

Teen

Acts, Scene 1

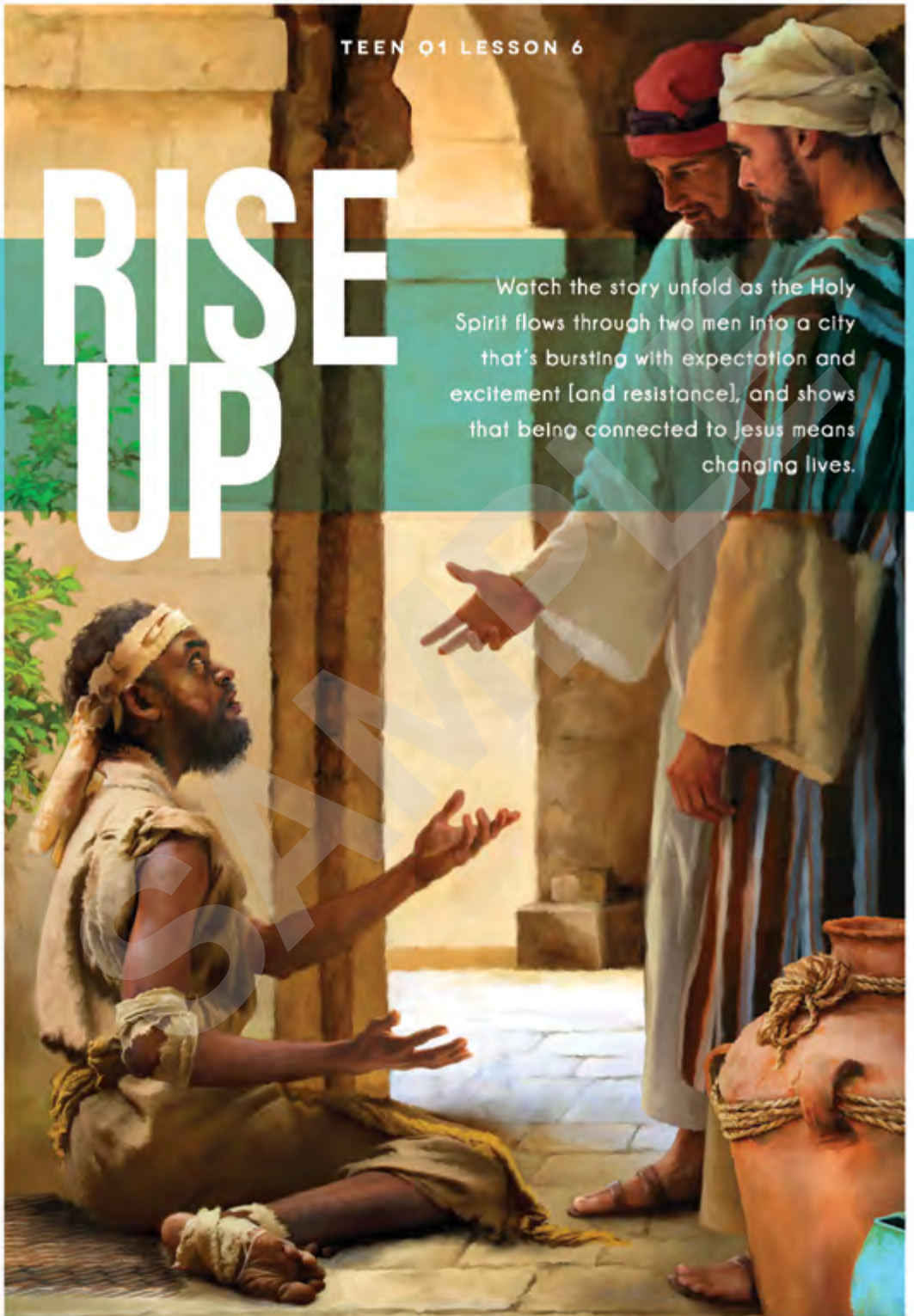


Alive in Jesus



RISE UP

Watch the story unfold as the Holy Spirit flows through two men into a city that's bursting with expectation and excitement (and resistance), and shows that being connected to Jesus means changing lives.



A NEW DAY

[ACTS 3:1-10]

The lame man propped himself up against the wall to a half-sitting position. Morning shadows cast patterns on the cobblestones as worshippers rushed by to pray at the Temple on this new day.

He lay beside the Beautiful Gate, with its gleaming bronze bars that shone in the sun. This had become his daily hangout. Worshippers passed by for the morning and evening services, and every so often someone would drop a few coins into his container. It was just enough to keep him from starving, but he still wished his life could have been different.

He had heard about a Healer named Jesus who had cured all kinds of sickness. This Jesus had given sight to the blind, He'd made the lame walk, caused the deaf to hear, and even raised people from the dead. Oh, how he wished he had the chance to get close to this Jesus so he too could be healed!

When he'd heard about Jesus, he pleaded with his friends to take him to Him. Then he'd heard that Jesus had been crucified. How strange that the great Healer, who had done so much good for so many, would be killed in the worst possible way. The cripple couldn't understand it.

His disappointment had been real and deeply felt. After a lifetime of sickness, it seemed that any flicker of hope for healing and wholeness was gone.

Those who knew him felt his sadness. They knew how long he'd suffered, and they'd seen his hope. Now they just felt sorry for him. And so each day his friends brought him to the Temple, where people would pass him by and feel sorry for him—and maybe drop a little money onto his mat.

As the cripple sat awkwardly against the wall, flowing robes and sandaled feet rushed passed him. He briefly glanced up at the passersby. He knew they weren't interested in him.

"Alms for the poor, alms for the poor," he cried occasionally, seeing the familiar locals walk on by.

Then he noticed two unfamiliar men walking toward the Temple. They didn't look wealthy, but he thought he would try. "Alms, alms," he cried out to them. He watched their moving feet suddenly stop—right in front of him.

Then one of the men spoke. "Look at us."

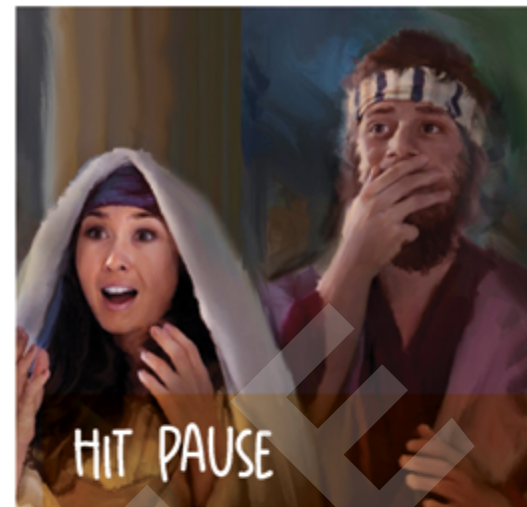
Tilting his head back slightly, the lame man lifted his eyes to the weather-beaten but kind faces of the two men as they looked down at him.

"Silver and gold I do not have," the same man, Peter, stated. "But what I do have I give you." The crippled man's eyes grew bright with hope as Peter continued, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6).

Wait! In whose name? Jesus Christ of Nazareth's? The cripple's ears burned with expectation! This was the very Man he'd wanted to see for so long! This was the Healer of cripples! But—Jesus was dead. Was there healing power in just His name? Reaching out, the crippled man grasped Peter's outstretched hand.

Their hands locked tightly as Peter lifted the beggar to his feet. The cripple's twisted feet and ankles suddenly knit themselves together and became strong, as a surge of renewed life entered him. Leaping to his feet, he stood, and then walked, for the first time in his life!

How could this be? Without restraint, he started shouting again—not for alms this time, but with praises to God as he leaped and jumped to test out his new legs. In the Temple



HIT PAUSE

It would be easy to be so focused on getting to the temple, to rush past and ignore a poor lame man. There were beggars all over this city! But had the men rushed by, it would have been a lost opportunity. (What would you have done? Stopped or kept going?)

other worshippers recognized him, as he entered with Peter and John, praising God with a heart bursting of thankful love.

The commotion caught the attention of other worshippers, who gaped and stared, looking at each other with questioning eyes. Wasn't that the cripple who sat begging at the gate each day? This man, a cripple for about 40 years, was now jumping and rejoicing, free of pain. Could this be true?

The Bible says, "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" (Acts 3:10). But the story wasn't over—not yet. (Stay tuned for next week!)

LIFE VERSE

"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them.

I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, in a straight way in which they shall not stumble. For I am a Father to Israel!" (Jeremiah 31:9).

MONDAY



GET INTO THE TEXT

Pray about God's message for you this week, then carefully read this week's story in the Bible in **Acts 3:1-10**. As you read, write down any observations, ideas, or questions that come to mind. You might like to use these sentence starters:

I NOTICED...

WHY/HOW DID...?

I WONDER...

Then put yourself into this picture: as the lame man's friends, one of the temple worshippers, a passerby, or maybe even Peter or John. *What might it have been like to see this miracle unfold?* Consider this week's Memory Verse. *How does it connect to the story you've just read in the Bible?*

TUESDAY

HISTORY FLASHBACK ▶ HERE, NOW

The Roman Empire turned everything that God had provided for Israel upside down. Most families no longer owned land, and many who had owned land before now worked as tenant farmers, giving more than half of their crops to their landlords. Taxes were high and pushed most into poverty. It was impossible to store up wealth if you were an ordinary person. At any time a Roman soldier could search your house and take any hidden coins or grain.

Those who were crippled, blind, or sick relied completely on the kindness and generosity of others to survive from one day to the next. But because most people were poor themselves, it made for a miserable existence for anyone who couldn't work.

THINK & FIND

» *When did you last feel hungry? How long did you go between meals? Read Mark 8:1-3 to learn about Jesus' compassion for those who are hungry. You may want to research the latest statistics of poverty in your country.*

» *When and where have you seen someone begging? How did this make you feel, and what was your response?*

WEDNESDAY

CHOOSING FRIENDS

The crippled beggar was blessed to have friends who cared enough about him to bring him each day to beg at the Beautiful Gate. As poor and helpless as he was, he likely couldn't give much back to his friends—other than his friendship itself.

DO

Draw or illustrate one of these Bible verses: **Proverbs 18:24** or **Proverbs 27:10**. Then post a picture of your drawing on social media or the *Alive in Jesus* website.

REFLECT & WRITE

Who are your closest friends? How would you describe them? Why is it important to choose your friends carefully?

The best kind of friend you can find, and the best kind of friend you can be, is one who help others look up to "see" Jesus. Don't be drawn to friends who just have "silver and gold," but instead look for friends who give something much more valuable—a faith-filled friendship with Jesus Christ.

Talk to God about your friends. Tell Him about the different dynamics in your friendship groups, what's going great at the moment, as well as the challenges or issues with certain friendships. Be specific and ask God to help you to navigate things wisely, and help you grow to be a spiritual leader to your friends.

DO

As you explore this week's lesson, consider what you can do to help someone in need, either physically or spiritually. Pray for God to show you where and how He might use you this week to help with a specific need.

» **Think about your words:** Whom can you bring joy, hope, or encouragement to? It doesn't take much, and words are free!

» **Think about your actions:** What can you do or give to help someone with a greater need? You never know what difference this may make for their future.

MY SIMPLE PLAN THIS WEEK IS TO...

Remember, in making someone else's world better, you also improve your own.

THURSDAY



THINK ABOUT IT!

GOD'S KINGDOM

Isaiah is sometimes referred to as the "gospel prophet" because he wrote so much about the Messiah and the messianic kingdom. Read **Isaiah 35:3-7** for a glimpse into this. Starting in verse 3, notice all the things that are flipped upside down in God's kingdom.

No one is left behind in God's kingdom. Every need is noticed and every person cared for. In healing the lame beggar, Peter and John continued the work of Jesus. They became part of God's ongoing plan to turn the world the right way up. You can do the same. *How are you doing with this week's mission, to seek out someone in need and do something that flips their world?* (Pray about this now!)

In times of trouble the lame were the most vulnerable because they couldn't go anywhere on their own. Under attack, they were often left alone.

Isaiah wasn't the only prophet with good news for the lame. The prophets Jeremiah, Micah, and Zephaniah also shared hope. Choose one of these verses—Jeremiah 31:8, 9; Micah 4:6, 7; Zephaniah 3:19—and think: *How would I summarize God's thoughts and feelings toward the vulnerable?*

FRIDAY

FLIP YOUR WORLD

On that early morning outside the Temple, Peter and John didn't rush by when they saw a beggar. They saw the world differently—through Jesus' eyes, remembering the many, many times Jesus had noticed and helped those in need. They felt sympathy and genuine love toward the crippled beggar, as Jesus would have, because the Holy Spirit was abiding in them. Then, in faith, they acted! Yes, this first miracle was evidence that the Holy Spirit had indeed fallen on the disciples in power—Jesus hadn't left them! He was actively working through His followers, as He still actively works through His followers today in different ways.

REFLECT & SHARE

God has called you to act—to work with Him in His work of restoring others in this broken world. So much of the good that God created has been turned upside down. All around you you'll see suffering, pain, heartache, and sickness. Did you flip someone's world and make a difference by helping them, or taking the next step to share Jesus with them? Share about your experience on social media and challenge others to act in their corner of the world.

Share with your family the needs you noticed, what you did about it, how you felt, and what God taught you. Invite them to share their experiences. Pray together that you will have eyes that really see others' needs, and feet that are quick to respond, just as Peter and John did on that day.

SWEDISH PROVERB

When a blind man carries the lame man, both go forward.



OPEN MY EYES

Find a contemporary song about this or compose one yourself. (Take a look at the words of the hymn "Open My Eyes That I May See." You'll find the words of the first verse below.) Alternatively, draw a picture that captures your learning from this week. Share your creations with other Teens on the *AliveInJesus* website.

*Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth
Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands
the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit Divine!*



This week's lesson is taken from Acts 3:1–4:31. Some insights have also been drawn from *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 57–69; or *Unlikely Leaders*, pp. 23–26. You can listen to these chapters here: (include QR code) <https://ellenwhiteaudio.org/acts-of-the-apostles/> <https://ellenwhiteaudio.org/unlikely-leaders/>

SAMPLE



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