

Jesus had said in John 9:1-3 that the reason that the blind man that He and his disciples encountered was born that way was so that God could be glorified by the man's healing. In Acts 3, God leads Peter and John to encounter a lame man at the gate of the temple so that, by healing the man, they would have the opportunity to be witnesses of Jesus Christ to the crowd that had gathered (Acts 1:8).

1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being the ninth hour*.

This chapter occurs an undetermined number of days after the Day of Pentecost in chapter 2. Acts 2:42-47 imply a passage of time during which the new body of believers shared meals and possessions with one another as well as worshiping God together. The end of v. 47 says "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," indicating that multiple days have passed since Pentecost. In fact, days, weeks or even months may have passed between chapters 2 and 3. On this day referenced in Acts 3:1, Peter and John are going to the temple to pray at the ninth hour. The Jews had set aside three time slots for daily prayer: the third hour (9:00 am), the sixth hour (12:00 noon), and the ninth hour (3:00 pm). The events described in this chapter happen to occur as the two apostles are going to the temple for evening prayers.

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.

"And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried...to ask alms of them that entered into the temple" – This was not a random unknown person who was laying at the gate, nor was he an actor hired by Peter and John to help them fake a miracle. This was a "certain" (particular) man who was well known among those who entered the temple complex through the Beautiful gate (v. 10). This man had been lame all his life and his only apparent means of support was to beg for money from people who came and went from the temple.

"whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful" – The "they" may have been friends or family that would carry the man and set him beside the gate so that he could beg every day. It is believed that the "Beautiful" gate was on the eastern wall of the temple courtyard, so called because it was ornate and decorative. The word "beautiful" is likely descriptive rather than the actual name of the gate.

"Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms" – This man probably did not know Peter and John. He likely saw these men as two worshipers who might likely be compassionate enough to give him some money. Beggars knew that people heading in to the temple often found it hard to refuse to give to the poor immediately before approaching God in prayer.

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.

"And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us" – Many people who give money to beggars will try to make the encounter as brief as possible. Peter and John do not do this. They lock their eyes on the man as Peter tells the man to look at them. The man has Peter's undivided attention and Peter wants the man's undivided attention.

"And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them" – The man naturally believes that Peter wants his attention in order to give him some money.

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. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him up*: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee" – The lame man was expecting money, but not only does Peter not have money to give the man, he knows that's not what the man actually needs. Money would only be treating the symptom and not the cause of the man's problem. Even though Peter has no money to give the man, he is more than willing to give to the man what he does have: Jesus Christ.

"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" – Notice that Peter does not perform this miracle in his own name in order that he or John might receive the glory. To do something in the name of someone else is to do it under the authority of that person or in obedience to them. Under the authority of Jesus Christ and in obedience to Him, Peter commands the man to stand up and walk. Jesus gets all the glory since it was the power of Christ that healed the man.

"And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him up*" – The man had never walked and so would not have even attempted to try on his own. Peter takes him by the hand and pulls up on the man in order to encourage him to make the attempt to stand and walk.

"and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength" – It's possible that the healing did not occur until the man made an attempt to stand. Sometimes God does not answer our prayers until we step out in faith. The medical details make this healing even more outstanding. His leg and feet muscles were no doubt atrophied since he'd never used them. It's possible that osteoporosis had made his bones weak and brittle from lack of use. Also, if the healing had only affected his muscles and bones then he would still need to learn to walk since he'd never learned as a child. However, it seems he has no trouble immediately leaping and walking. Thus the power of God must have touched the man's brain as well. Our God is amazing!

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

“And he leaping up stood, and walked” – The ability to leap to his feet and immediately start walking shows strength and dexterity. He did not need physical therapy to gain the normal use of his feet and legs. The healing was complete and immediate.

“and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God” – The man understood that his healing came from God and showed immediate gratitude for his healing. He enters the temple with Peter and John in order to worship but, in his excitement over being healed, he could not refrain from walking, 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.

The man was not bashful about what had happened to him. Everyone in the temple area saw and heard him walking around, leaping and praising God. They recognized that he was the man who had been lame from his mother’s womb that was always at the Beautiful gate begging for money (v. 2). Knowing this, the people knew that a genuine miracle had occurred and therefore were amazed and astonished (“wonder”) at the sight of him walking and leaping.

11 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.

“And as the lame man which was healed held [to seize; to lay hold of] Peter and John” – The Greek word for “held” is the same word used when arresting someone and implies forceful restraint. We are not told if Peter and John were attempting to walk away but the healed man held onto them and would not let them go. Perhaps he wanted to give them credit for the healing, which would explain Peter’s response to the crowd in v. 12.

“all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly wondering [great astonishment]” – A crowd was gathering because either word had apparently gotten around about the lame man’s healing or the sight of the man leaping and praising God was attracting a lot of attention. Since it was the time for prayer at the ninth hour there must have been a large number of people already in the temple courtyard. Their amazement at the lame man’s healing caused them to gather where Peter, John and the man were standing in order to discover what had happened.

Verses 12-26: Peter sees the opportunity to preach to the crowd and witness for Christ, so he begins by making it clear that neither he nor John had the power to heal the man. He declares that it was the power of Jesus Christ that had healed the man because Jesus is the Holy One that God had sent but that they had rejected. It was faith in Christ that had healed this man, not any power that the apostles might have. Peter declares that if they would repent then God would blot out their sins and Christ would return so that the “times of refreshing” would begin. These things had been promised since the time of Abraham all the way through all the prophets.