your seed...”** Peter quotes Genesis 22:18, 26:4.

**“To you first.”** The Jews were privileged to be the first people on Earth to witness the coming of the Messiah and to experience His redemption. Peter’s words also conveyed the message that **“all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”** Although they were **“first”**, the Jewish people were going to have to become equal partners with the rest of the world. Everyone now could enjoy the honor and blessing of God’s favor through faith in their Messiah.

**[Note: This episode in the Book of Acts has not ended yet but continues on into chapter 4]**

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### **Further Explanation about the “Prophet” prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:**

Three thousand five hundred years ago the Lord said through Moses, **“And the LORD said unto me... I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him.”** (Deuteronomy 18:17-18, KJV) Peter said that this prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 3:22-26). However, the prophecy could just as easily have been fulfilled in Joshua, who succeeded Moses as the next leader of the children of Israel. In fact, this prophecy, like many of the prophecies of God, has seen its fulfillment in several different individuals. Following are a few examples:

**1) JOSHUA was a Prophet “like unto” Moses; “And the Lord said to Joshua, This day I will begin to exalt you (raise you up) in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you... So Joshua said to the children of Israel, Come here, and hear the words of the Lord your God.” (Joshua 3:7,9)**

2) **DAVID** said he was *“raised up”* and that *“the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His Word was on my tongue.”* (2Samuel 23:1,2)

3) **JEREMIAH**-God told him, *“I ordained you a Prophet... I have put My words in your mouth.”* (Jeremiah 1:5-10)

4) **JESUS CHRIST**, God’s only begotten Son, definitely fulfilled the Deuteronomy prophecy, as Peter acknowledged. But Jesus also said *“He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also (like fulfilling Deuteronomy 18); and greater works than these he will do.”* (John14:12)

The fact that those who follow Christ will do *“greater works”* does not mean that we are greater than Christ, but it is Christ who works in us, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So doubtless we can expect that God’s people will do greater works, especially in these *“last days”*... for the simple reason that they will be needed to stem the tide of iniquity which will be rising against His children. As the Early Church saw great miracles of proclaiming the Message and of protection from their enemies, so it will be in the very end of the *“last days”* for the followers of Christ.

Jesus Himself said that He was not the only, or the last of the prophets: *“Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets.”* (Matthew 23:34) This included men like Paul, who said his Apostolic or Prophetic authority was a result of *“Christ speaking in me.”* (2Corinthians 13:3) Paul also predicted the continuation of *“prophets... for the equipping of the saints... till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4:11-13) So, as anyone can see... this hasn’t happened yet; therefore Jesus is still sending Prophets... including prophets for our modern day.

Christ was speaking through the Old Testament prophets: *“the prophets... the Spirit of Christ who was in them... testified beforehand.”* (1Peter 1:10,11) And He is still speaking through New Testament Prophets. Is this strange? As the Son of God, He Himself, of course, is much more than just a prophet, but He took on the role of the Prophet of Deuteronomy 18... and the role of King and High Priest and Counselor and Prince of Peace... and so on. (Isaiah 9:6)

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**(Continue to ACTS, chapter 4)**