

~LAME, LAMENESS (707)

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- A **physical handicap that prevents a person from walking normally**. Lameness may date from birth because of congenital deformities.
- And a certain man that was **lame** from his mother's womb was being carried, and they would daily put him near the temple door that was called Beautiful, in order to ask gifts of mercy from those entering into the temple. (**Acts of Apostles 3:2**)
- Now in Lystra there was sitting a certain man disabled in his feet, **lame** from his mother's womb, and he had never walked at all. (**Acts of Apostles 14:8**)
- But most cases are caused by accidents or diseases.

.. Aaronic Priesthood

- A **lame** person who was a descendant of Aaron could not serve in the priesthood, although he was allowed to eat from the things provided for the priesthood for their sustenance.
- And Yehowah continued to speak to Moses, saying; (**Leviticus 21:16**)
- Speak to Aaron, saying; No man of your seed throughout their generations in whom there proves to be a defect may come near to present the bread of his God. (**Leviticus 21:17**)
- In case there is any man in whom there is a defect, he may not come near, a man blind or lame or with his nose slit or with one member too long. (**Leviticus 21:18**)

- Or a man in whom there proves to be a fracture of the foot or a fracture of the hand. ([Leviticus 21:19](#))
- Or hunchback or thin or diseased in his eyes or scabby or having ringworms or having his testicles broken. ([Leviticus 21:20](#))
- Any man of the seed of Aaron the priest in whom there is a defect may not approach to present Yehowah's offerings made by fire. There is a defect in him. He may not approach to present the bread of his God. ([Leviticus 21:21](#))
- He may eat the bread of his God from the most holy things and from the holy things. ([Leviticus 21:22](#))
- However, he may not come in near the curtain, and he may not approach the altar, because there is a defect in him, and he should not profane my sanctuary, for I am Yehowah who is sanctifying them. ([Leviticus 21:23](#))
- Yehowah set a high standard of physical fitness for his priesthood, for these represented him at his sanctuary.
- Speak to Aaron, saying; No man of your seed throughout their generations in whom there proves to be a **defect** may come near to present the bread of his God. ([Leviticus 21:17](#))
- In case there is any man in whom there is a **defect**, he may not come near, a man **blind** or **lame** or with his **nose slit** or with **one member too long**. ([Leviticus 21:18](#))
- Or a man in whom there proves to be a fracture of the foot or a fracture of the hand. ([Leviticus 21:19](#))
- Or hunchback or thin or diseased in his eyes or scabby or having ringworms or having his testicles broken. ([Leviticus 21:20](#))
- Any man of the seed of Aaron the priest in whom there is a defect may not approach to present Yehowah's offerings made by fire. There is a defect in him. He may not approach to present the bread of his God. ([Leviticus 21:21](#))
- He may eat the bread of his God from the most holy things and from the holy things. ([Leviticus 21:22](#))

- However, he may not come in near the curtain, and he may not approach the altar, because there is a defect in him, and he should not profane my sanctuary, for I am Yehowah who is sanctifying them. ([Leviticus 21:23](#))
- So, too, Christ, the great High Priest, was loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners.
- For such a High Priest as this was suitable for us, loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens. ([Hebrews 7:26](#))

•• Sacrifices

- It was also forbidden, under the Law, to offer as a sacrifice any animal with a defect of lameness, because these foreshadowed the perfect sacrifice of Christ.
- And in case there should prove to be in it a defect, being lame or blind, any bad defect, you must not sacrifice it to Yehowah your God. ([Deuteronomy 15:21](#))
- To gain approval for you it must be sound, a male among the herd, among the young rams or among the goats. ([Leviticus 22:19](#))
- Anything in which there is a defect you must not present, because it will not serve to gain approval for you. ([Leviticus 22:20](#))
- This Law was violated by the apostate Israelites, for which God reproved them, saying; When you present a **lame animal** for sacrificing, you say; It is nothing bad. Bring it near, please, to your governor. Will he find pleasure in you, or will he receive you kindly? Can I take pleasure in it at your hand?
- And when you present a blind animal for sacrificing; It is nothing bad. And when you present a lame animal or a sick one; It is nothing bad. Bring it near, please, to your governor. Will he find pleasure in you, or will he receive you kindly? Yehowah of armies has said. ([Malachi 1:8](#))
- And you have said; Look! What a weariness! And you have

caused a sniffing at it, Yehowah of armies has said. And you have brought something torn away, and the lame one, and the sick one, yes, you have brought it as a gift. Can I take pleasure in it at your hand? Yehowah has said. (**Malachi 1:13**)

- The apostle evidently applies this requirement in a spiritual way to Christians, entreating them;
- Consequently I entreat you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason. (**Romans 12:1**)

•• Jacob's Lameness

- When Jacob was about 97 years old, he had the experience of grappling all night with a materialized angel of God. He prevailed in detaining the angel until the angel gave him a blessing. During the contest, the angel touched the socket of Jacob's thigh joint, throwing it out of place. The result was that Jacob walked with a **limp**.
- Finally Jacob was left by himself. Then a man began to grapple with him until the dawn ascended. (**Genesis 32:24**)
- When he got to see that he had not prevailed over him, then he touched the socket of his thigh joint, and the socket of Jacob's thigh joint got out of place during his grappling with him. (**Genesis 32:25**)
- After that he said; Let me go, for the dawn has ascended. To this he said; I am not going to let you go until you first bless me. (**Genesis 32:26**)
- So he said to him; What is your name? To which he said; Jacob. (**Genesis 32:27**)
- Then he said; Your name will no longer be called Jacob but Israel, for you have contended with God and with men so that you at last prevailed. (**Genesis 32:28**)
- In turn Jacob inquired and said; Tell me, please, your name. However, he said; Why is it that you inquire for my name? With that he blessed him there. (**Genesis 32:29**)
- Hence Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, because, to

quote him, I have seen God face to face and yet my soul was delivered. (**Genesis 32:30**)

- And the sun began to flash upon him as soon as he passed by Penuel, but he was limping upon his thigh. (**Genesis 32:31**)
- That is why the sons of Israel are not accustomed to eat the sinew of the thigh nerve, which is on the socket of the thigh joint, down to this day, because he touched the socket of Jacob's thigh joint by the sinew of the thigh nerve. (**Genesis 32:32**)
- And Yehowah has a legal case with Judah, even to hold an accounting against Jacob according to his ways, according to his dealings he will repay him. (**Hosea 12:2**)
- In the belly he seized his brother by the heel, and with his dynamic energy he contended with God. (**Hosea 12:3**)
- And he kept contending with an angel and gradually prevailed. He wept, that he might implore favor for himself. At Bethel He got to find him, and there He began talking with us. (**Hosea 12:4**)
- Jacob thereafter had a reminder that, although he had contended with God, God's angel, and with men so that he at last prevailed, as the angel said; He did not in reality defeat a powerful angel of God.
- It was only by God's purpose and permission that Jacob was allowed to contend with the angel, so as to provide proof of Jacob's great appreciation of the need of God's blessing.

.. Consideration

- The Scriptures inculcate consideration for the **lame**. Job remarked that, even in his prosperous state, feet to the **lame** one I was.
- Eyes I became to the blind one, and feet to the **lame** one I was. (**Job 29:15**)
- Jesus and his disciples had compassion for the sick and **lame**, performing many cures of such persons.
- In reply Jesus said to them; Go your way and report to John

what you are hearing and seeing. ([Matthew 11:4](#))

- The blind are seeing again, and the lame are walking about, the lepers are being cleansed and the deaf are hearing, and the dead are being raised up, and the poor are having the Good News declared to them. ([Matthew 11:5](#))
- Then great crowds approached him, having along with them people that were **lame**, maimed, blind, dumb, and many otherwise, and they fairly threw them at his feet, and he cured them. ([Matthew 15:30](#))
- So that the crowd felt amazement as they saw the dumb speaking and the lame walking and the blind seeing, and they glorified the God of Israel. ([Matthew 15:31](#))
- Also, blind and lame persons came up to him in the temple, and he cured them. ([Matthew 21:14](#))
- Now Peter and John were going up into the temple for the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ([Acts of Apostles 3:1](#))
- And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was being carried, and they would daily put him near the temple door that was called Beautiful, in order to ask gifts of mercy from those entering into the temple. ([Acts of Apostles 3:2](#))
- When he caught sight of Peter and John about to go into the temple he began requesting to get gifts of mercy. ([Acts of Apostles 3:3](#))
- But Peter, together with John, gazed at him and said; Take a look at us. ([Acts of Apostles 3:4](#))
- So he fixed his attention upon them, expecting to get something from them. ([Acts of Apostles 3:5](#))
- However, Peter said; Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I do have is what I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk! ([Acts of Apostles 3:6](#))
- With that he took hold of him by the right hand and raised him up. Instantly the soles of his feet and his anklebones were made firm. ([Acts of Apostles 3:7](#))

- And, leaping up, he stood up and began walking, and he entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. **(Acts of Apostles 3:8)**
- And all the people got sight of him walking and praising God. **(Acts of Apostles 3:9)**
- Moreover, they began to recognize him, that this was the man that used to sit for gifts of mercy at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and they became filled with astonishment and ecstasy at what had happened to him. **(Acts of Apostles 3:10)**
- Philip, for one, went down to the city of Samaria and began to preach the Christ to them. **(Acts of Apostles 8:5)**
- With one accord the crowds were paying attention to the things said by Philip while they listened and looked at the signs he was performing. **(Acts of Apostles 8:6)**
- For there were many that had unclean spirits, and these would cry out with a loud voice and come out. Moreover, many that were paralyzed and lame were cured. **(Acts of Apostles 8:7)**
- Now in Lystra there was sitting a certain man disabled in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, and he had never walked at all. **(Acts of Apostles 14:8)**
- This man was listening to Paul speak, who, on looking at him intently and seeing he had faith to be made well. **(Acts of Apostles 14:9)**
- Said with a loud voice; Stand up erect on your feet. And he leaped up and began walking. **(Acts of Apostles 14:10)**

•• Illustrative And Figurative Uses

- The Jebusites illustrated their boastful confidence in the security of their citadel when they taunted David; You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame ones will certainly turn you away, they thinking; David will not come in here.

- They may have actually placed such persons on the wall as defenders, as is stated by Josephus [[Jewish Antiquities, VII, 61, iii, 1](#)], and this may be the reason why David said;
- Anyone striking the Jebusites, let him, by means of the water tunnel, make contact with both the lame and the blind, hateful to the soul of David!
- These lame and blind ones were the symbol of the Jebusites insult to David and, more seriously, their taunt against the armies of Yehowah. David hated the Jebusites, along with their lame and blind, for such arrogance.
- He may actually have been calling the Jebusite leaders themselves the **lame** and blind, in derision.
- Consequently the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites inhabiting the land, and they began to say to David; You will not come in here, but the blind and the **lame** ones will certainly turn you away, they thinking; David will not come in here. ([2 Samuel 5:6](#))
- Just the same, David proceeded to capture the stronghold of Zion, that is, the City of David. ([2 Samuel 5:7](#))
- So David said on that day; Anyone striking the Jebusites, let him, by means of the water tunnel, make contact with both the lame and the blind, hateful to the soul of David! That is why they say; The blind one and the lame one will not come into the house. ([2 Samuel 5:8](#))
- As to the statement in;
- So David said on that day; Anyone striking the Jebusites, let him, by means of the water tunnel, make contact with both the lame and the blind, hateful to the soul of David! That is why they say; The blind one and the lame one will not come into the house. ([2 Samuel 5:8](#))
- That is why they say; The blind one and the lame one will not come into the house, several explanations have been offered. In the text this statement is not attributed to David and may mean that others developed this proverbial saying with regard to those who, like the Jebusites, boasted or were overconfident of their secure position.

- Or, the saying might have meant, No one who holds intercourse with disagreeable people like the Jebusites will enter. Others would render the text, **because the blind and the lame continued to say; He shall not come into this house, or, Because they had said; even the blind and the lame, He shall not come into the house.** [Barrett's Synopsis of Criticisms, London, 1847, Vol. II, Part II, p. 518][KJ margin]
- On a later occasion, Elijah asked the Israelites; How long will you be limping upon two different opinions? If Yehowah is the true God, go following him, but if Baal is, go following him.
- At that time the Israelites were claiming to worship Yehowah but at the same time were worshipping Baal. Their course was unsteady and halting, like that of a lame man.
- During the contest that ensued, when the prophets of Baal were vainly trying from morning till noon to get their god to answer them; they kept limping around the altar that they had made.
- This may be a mocking description of the ritualistic dance or hobble of the fanatical Baal worshipers, or it may be that they limped because of their tiredness from the long, futile ritual.
- Then Elijah approached all the people and said; How long will you be limping upon two different opinions? If Yehowah is the true God, go following him, but if Baal is, go following him. And the people did not say a word in answer to him. (**1 Kings 18:21**)
- And Elijah went on to say to the people; I myself have been left as a prophet of Yehowah, I alone, while the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men. (**1 Kings 18:22**)
- Now let them give us two young bulls, and let them choose for themselves one young bull and cut it in pieces and put it upon the wood, but they should not put fire to it. And I myself shall dress the other young bull, and I must place it upon the wood, but I shall not put fire to it. (**1 Kings 18:23**)
- And you must call upon the name of your god, and I, for my part, shall call upon the name of Yehowah, and it must occur that the true God that answers by fire is the true God. To this all the people answered and said; The thing is good. (**1 Kings 18:24**)

- **Elijah now said to the prophets of Baal; Choose for yourselves one young bull and dress it first, because you are the majority, and call upon the name of your god, but you must not put fire to it. (1 Kings 18:25)**
- **Accordingly they took the young bull that he gave them. Then they dressed it, and they kept calling upon the name of Baal from morning till noon, saying; O Baal, answer us! But there was no voice, and there was no one answering. And they kept limping around the altar that they had made. (1 Kings 18:26)**
- **And it came about at noon that Elijah began to mock them and say; Call at the top of your voice, for he is a god, for he must be concerned with a matter, and he has excrement and has to go to the privy. Or maybe he is asleep and ought to wake up! (1 Kings 18:27)**
- **And they began calling at the top of their voice and cutting themselves according to their custom with daggers and with lances, until they caused blood to flow out upon them. (1 Kings 18:28)**
- **And it came about that, as soon as noon was past and they continued behaving as prophets until the going up of the grain offering, there was no voice, and there was no one answering, and there was no paying of attention. (1 Kings 18:29)**
- **Limping, lameness, and stumbling are used in figures of speech to denote halting irregularity or unsteadiness in ones course of life, purpose, or speech. Bildad, supposedly warning Job of dangers ahead for him, said of a person taking a wicked course; Disaster stands ready to make him limp.**
- **His vigor becomes famished, and disaster stands ready to make him limp. (Job 18:12)**
- **In a similar figure David and Jeremiah spoke of their enemies as waiting for them to make an unsteady step, watching for them to limp, so that, as Jeremiah's foes said; We may prevail against him and take our revenge upon him.**
- **For I heard the bad report of many. There was fright all around. Tell out, that we may tell out about him. Every mortal man bidding me; Peace! They are watching for my limping; Perhaps**

he will be fooled, so that we may prevail against him and take our revenge upon him. ([Jeremiah 20:10](#))

- For I said; Otherwise they would rejoice at me, when my foot moved unsteadily, they would certainly assume great airs against me. ([Psalms 38:16](#))
- For I was ready to **limp**, and my pain was in front of me constantly. ([Psalms 38:17](#))
- The enemies of Jesus Christ wanted to see him stumble, or **limp**, in his speech so as to entrap him.
- Then the Pharisees went their way and took counsel together in order to trap him in his speech. ([Matthew 22:15](#))

•• Proverbial Usage

- As one that is mutilating his feet, which would make him **lame**, as one that is drinking mere violence, is he that is thrusting matters into the hand of someone stupid, said wise King Solomon.
- Truly, the man employing a stupid person to handle any project for him is doing crippling violence to his own interests. He is certain to see his proposed work collapse, with damage to himself.
- As one that is **mutilating his feet**, as one that is drinking mere violence, is he that is thrusting matters into the hand of someone stupid. ([Proverbs 26:6](#))
- The Proverbs continue with a like illustration. Have the legs of the **lame** one drawn up water? Then there is a proverb in the mouth of stupid people.
- Have the legs of the **lame** one drawn up water? Then there is a proverb in the mouth of stupid people. ([Proverbs 26:7](#))
- In ancient times, especially in cities built upon mounds, it was often necessary to climb down a ladder or a long stairway to bring water up from a well. A stupid person trying to speak or apply a proverb is as clumsy and ineffective as a lame man trying to carry water up a stairway.

•• God's Ancient Nation

- In speaking of the restoration of his people, Yehowah promised to strengthen them to leave Babylon and to undertake the hazardous journey back to desolated Jerusalem.
- Any spiritual lameness, hesitancy, or indecision would be removed. Through the prophet Isaiah, God encouraged them;
- At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness. For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. ([Isaiah 35:6](#))
- God's nation had limped and suffered a fall into captivity, but in that day, said Yehowah, I will gather her that was **limping**, and I shall certainly make her that was limping a remnant, and her that was removed far off a mighty nation.
- In that day, is the utterance of Yehowah, I will gather her that was **limping**, and her that was dispersed I will collect together, even her whom I have treated badly. ([Micah 4:6](#))
- And I shall certainly make her that was **limping** a remnant, and her that was removed far off a mighty nation, and Yehowah will actually rule as king over them in Mount Zion, from now on and into time indefinite. ([Micah 4:7](#))
- Here I am acting against all those afflicting you, at that time, and I will save her that is **limping**, and her that is dispersed I shall collect together. And I will set them as a praise and as a name in all the land of their shame. ([Zephaniah 3:19](#))
- Further comforting his people, Yehowah promised, as their King, to protect them from aggressors. He described the helplessness of Zion's enemies as a ship with its tacklings loosed, its mast wobbling, and its sail gone.
- Then he said; At that time even spoil of the enemy in abundance will have to be divided up, the **lame** ones themselves will actually take a big plunder. There would be so much spoil that even those not usually able to have part in taking plunder would at that time be able to share.
- Your ropes must hang loose, their mast they will not hold firmly

erect, they have not spread a sail. At that time even spoil in abundance will have to be divided up, the lame ones themselves will actually take a big plunder. (Isaiah 33:23)

.. Consideration For Spiritually Lame Ones

- The Christian writer of the letter to the Hebrews pointed out that among them were many spiritually immature ones, who should be making better progress.
- For, indeed, although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God, and you have become such as need milk, not solid food. (Hebrews 5:12)
- For everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. (Hebrews 5:13)
- But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong. (Hebrews 5:14)
- Then, after speaking of discipline, he said; Keep making straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather that it may be healed.
- And keep making straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather that it may be healed. (Hebrews 12:13)
- Even stronger ones should carefully watch how they walk in their Christian course, so that the weaker, spiritually lame ones would not stumble or injure themselves.
- If those stronger in faith used their spiritual freedom to do certain things that were lawful, those weaker in faith might be stumbled by their actions.
- We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves. (Romans 15:1)

- **The apostle Paul sets forth as an example of this principle the matter of eating and drinking.**
- **Therefore let us not be judging one another any longer, but rather make this your decision, not to put before a brother a stumbling block or a cause for tripping. ([Romans 14:13](#))**
- **I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is defiled in itself, only where a man considers something to be defiled, to him it is defiled. ([Romans 14:14](#))**
- **For if because of food your brother is being grieved, you are no longer walking in accord with love. Do not by your food ruin that one for whom Christ died. ([Romans 14:15](#))**
- **Do not, therefore, let the good you people do be spoken of with injury to you. ([Romans 14:16](#))**
- **For the kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking, but means righteousness and peace and joy with Holy Spirit. ([Romans 14:17](#))**
- **For he who in this regard slaves for Christ is acceptable to God and has approval with men. ([Romans 14:18](#))**
- **It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles. ([Romans 14:21](#))**
- **In this passage he counsels, in part. Make this your decision, not to put before a brother a stumbling block or a cause for tripping. He says; It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles.**
- **Nevertheless, there is not this knowledge in all persons, but some, being accustomed until now to the idol, eat food as something sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ([1 Corinthians 8:7](#))**
- **But food will not commend us to God, if we do not eat, we do not fall short, and, if we eat, we have no credit to ourselves. ([1 Corinthians 8:8](#))**
- **But keep watching that this authority of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ([1 Corinthians](#)**

8:9)

- For if anyone should see you, the one having knowledge, reclining at a meal in an idol temple, will not the conscience of that one who is weak be built up to the point of eating foods offered to idols? (**1 Corinthians 8:10**)
- Really, by your knowledge, the man that is weak is being ruined, your brother for whose sake Christ died. (**1 Corinthians 8:11**)
- But when you people thus sin against your brothers and wound their conscience that is weak, you are sinning against Christ. (**1 Corinthians 8:12**)
- Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat flesh at all, that I may not make my brother stumble. (**1 Corinthians 8:13**)
- On the other hand, the apostle shows, a Christian should strengthen his own spiritual **legs** so that he will not **limp** or be stumbled by what occurs or by what someone else does.
- He should make himself strong so as to keep steady in the Christian course. Paul says; Let the one eating not look down on the one not eating, and let the one not eating not judge the one eating, for God has welcomed that one.
- Let the one eating not look down on the one not eating, and let the one not eating not judge the one eating, for God has welcomed that one. (**Romans 14:3**)
- This principle was expressed by the psalmist,
- Abundant peace belongs to those loving your Law, and for them there is no stumbling block. (**Psalms 119:165**)
- Those loving God's Law will not be caused to **limp** with spiritual lameness over any matter.

.. Complete Healing

- **Lameness** has caused many tears. Just as Jesus Christ healed many lame and maimed persons when he was on earth, even restoring dried-up body parts

- **Once again he entered into a synagogue, and a man was there with a dried-up hand. (Mark 3:1)**
- **And after looking around upon them with indignation, being thoroughly grieved at the insensibility of their hearts, he said to the man; Stretch out your hand. And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. (Mark 3:5)**
- **A certain one of them even did strike the slave of the High Priest and took off his right ear. (Luke 22:50)**
- **But in reply Jesus said; Let it go as far as this. And he touched the ear and healed him. (Luke 22:51)**
- **By means of a new heaven God's Son will again perform similar cures. This he will accomplish completely as High Priest and King appointed by God, wiping out every tear from the eyes of humankind.**
- **But after it became evening, people brought him many demon-possessed persons, and he expelled the spirits with a word, and he cured all who were faring badly. (Matthew 8:16)**
- **That there might be fulfilled what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying; He himself took our sicknesses and carried our diseases. (Matthew 8:17)**
- **And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more. (Revelation 21:1)**
- **And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away. (Revelation 21:4)**