

2. May 2025

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

“The healing of a lame man in the Temple”

Acts 3:1-11

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at that gate of the temple which is called Beautiful to ask alms of those who entered the temple. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. And Peter directed his gaze at him, with John, and said, “Look at us.” And he fixed his attention upon them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up he stood and walked and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and recognized him as the one who sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon’s, astounded.

The signs had already begun to manifest themselves through the apostles. Jesus had made them partakers of His power and they applied it concretely. The miracles confirmed their testimony, and we can already foresee the resistance that would be offered to them by those who did not accept the truth that had come to them in Jesus Christ and had put him to death. But they could not undo the great sign that had taken place. The lame man had been healed and was now leaping and praising God.

The people gathered to see the miracle and were filled with awe and wonder.

Then Peter took the floor to preach the Gospel again, so that the people would understand and interpret correctly what had happened before their eyes. The account in the Acts of the Apostles continues like this:

When Peter saw it he addressed the people, “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And his name, by faith in his name, has made this man strong whom you see and know; and the faith which is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers”.

Peter leaves no doubt as to who is the author of this miracle of the healing of the lame man. As in the Pentecost sermon, he confronts his listeners with the crime committed against Jesus in no uncertain terms: *“You killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses”*. At the end, however, Peter uttered a phrase that recalled the words of Jesus at the time of His Passion: *“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”* (Lk 23:34). Peter affirms: *“Now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers”*.

These statements open our eyes to a deeper understanding. On the one hand, the crucifixion of Jesus is the worst crime imaginable and must be denounced as such. On the other hand, from the cross, our Saviour Himself had asked the Father in heaven for forgiveness for His executioners, claiming that they did not know what they were doing.

Here we see how the Lord and His Apostles dealt with such a difficult situation. On the one hand, there are the serious transgressions and even crimes such as the persecution and death of Jesus. On the other hand, we do not always know to what extent the person was aware of the wrongdoing. In the case of the Pharisees, the leaders of the conspiracy against Jesus, the blindness that the devil had caused in them led them to believe that they were 'worshipping God' by eliminating Jesus.

This certainly does not excuse the objective content of the act: *“You denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you”*, nor does it exonerate them from its consequences. However, they are offered the path of conversion, to which Peter will exhort them in the course of his preaching.

The lame man, who was completely healed by a miracle and by faith, was an undeniable proof of the work of God, which now continued through the Apostles of His Son Jesus. Thus the doors of conversion were wide open to the hearers of the apostles.

Meditation on the day's reading: <https://en.elijamission.net/the-advice-of-gamaliel-2/>

Meditation on the Gospel of the day: <https://en.elijamission.net/understanding-signs-properly-2/>