

**Acts #13**  
**Israel's Second Chance**  
Acts 3:1-4:31

**It was a day, just a day like any other day.** His brothers had gotten him out of bed and gotten him dressed. And on their way to work they carried him to us usually spot at the Temple gate. **It was just a day, the sky wasn't any bluer, the bird did not sing any louder, the sun did not shine any brighter, it was just a day.** Just a day like any other day. And yet before it was finished it would be unlike any other day in his life.

**It was just a day.** As he lay with his shriveled twisted legs extended in front of him he might have thought of all the days he had laid in front of the Temple gate and how those days stretched out like an endless horizon before him.

**It was just a day.** As he looked down at the useless limbs stretched out on the blanket in front of him. They were his, but they were not even a part of him, he had never felt them, never moved them, never ran as a boy, never walked as a man. **And today was just another day, no better and no worse.** But without his knowledge and without his consent today would become the day he would never forget. And today would take him from being a beggar destined for an obscure life and obscure death, and would propel him into immortality. **And yet, we do not even know his name.** The scriptures reveal nothing about his life up to this day, and nothing about his life after this day.

**But today, this day, this ordinary day would be written about by a doctor and read about by millions upon millions of people all over the world.** The man and the day are written about in Acts 3:1-10, "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. 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; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. 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. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and anklebones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping,

and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 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.”

**This man presents a perfect picture of the sinner. First of all, you will notice that he could not walk. Many times the Bible records God’s commandments for men to walk in His ways – but this is as impossible for the unbeliever as it was impossible for this lame man to walk physically. In Exodus 18:20 Moses commanded, “Thou shalt teach (the people) ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.” And in Deuteronomy 5:33, “Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.” In Isaiah 2:5 God commands His people to “walk in the light of the Lord.” One cannot walk according to the ways of God unless the Spirit of God is directing him.**

**The scene is the Temple, even though the Temple was already abandoned by God, the people were still there. This cripple man was someone that was well known by those that frequently visited there.**

Peter immediately used this occasion to preach to the crowd of people that had gathered, as seen in verses 12-26, “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? 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. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 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. And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 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; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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. 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. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 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. 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.”

Notice that Peter addresses his hearers as “Ye men of Israel,” and later in verses 13,15 & 16, he says, “The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom you delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate...And killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name, though faith in his name, hath made this man strong.”

The message was still to the Jews, the nation of Israel, for the gospel was to be “to the Jew first,” and this was fulfilled in the book of Acts.

This message had been offered once and according to God’s foreknown plan was rejected by the Jews, as seen in Acts 3:17-18, “And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.” And then Peter repeats the invitation to the nation of Israel to once again turn to Christ as seen in verses 19-21, “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; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 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 age began.”

**This was Peter’s message to Israel.** It was the promise of the kingdom, upon the condition of their repentance and acknowledgement of Jesus as their Messiah. If they accepted this invitation, Jesus would have immediately returned from Heaven to set up the Davidic Kingdom. It would have ushered in the promised “times of refreshing.” Peter says if you will repent, then God “shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” But God fore-knew this

invitation too would be rejected and so Peter adds, “Whom (Jesus) the heaven must receive unto the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken...”

**Since the nation would not receive this repeated offer, Jesus will remain in Heaven “until” (notice the word “until”) the times of restitution of all things.** This refers to the time when Israel will be converted and their Messiah will come and set up His Kingdom, as recorded in Romans 11:25-26, “...that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so (then) all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

We ask the question, “What would have happened if Israel had repented at Peter’s message?” Undoubtedly all would have come to pass in rapid succession and Christ would have returned for the “times of refreshing, and the restitution of all things.” **But this was not in the foreknowledge of God. He knew Israel would reject this offer also, for so it had been foretold. The Kingdom is to be postponed, and the mystery of the Church would fill the gap between Israel’s rejection of Christ as His first coming and their acceptance of Him at His second Coming. God’s purpose for the Church, the Body of Christ, must be carried out while Israel is in rejection.** Then after the Church Age is complete, Israel will be converted and the glorious Kingdom Age will be ushered in.

This great truth was not only taught by the prophets, but also by the Lord Himself in Matthew 22:1-14, “And Jesus answered and spoke unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not

having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen.”

**You will notice that there are two separate invitations to the king’s dinner for his son.** The king is the heavenly Father; the king’s son is Jesus Christ; the guests who were bidden first are the nation of Israel. The first invitation was by the king’s servants before the feast was ready. **The servants were the prophets and the apostles sent to the nation of Israel to hone the Son by coming to the feast.** But they refused the invitation. **The second invitation is again given to the same crowd, but this invitation was after the dinner was ready.** The sacrificial animals had been slain, the feast was waiting. This is the invitation after the Cross and after Pentecost. **The invitation is by Peter and the other disciples and is recorded in these two chapters of Acts.** Once more the Kingdom is offered and the Kingdom is once again promised when he “shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” But this second offer was also rejected. They abused the servants who brought the message as recorded in Acts 4, as Jesus had predicted in the parable, “And the remnant took his servants, and treated them shamefully, and killed them.”

**The servants who with Peter preached to the nation after Pentecost were persecuted, culminating in the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7.** The invitation was to Israel first, beginning at Jerusalem. But when the final invitation was rejected, the nation comes under judgment and Jesus predicted it in these prophetic words, “But when the king heard of it, he was angry; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.” This was literally fulfilled when the Romans legions marched upon Jerusalem under Titus in the year A.D. 70 and deported the nation and burned the city of Jerusalem to the ground.

The bidden ones, the chosen guests, are punished and now the invitation goes out to the unbidden guests, as seen in the parable, “Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they who were bidden were not worthy. Go, therefore, into the highways, and as many as you shall find, bid to the marriage.”

**The message of the Gospel, rejected by the nation of Israel, now is to go into the entire world.** Salvation has burst beyond national walls and the

commission of our Lord in Acts 1:8 was, "...in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

**The first part of the Great Commission was fulfilled in the first seven chapters of Acts, and was concluded when Stephen was stoned.** Then followed the second step, "and in Samaria," when Philip went into Samaria and preached the Gospel there (Acts 8). And now we are ready for the third stage, "unto the uttermost part of the earth," or "into the highways," to bid whosoever will to come!

**Today the message of salvation is the same for every person regardless of their background, or their race or color, or of their social standing.** And the message is simply – faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ!

If you are not saved, why not come tonight?