

The Lame Leap

Isaiah 35 is a prophetic description of the wonders that will occur when God settles His children in His Kingdom. Some of the things mentioned were realized when Judah returned from Babylon. However, all of the things the prophet itemizes happened when Messiah came and set up His everlasting Kingdom. The New Testament describes the fulfillment of physical healings. Jesus performed all healings as signs that He is God with us and has the authority to establish His Kingdom. Many of these same signs were also performed by the Holy Spirit, working through the apostles and by the power of Jesus, to prove that the apostles spoke for The Son of God.

The Spirit told Isaiah of things that would happen when the Messiah walked with the people. One specific sign that would identify the work of the Messiah is in (Isaiah 35:6) ***"The lame will leap like a deer."*** When John the Baptist was in prison, about 700 years later, he sent men to Jesus to ask if He were the one. Jesus answered, *"Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them"* (Matthew 11:4-5 ESV). Healing the blind and lame seem to dominate much of the healing miracles Jesus worked in Jerusalem as signs to the chief priests, elders, and the people as Matthew records. *"And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them"* (Matthew 21:14).

Of all the miracles Jesus worked, the most visible and astounding were those that restored or mended some portion of the physical body. Today, many of us have artificial joints made from titanium, stainless steel, and plastics. The surgery is extensive, and there are weeks, and sometimes months, of healing and therapy to make the artificial body parts work. But when the creator of the universe healed, it was an instantaneous repair or recreation of bone, muscle, ligaments, and tissue with no time needed for recovery and therapy. The lame jumped up and walked, even though some had never walked before. It happened to the lame as it did for the first man created from the dust of the earth in the beginning.

In John 5, we read of an incident where Jesus healed an individual and used that as an opportunity to teach. People knew the person during his 32 years of being debilitated. The term used identifies a weakness caused by disease and not a lameness as we usually think of such. However, the event caused the people to recognize that a miracle, something beyond nature, had occurred. The result was that Jesus taught that God, His Father, works continuously, even on the Sabbath, and the Son of God also does. *"For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God"* (John 5:18). Note that Jesus demonstrated His equality to God, not just claimed to be (Hebrews 1:3). There was evidence given and a point made with this and every healing.

We read of a similar incident in Acts chapters 3 and 4. Peter and John were entering the Temple area, *"And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple"* (Acts 3:2). Peter said to him, *"In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!"* (Acts 3:6). Then, just like Isaiah 35:6 promised, ***"With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God"*** (Acts 3:8-9). Peter saw the people gathering around, wondering at what had happened to a man known to be lame. Peter said to them, *"Men of Israel, why are you amazed at*

this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?" (Acts 3:12). "It is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16).

Peter's message to the people assembled on the Temple porch concerned the power of Christ to heal the spirit within just as He had healed the physically lame. *"For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways" (Acts 3:26).* Some of those who heard of this miracle believed the gospel message (Acts 4:4). But the jealousy of the Sadducees and their power with the Sanhedrin was at work. *"As Peter and John were speaking to the people, "the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:1-2).*

Do you believe the witnesses?