

Peter and John were walking up to the Temple when the Holy Spirit arrested their attention; He urged them to look down at the lame man whom they'd passed countless times but this time was different; God's plan was to glorify Himself in this man, His child, who'd been created and prepared for this very moment to the glory of God. Notice what the text specifically tells us of this man: his heart had been kept and prepared by God to be one whom, upon his healing, would immediately begin to praise and glorify God! He didn't give glory to Peter and John... he was praising God!

**Chapter 3:9:** *'And all the people saw him walking and praising God: <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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.'*

All the people saw him walking and praising God! This is the primary reason God chose to heal this particular man; God had prepared him so as to be one who would immediately begin giving the glory to God! All the people around recognized who he was and who he had been; they were all filled with wonder and amazement; all the people ran to them.

God was doing two very specific things: first, this was going to be used to further grow and expand the scope and influence of the True Church; this would further confirm the truth of all that Peter, John and the other Apostles were preaching and teaching. But God was also going to begin something else with this miracle: this was going to be the beginnings of persecution of the Church which was, itself, going to begin two specific processes: that of 'weeding out' nominal believers, those who simply wanted to be part of the next big thing along with those who were just joining in because people were being fed and cared for but this would also begin God's plan of scattering the True Church abroad; they were becoming comfortable as they were *'having favour with all the people.'*

Jesus had given a clear command to His disciples: *'...after the Holy Spirit comes upon you: 'Go into all the World and preach the Gospel!'* He had no intention of waiting until they finally 'got around to it,' slowly moving out from Jerusalem and Judea up to Samaria and then to the 'uttermost parts of the World.'

God was going to cause it to happen sooner, rather than later.

But the next thing we'll see is the faithfulness of Peter in turning all glory and honor to the Lord Jesus Christ:

**Verse 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. 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?'*

This is the attitude God wants from us; whether we speak, sing, teach, preach or do anything else which might garner the praise of men; every action causes a reaction; we can adopt the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ, as He always sought to glorify His Heavenly Father, or we can adopt the attitude of Lucifer: 'I will!... I will be glorified!... I deserve the glory and praise of men and angels... of God even! He never really appreciated me!'

**Verse 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.'*

It can be difficult to stand up to the crowd, difficult to honor and glorify God; it's often much easier to simply let it go... let them praise you... and it can really be difficult to speak the truth when that truth attacks and condemns those hearing. Peter is not softening this at all! You delivered Him up! Pilate wanted to let Him go; you are all guilty of His blood!

**Verse 14:** *' But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; <sup>15</sup> And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.'*

What a thing to forcefully cry out to people... and what a thing of which to be accused and guilty!

They denied the Holy One! The only Just One! He was sinless; therefore He did not need justification as do we. He was Holy, wholly innocent of any sin or transgression. You killed the Prince of Life! You only have life

because He graciously created you and has allowed you to grow and prosper; He came to give you Life Eternal; you not only denied Him... you killed Him and you chose, you preferred a murderer to be set free!

Little did they know but that they were actually illustrating why they were acting according to God's will and plan: because of their evil work, evil would be conquered; death would be conquered so much so that even a murderer like Barabbas can be forgiven, cleansed and set free unto eternal life; God raised His Son back to Life so that you can have that same Life: Life Eternal.

Jesus' life was taken in exchange for Barabbas though they were unaware, He was willingly giving His life for Barabbas.

**Verse 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.'*

Remember... this is the transitional period between Pentecost and when the Gospels, Letters and The Revelation were written, saved, copied and sparsely available to pastors and evangelists. This is the time during which miracles are being accomplished, by God, through the hands of the Apostles with their main purpose being, to confirm the Truth of all that the Apostles were teaching and preaching.

This miracle, coupled with what Peter preaches, will be the catalyst for many, suddenly coming to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember also: Jesus said, *'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him... All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out... And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'* John 6

*'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.'* Eph 2:8

The lame man was given, from God, the gift of faith to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. It wasn't faith to be healed; it was faith in Jesus' Name. Peter, however, was given the gift of miraculous faith in Jesus Christ, the faith for healing, for that moment. Peter heard the Holy Spirit tell him to do what he did... God did the healing; Peter simply obeyed and moved forward.

Now, all who have gathered are hearing the Truth of God's Word; we aren't told so, but we can assume that this will be similar to Pentecost when Peter stood up and preached, resulting in the crowd's being 'pricked in their hearts,' and responding, as they did in Acts 2, 'What shall we do to be saved?' Doubtless, there will be those in this crowd as well, to whom God will grant His gifts of repentance and faith to believe, resulting in their Salvation unto eternal life.

**Verse 17:** *'And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.'*

Wot is old English; it means: believe or 'worthy of belief.' So, simply: I believe that through ignorance...

Peter is being diplomatic, here. There may have been those, involved, who were honestly ignorant but there were also those who knew exactly what they were doing, especially their rulers, the Pharisees; they had seen the miracles and heard His Words for more than 3 years; they knew all the Old Testament Prophecies.

Remember: 'Then answered **all the people**, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. <sup>26</sup> Then released he Barabbas unto them...'

Jews have been spiritually blinded and paying that price for 2000 years; only when Jesus returns, at Armageddon, will their eyes be opened and all who are still alive will be saved, altogether, at once.

But... But!!! None of this happened according to any man's or demon's will or plan...

**Verse 18:** *'But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.'*

What a pregnant sentence! This was all God's plan and doing! From Eternity past, God planned to create a glorious Bride for His faithful Son. He chose and elected ever single member of that Bride: the True Church. He planned all Creation; He planned Lucifer; He planned Man and Eden; He planned the Fall and He planned Redemption for that Bride, through His Son: Peter would later write: *'(You were redeemed) with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: <sup>20</sup> Who verily was foreordained before the*

*foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,' 1Peter 1:19*

*'... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'* Rev 13:8

God began prophesying this from the very beginning of His Word to man. In the Garden, His curse on the serpent/Lucifer... that the Redeemer would come through the seed of the woman, that He would bruise the serpent's head while it would merely bruise His heel. God continued speaking, through His Prophets, of the things to come. See the last phrase of this verse: **'...that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.'**

... that Christ **should** suffer... He could have said: that Christ **would** suffer...

Would... is the idea that something, simply, will happen.

Should... carries the idea of something having been done according to purpose and plan.

I will go... it will be done.

I should go... it's the right thing to do... it's what I should do, as if there is previous thought and plan of action.

Christ should suffer, according to God's plan and purpose and, so, **He hath so fulfilled**... God did it; He caused it and directed it and He did it through evil men and fallen angels.

Remember: 'God turns the heart of the king...' and He turned the hearts of Jesus' captors.

Now... lest any of this seem to grate on anyone... remember... what is the primary plan and purpose of God, throughout all time and eternity... not the redemption and salvation of man... not the 'renewal' of the Earth... not to have people to praise Him, although that, in fact, is included in His primary purpose... God's number one plan, goal and purpose in all of time and eternity is but one thing... the Glory of God. From before the foundation of the World... He planned to glorify Himself through Lucifer, through Man and the Fall, through Israel, through the Crucifixion, through the Church, through the Antichrist, through the Final Judgment, through the Lake of Fire, through the New Heaven and Earth and throughout all Eternity. He will be praised, glorified and honored by, in and through all things.

It's all God's plan... all the time and everywhere... always and forever.

God is, in all places, Sovereign, all-Powerful, all-knowing... **in complete control** ... period!!

**Verse 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.'*

There it is! This is what should be the heart of all thought and conversation: seeking the Salvation of the lost.

'Go into all the World and preach the Gospel.'

Sure... we must live in the World, to eat and sleep, shop, buy and sell, raise children... but our ultimate focus can always be: the glory of God, the building up of fellow believers and the Salvation of the lost.

Peter shows them their sin and then offers the remedy; however each one responds is according to God's will coupled with their own will.

Whatever any person's circumstance, when God grants His gifts of repentance and faith to believe, the greatest burden a person can carry is lifted and removed, replaced by peace and refreshing but the full time of refreshing to which Peter refers will come when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in Power and Glory and Israel is finally redeemed and glorified as the head of the nations, never again to be the tail.

**Verse 20:** *'And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: <sup>21</sup> 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.'*

The World of today is terrible; what we are watching is the lead-up to the culmination of all of Lucifer's plans since he rebelled, revealing his desire 'to be like God.' He has been patiently but steadily moving toward the revelation of his 'son,' the Antichrist; there have been many antichrists, through the centuries, but only one, the last World ruler, the only one to have truly ruled the whole Earth, will rise during the final 7 years of Satan's Earthly kingdom of darkness. During that last 7 years, the Tribulation, Satan will have nearly succeeded in his plan to destroy the Earth and all of humanity. (... if I can't rule it, no one will; I will destroy it all...) In fact, if God will not have 'shortened' that time, all humanity will have been destroyed: *'... For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.'*

<sup>22</sup> *And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'* Matt 24: 21

*'For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.'* Rom 9:28

This does not mean that God will change His mind and decide to return earlier than first planned. He will come just in time to keep the Earth and humanity from being completely destroyed; His timing is part of the prophecy. He decided when He would return, that it would be just in the nick of time and then inspired the prophecy accordingly.

When He does return, the first thing He will do is that He will destroy the multiplied millions, in the World's armies, who will have gathered together to come against Jerusalem and the returning rightful King; they will all be killed, in an instant with the Sword that will come from the Mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ; It will, doubtless, instantly decapitate all of them, causing their blood to quickly drain and to then cover a distance of 200 miles, to a depth of nearly 5 feet.

When He returns, the Earth will be a stinking and horrid scene of death, rot and destruction.

He will appoint overseers of worldwide clean-up crews as well as countless birds of prey to consume the multiplied millions of dead and rotting corpses.

But something else will happen: He will establish His Earthly Kingdom, ruling and reigning from Jerusalem, and He will begin the process of the restitution of all things. Everything which was lost, in Eden, at the Fall, will begin to come back; plants, animals, people... Justice, Righteousness, Peace... the next 1000 years will be the absolute best 1000 years yet. The only time and place which will be better, will be what comes after that 1000 years. He will destroy the present Heavens and Earth, He will finally sentence every fallen angel, evil spirit and fallen man to the Lake of Fire; He will create a New Heavens and a New Earth wherein only Righteousness and Holiness exist.

**Verse 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. <sup>23</sup> And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. <sup>24</sup> Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> 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.'*

Every Prophet looked forward to the Lord Jesus Christ: either to His first or His second coming but every one was tasked with pointing their readers toward the Son of God.

Moses foretold the coming of the Messiah and also forewarned that anyone who would not hear and turn in faith to Him would be destroyed both physically and then eternally in the Lake of Fire.

God gave His everlasting Covenant with your forefathers, that through you, all peoples would be blessed by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. God gave Him to you first, to bless you, to lead you to turning away from your sin... but what is not being said, here, is that you, Israel, as a nation, instead, rejected and crucified Him and because of that great and grave sin, 2000 years will be added to your sentence from Daniel 9: *'to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.'* Daniel 9:24

Everything that happened was according to God's will and plan. But, if Israel had not rejected Jesus Christ, His Kingdom would have then been established but, obviously, that was not God's plan; His plan, all along, was to have and to use this past 2000 years to create His chosen Bride for His faithful Son.

We are especially blessed that Israel rejected her Messiah at His first coming... thank you, Israel! But, we're sorry you've had to endure so much retribution.

Israel's rejection of Jesus is a picture of every human who does so. Israel's punishment will have been an additional 2000 years but for every human rejecter, the punishment will be eternal.