

# **ANTIOCH BIBLE CLASS**

LESSON SUBJECT

## **THE MESSAGE FROM THE MIRACLE**

SCRIPTURE TEXT: ACTS 3:1-26

**MEMORY VERSE: ACTS 3: 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.

**INTRODUCTION:** One of the great marvels of all the stories recorded in the book of Acts, is how God very specifically worked along with and even ahead of the disciples in the promotion of the gospel. This was so indispensable, most especially in these early days of the church. The disciples were in so much need of divine guidance, inspiration, help and providence; without it they would have failed. We will too!

Peter and John go to the temple at the ninth hour for prayer. There is a lame man at the gate, who is over 40 years old, known generally by all because he had been lame for so long. He is begging for alms, perhaps his only way of meeting his daily needs. It is difficult for us to tell if Peter had any prior inspiration from God about this occurrence or if he simply reacted upon seeing him. We can safely assume that Peter and others had seen this man there before. Even Jesus could have seen him. This causes you to realize that God has a special purpose in this miracle being performed at this time. That purpose, other than the healing of the lame man, surely must be the creating of an opportunity to preach the message of Jesus name and his resurrection. It was very hard (in fact impossible) to discredit the message of the resurrection in the wake of such an obvious miracle.

While we rejoice with the lame man and his healing, we must see the greater picture displayed here which is Jesus crucified, buried and risen from the grave, with the offer of salvation for all the world. It is also important that the apostles did not allow any credit for themselves, but gave due honor and glory to God for this extraordinary miracle. Peter even called upon his audience to repent. This started out as an innocent time of prayer but has now been transformed by the Lord into a marvelous miracle of personal healing, and more than that, a wonderful opportunity to preach the glorious gospel of Christ. Only God himself could have orchestrated such a sequence of events.

### **DAILY READINGS AND THOUGHTS**

**MONDAY – ACTS 3:1-6. A VISIT TO THE TEMPLE TO PRAY.**

#### **SCRIPTURE.**

- V1.** Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.
- 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; 3. Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. 4. 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.

#### COMMENTS.

Peter and John go to the temple at the ninth hour (about 3:00 PM). It is rather ironic that they are going to the temple to pray, right where all of the recent events leading up to and including the crucifixion of Christ originated from. The temple and its rulers are a "lion's den", as it were, and yet God so marvelously leads and protects them. As they approach the temple they see this lame man begging alms, which very possibly they have seen before. But this man and all others needed something far greater than "alms". They needed the saving message and the experience of salvation offered by Christ. Today's Christianity is caught up in the "what's-in-it-for-me" attitude, which causes us to focus more on physical needs than on spiritual needs. We will put great emphasis on miracles of healing, as though that was an end in itself, when it is only a means to the real end: the salvation of our hearts from sin. People can really get excited about "signs and wonders" and ignore the greater work of the power of the gospel to save.

#### TUESDAY – ACTS 3:7-10. GOD PERFORMS A GREAT MIRACLE IN THE LIFE OF THE LAME MAN.

##### Scripture.

V7. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping and praising God. 9. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 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.

#### COMMENTS.

Peter looked upon the man and said to him, I don't have any silver or gold to give you, but I have something I would like for you to have; "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk". The lame man is completely healed and goes leaping and jumping, praising God into the temple. A bomb explosion would not have attracted more attention. And it happened right in the holy precinct of the temple. With all of the storied, stoic, ritual-bound tradition of the temple, this was an earth shattering, epochal day in Jerusalem. It was time for God to "break through" the barriers of self will and religious hypocrisy, even rejection of the Just One, and do something absolutely wonderful, the authority of the priests notwithstanding. This miracle was witnessed by all the people and they knew that it was no fluke.

#### WEDNESDAY – ACTS 3:11-16. DON'T FOCUS ON MAN; GLORIFY GOD.

### SCRIPTURE.

V11. 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. 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? 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. 14. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15. And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses. 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.

### COMMENTS.

The miracle drew immediate attention of all the people. When Peter speaks, he first of all disavows any credit or glory for what has been done. It is not because of our power or holiness, but only because of the name and the power of Jesus that this man is healed. That is so different from the self-centered, celebrity status and promotional events prevalent today. Reciting some of their own history, Peter declares that God has glorified Jesus, who you condemned and in doing so, demanded a murderer to be released in his place. With uncompromising forthrightness, Peter says that they are witnesses of the resurrection of the Holy and Just One, which you had put to death. It is the name of Jesus and by faith in his name, that this man is healed.

### THURSDAY – ACTS 3:17-24. LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT JESUS.

#### Scripture.

V17. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, 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. 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. 20. 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. 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. 23. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

### COMMENTS.

It was your sins (and our sins) that caused the crucifixion of the Prince of Life. The prophets of the Old Testament foretold that the coming savior would suffer for the sins of man, even becoming a sacrifice

for those sins. There is a remedy for our guilt and complexity in this crime; it is by our repentance to God and turning from a sinful life. So it is not just the healing of this lame man that Jesus has accomplished, but far more importantly, he has made provision for the “spiritual healing” of our sinful, condemned souls. The entire scene in the temple has turned from the physical healing of the lame man to the preaching of the gospel to all those who were at the temple. From there it could only spread further.

**FRIDAY – ACTS 3:25-26. THIS MESSAGE IS FOR US TODAY.**

### **SCRIPTURE.**

V25. 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 kindred of the earth be blessed. 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.

### **COMMENTS.**

It was not just the sin and unbelief of the priests and rulers of Jerusalem that crucified Christ. It was not just the uncaring Roman soldiers that crucified him. It was the sins and sinful nature of Adam’s race, from his fall until the end of time. We were not physically present, lending our support to the actual crucifixion; we did not need to be, our inherent sins made us accomplices in his murder. The miracle of an empty tomb has made it possible for us to have the opportunity of salvation. The message Peter preached on this day is still the message for our day, and it is still effective in all who yield to it.

### **SUMMARY**

A forty year old man, lame from birth, received a marvelous miracle when Peter and John went to the temple to pray. But an even greater miracle on that occasion was the message of the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus, and the offer of repentance and faith to everyone there and of all time. The Lord once told the disciples that they would do greater miracles than they had seen him do. What could that possibly be? He made the world, raised the dead, healed the sick, walked on water and even changed water to wine. There is only one miracle that can be classed as greater than all of these: the preaching of the gospel and the total salvation and change of a sinful life. The miracle of a transformed heart and life! There on that day, in the temple, in what could well be called a hostile environment, Peter preached the NAME OF JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION, offering repentance from sins and the hope of eternal life through Christ. There is no greater miracle. It is still true today. Our chance at eternal life is only through the name of Jesus Christ and our repentance toward him. What a miracle he can perform in an unbelieving, sinful heart.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1. Discuss the entire scene, circumstances and outcome of this lesson.**
- 2. Why do you think that this man had not previously been healed?**
- 3. Discuss and define the difference in physical healing and spiritual healing and the greater importance of the later.**
- 4. God did a wonderful thing for this lame man; discuss his reaction along with what our own reaction should be when God does great things for us.**