

Outline

1. Miracle performed
 1. First state of the man
 1. Unable to walk
 2. From birth — so this was no new thing
 2. Location is important
 3. The miracle itself
 4. The man's response
2. Sermon
 1. Explanation of the miracle
 2. Recounting of the death of Jesus
 3. Call to repent

Commentary

The ninth hour would have been about 3:00 p.m. “The stated times for prayer in Judaism were (1) early in the morning, in connection with the morning sacrifice; (2) at the ninth hour of the day, in connection with the evening sacrifice; and (3) at sunset” (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 9293).

We learn from Acts 4:22 that this man was more than 40 years old. His disability was neither new nor was he unknown in the place.

The word used to describe the man's condition is “χωλός (cholos)” and would denote a person who suffered from a mechanical problem of the feet (cf. v. 7). The word for “paralyzed” is “ξηρός (xeros).”

It is difficult to underestimate crowd's reaction to the miracle performed. The word translated as “wonder” is only found in two other passages (Luke 4:36 [“amazed”] and 5:9 [“astonished”]). The English word “‘ecstasy’ is a transliteration. It is translated ‘amazement’

in Acts 3:10. It was said of any displacement, and especially, with reference to the mind, of that alteration of the normal condition by which the person is thrown into a state of surprise or fear, or both; or again, in which a person is so transported out of his natural state that he falls into a trance, Acts 10:10; 11:5; 22:17" (Vine, 24).

Peter follows a form here in verse 12 by deflecting attention from himself to God. Acts 14:14-15 along with Rev. 19:10 and 22:8 are the general passages where we might consider similar actions to take place. While the people are not described as falling down to worship Peter and John, the words used to describe their state might lead one to believe that such a thing would be possible. Peter immediately says that he and John were not responsible for what the people were seeing, but rather that God was responsible.

Peter's sermon is remarkable in that he lays responsibility for the death of Jesus not only at the feet of the people but their leaders as well (v. 17). Of special significance is his description of the efforts undertaken by Pilate to save Jesus (cf. Matthew 27:20-25; John 19:12-16).

Verse 26 presents us with some foreshadowing of salvation for the Gentiles. Notice Peter's language: "To you first". In that, while the people may not have recognized what he was stating, we see that there would be those who were unlike them who would follow them in being turned away from their iniquities.

Thought Questions

Consider the following questions:

1. How important is it that this man has been lame from birth?

2. Consider the circumstances of the man. Do you think he knew who Jesus was?

3. Why do you think Peter tells him to look at him and John?

4. Is ignorance an excuse? What, within this passage, gives us an answer?

5. Compare and contrast Peter's sermon here with his sermon in Acts 2.

