

PART 5: THE WONDER AND THE WORD

ACTS 3:1-26

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I. MAIN IDEA

The main idea is not the miracle but the purpose of the miracle, which was to show that the Jesus whom they crucified was their Messiah, the Son of God.

Peter heals a man who had been crippled since birth. As the people who witnessed this event were filled with wonder, Peter publicly proclaims Jesus as the power behind this miracle and uses it to prove to them that the Jesus they crucified was the Messiah. Again, he calls the people to repent by acknowledging who Jesus is.

II. THE WONDER: PETER HEALS THE LAME MAN (3:1-10)

A. (1-3) The lame man expected money

"One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer-- at three in the afternoon. ² Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money." Acts 3:1-3 NIV

- (3:1) The ninth hour (3 pm).
- This man was more than 40 years old (Acts 4:22) and had been crippled since birth. He was a familiar sight at this temple gate (Acts 3:10)
- (3:2a) The lame man hoped for alms. He received much more.
- There was a strong tradition of alms-giving (giving to the poor, especially beggars) in Judaism and doing it as an act of righteousness.
- (3:2) Gate called Beautiful: 75 feet high, immense double doors, made of fine Corinthian brass.

B. (4-10) But Peter gave him healing

"So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. ⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. ⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. ⁹ When all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰ they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him." Acts 3:4-10 NIV

- (3:4) *Looked straight at him*: The man must have been happy and encouraged when Peter and John looked at him intently. Most people who want to ignore beggars are careful to not make eye contact with them. When they looked at the lame man so intently, he probably thought he had a big gift coming.
- (3:5) *He gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them*: The lame man returned the eye contact with Peter and John; perhaps he stretched out his hand or a cup to accept their generosity.
- (3:6a) *Silver or gold I do not have*: Peter didn't have any money, but he did have authority from Jesus to heal the sick (*what I do have I give to you*).
- (3:6b) *In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*: Jesus was from Nazareth – he was a Nazarene, and this had been used to insult Christ during his life on earth. But now Peter applauds it.
- (3:8) The phrase "jumped to his feet" describes the coming suddenly back into its socket of something that was out of place, the articulation of a joint (Guzik).

III. THE WORD: PETER EXPLAINS THE MIRACLE (3:11-16)

"While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. ¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see. Acts 3:11-16 NIV

A. (3:11-12) Peter reveals the power behind this miracle

- (3:11) Held on to Peter and John: Since he could walk, it wasn't for support. Perhaps he held on to them out of gratitude, perhaps out of a combined sense of fear and surprise – since a crowd quickly gathered as the people ran together to them, incredibly amazed.
- (3:12) When Peter saw it, he responded to the people: Peter wisely took advantage of the gathering crowd. Yet he knew that the phenomenon of the miraculous in itself brought no one to Jesus; it merely aroused interest. Though they were incredibly amazed, they weren't saved yet.

B. (3:13-15) You are guilty of killing the Messiah

- (3:13a) *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. By opening with this reference to God, Peter made it clear that he spoke to them about the God of Israel, the God represented in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- (3:13a) *His Servant Jesus*. The greatness of Peter's sermon is that it was all about Jesus. The focus on the sermon was not on Peter nor on anything he did, but all about Jesus.
- (3:13b-15) Peter makes it clear that the Jews in this crowd were guilty of killing the Messiah. When Peter spoke of this, he used the word "you" several times.
- This does *not* mean that the Jewish people of that day *alone* were responsible for the death of Jesus. The Romans, Gentiles were also responsible.

C. (3:16) This miracle was done by faith in Jesus

- (3:16) Peter refers to his faith in Christ. Jesus himself imparts this kind of miracle-working faith.

- This reaffirms that the Jesus they killed is not dead by is alive and actively working in others who place their faith im him.

IV. THE CALL TO RESPOND BY REPENTING (3:17-20)

A. (3:17-20) Now is the time to repent and acknowledge Jesus as Messiah

"Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. 18 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. 19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus." Acts 3:17-20 NIV

- (3:17) They acted in ignorance probably means they didn't recognize Jesus as their Messiah. Nevertheless, they were still culpable of this big mistake (ESV Crossway Bibles).
- (3:19-20) Peter described three results of this repentance (ESV Crossway Bibles).
- (3:19a) First, that your sins may be blotted out: This was the first benefit of repentance Peter presented to them. The one who repents and is converted is forgiven their sins, and the record itself is erased.
- (3:19b) Second, as foretold by the prophets, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. The times of refreshing is referring to when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within them. This refreshing comes also to the world in general as it is affected by believers who are changed by the power of the Spirit.
- (3:20) Third, that God would send the Messiah. Peter referred to the time when Jesus will return and rule the earth in righteousness. Peter went so far as to say, "that He may send Jesus Christ," thus implying that if the Jewish people as a whole repented, God the Father would send Jesus to return in glory. The time for restoring all things looks forward to when Jesus Christ will return, and his kingdom will be established on earth, and the earth itself will be renewed even beyond the more abundant and productive state it had before Adam and Eve's fall (ESV Crossway Bibles).

B. (3:21-26) The danger of refusing to repent

Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. ²² For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.' ²⁴ Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. ²⁵ And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to

Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' ²⁶ When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways.'" Acts 3:21-26 NIV.

- (3:21a) Peter made it clear that Jesus will remain in heaven until the times of restoration of all things, and since the repentance of Israel is one of the all things, there is some sense in which the return of Jesus in glory will not happen until Israel repents (Guzik).
- (3:21b): The time for restoring all things looks forward to when Jesus Christ will return, and his kingdom will be established on earth, and the earth itself will be renewed even beyond the more abundant and productive state it had before Adam and Eve's fall (ESV Crossway Bibles).
- (3:23) Every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be utterly cut off (destroyed).
- (3:25-26) Peter emphasized that although the promised blessings to Abraham applied initially to Israel, it also applies to all people.

V. SUMMARY

- A. It was Jesus who healed this lame man through Peter's faith.
- B. This was proof that Jesus is alive and is the Messiah whom they killed.
- C. There is still time for Israel to repent (acknowledge who Jesus is). By repenting:
 1. Sins will be blotted out (forgiven).
 2. Times of refreshing will come (as the prophets foretold of the coming of the Holy Spirit to dwell within them. This began at Pentecost).
 3. The time for restoring all things will return (when Jesus will reign as King during the millennial era).

VI. APPLICATION

As we place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, he is free to work great and wonderful things through us for his glory.