

GATE CALLED BEAUTIFUL *Where Peter Healed a Lame Man*

Acts 3:1-11 Peter heals a lame man.

Acts 3:12-26 Peter speaks to onlookers.

Acts 4:1-22 Peter preaches to the Sanhedrin

The following are a few explanatory facts about our story today:

Jewish schedule of time: The day for the Jews would start at 6:00 a.m. The third hour was 9:00 a.m.; the sixth was 12:00 noon; and the ninth hour was 3:00 p.m. There were three times of prayer at the temple – the third, sixth and ninth hours. (William Barclay, “Book of Acts”, p. 28)

Peter and John: These two of Jesus’ disciples were frequently together. Their friendship and fellowship continued after Jesus’ resurrection.

Lame man: This unnamed lame man was over 40 years old (4:22) and was carried to the Jerusalem temple daily by friends and/or family where he could beg for his livelihood. It was a good place to beg for alms. He was lame in both feet from birth.

His healing: Peter and John did not lay hands on him and pray but Peter spoke in Jesus’ name and told him to arise and walk. Peter did this with full authority from Jesus. He had empowered his disciples to heal. (See Luke 9:1). The author of the book of Acts, Luke, was a physician and described in physical detail what happened. This is how it may have occurred: the blood supply increased to the muscle, the brain sent signals to the nerve endings of the ankles and feet, the hardened fluid between the joints was softened and the atrophied muscles regained flexibility. The feet suddenly could bear the man’s weight. (Nelson Study Bible notes, NKJV, p. 1820).

Alms: These were kind deeds arising out of compassion, mercy or pity for the unfortunate. This word is only found in Matthew, Luke and Acts, although it was a principle based on Mosaic Law. The law of gleaning (as we saw in the story of Ruth) was a form of Old Testament alms).

The Gate called Beautiful: This gate was an outer gate of the temple and opened into the courtyard of the women from the outer court of the Gentiles – actually

the front door to the temple proper. It was the most costly of all the temple gates and was made of Corinthian brass. It required 20 men to close it! (*Lockyear's All the Miracles of the Bible*, p. 261).

The temple: This is the third temple. The first temple was built by Solomon, the second by Zerubbabel and the Jews who returned from the Babylonian exile. The third (in the times of Jesus) was rebuilt by Herod the Great. All three stood on Mount Moriah (where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac as a foretelling of Jesus' death). Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC. Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple in 515 BC. In 63 BC Roman General Pompey captured Jerusalem and took the temple. He did not destroy it, but Roman Consul Crassus plundered it of all gold later. Herod the Great in order to gain favor with the Jewish religious leaders had it restored and expanded, finishing it in AD 64. This temple was burned in 70 AD when Jerusalem fell to the Roman armies. The fourth temple prophesied by Ezekiel is yet in the future. (*Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, pp. 830-836).

Peter's sermon to the Sanhedrin: Time fails us to go into this powerful sermon in detail. Remember, Peter who in fear denied the Lord three times before His death, now boldly confronts the whole Sanhedrin and charges them with the murder of the Messiah! (*Lockyear's "All the Miracles of the Bible" p. 262*)

The Sanhedrin: The Sanhedrin was made up of 70 men and the high priest. It was the highest Jewish court. The group consisted of the wealthiest, most educated, most powerful Jewish men in Israel. (*Nelson Study Bible NKJV*, pl. 1821).

Conclusion: The Jewish temple was one of segregation. Gentiles could only be in the large outer courtyard. Jewish women could go into a special outer vestibule of the temple proper. Only Jewish men and priests could go into the inner temple and only the priests into their courts and the Holy Place. The Most Holy Place was only entered by the high priest, once a year.

When Jesus died, the veil in the temple was rent in two, symbolizing that we no longer needed a high priest to enter the Most Holy Place. Through His death and resurrection, we can all access the throne of God! Read this in Matthew 27:50-51 and Hebrews 10:19-22.

Imagine the situation of this man – lame for 40 years. He asks Peter for money and then pays attention, gets helped up by Peter and begins standing, then walking, then jumping and finally PRAISING GOD! What are some of the miracles in our lives that we can praise God for. How can that be a witness to those who see and hear us? Discuss.