

John, Part 18 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ – A Miracle by the Pool

As the revelation of Jesus Christ progresses in the Gospel of John, we begin seeing more of Who Jesus is, His power, mission, and glory. We have observed several signs, wonders, and miracles, and have noticed Christ's authority when He spoke. Jesus has traveled much during the short time since He was baptized by John in the Jordan River. After the miracle with the official's son, Jesus left Galilee and went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews.

The Pool of Bethesda was known as a place where miracles of healing occurred. Bethesda, or house of mercy, was located in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate. The Pool of Bethesda had a northern and southern pool that were surrounded by porches with a dividing wall. The five porches that surrounded the pools were in the colonnades. Large numbers of people came to the water of these pools for miracles or healing.

John 5:1-4 NKJV After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five covered porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, *waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.*

(Note: In our text, some manuscripts omit the last part of verse 3 and all of verse 4.)

It is believed that the text is included to explain what people commonly understood about the pool and the traditions surrounding it.

The Pool of Bethesda was famous in the Lord's day. According to local tradition and fables, when the water was stirred or troubled, people would be healed. The pool was fed by an underground spring and the water stirred up at times. Nothing in the Bible indicates that an angel came and stirred the waters. We must be careful about the things that we put our faith and trust in. Many people have believed and trusted in things that have no curative, healing or saving power.

Have you ever heard of a spring or pool that had healing waters? People around the Dead Sea travel to certain spots to soak in the mineral rich mud for its healing properties. There are many shrines, springs, or pools around the world that are advertised to have healing springs that possess magical mystical healing water. The popular tradition and fable around the Pool of Bethesda was associated with the bubbling of the waters.

Local traditions supported the belief that when an angel stirred the water of the Pool of Bethesda, people would be healed. John does not say when those certain seasons happened, and he does not support these beliefs.

Jesus made His way to the pool. Just like in the story of the woman at the well, Jesus knows where to find desperate people. When Jesus arrived, a multitude of sick, blind, lame, and withered people surrounded the pool. These sick and hurting people were desperate. In many ways, people in their world were just like people in our world. Desperate people look for something to put their faith in. They look for places to go and things to do for a miracle cure. Desperate people visit pools and gaze at the signs in the stars. They make trips to various rivers, pools and try all kinds of formulas and remedies to resolve their desperate situation. Desperate people want something real that will take away the stress, distress, and pain of life.

People came to the Pool of Bethesda and waited for something to happen that would

bring them a miracle. They believed the first one in the water would be healed.

Consider the scene around the pool. A multitude of powerless, blind, lame, withered, lean people are laying around the pool waiting for the water to stir. All of a sudden someone screams: "The water – now it's moving...." Now hear the commotion as everyone makes a mad frantic dash, shoving others out of the way. Everyone wants to be the first to get in. It is a scene of frantic selfishness.

For 38 years, this man has heard the cry, but someone else always got to the water first. It is noteworthy that no report is made of anyone actually being healed by the waters in the pool. Millions of people make migrations to springs, pools and fountains trying to find healing, rejuvenation and restoration.

When Jesus met the woman at the well, He told her of living water that would spring up into everlasting life. What Jesus offers cannot be found at a shrine, pool or Dead Sea mud puddle.

Can you imagine having an infirmity for 38 years and still going to the same pool without remedy?

No one was there to help this poor man. He was desperate and helpless, but he kept coming back to the pool because he was hoping against hope. Maybe this year at the pool, I will be healed. Maybe I will be healed this time! The results were always the same.

This kind of thing is contrary to the character of God. God wants believers to put their trust and hope in Him.

Exodus 15:26 God said: "I am the Lord who heals you."

Jeremiah 17:14 said: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed."

In Psalm 30:2 NKJV David said: O Lord my God, I cried out to You, And You healed me.

Psalm 103:2-3 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits; Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases."

Psalm 62:1-2 "My soul waits in silence for God only; From Him is my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken."

This paralyzed man had lived with the emptiness of his pain for 38 years. When desperate people go through the same distresses without relief, it is most difficult to maintain faith or hope.

This man by the pool represents multitudes of people who are stuck in helpless situations. They have no joy or hope. It is easy to look for solutions in all of the wrong places. They feel helpless and without hope. They feel shut out from God's blessing and favor. I find it interesting that this man and many others kept going back to the same place and found no answer or healing.

There is no situation that is out of the Lord's sight.

Hebrews 4:13 NKJV And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Something different was going to happen at the pool this year that had never happened before. This year Jesus was passing by. I want to remind you again that Jesus knows where to find troubled, sick, sinful and distressed people.

At the pool, it was getting close to the time for the water to be troubled. You could feel the excitement in the air. Everyone is ready.

That year, the source of real life was at the Pool of Bethesda. It makes a difference

when Jesus passes by! This was not an accidental or occasional meeting. Jesus was there to minister aid to those who were hurting.

Luke 4:18 NKJV “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed.”

John 5:6 NKJV When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

Some people don't know if they want to get better. They have developed a lifestyle around their situation and desperation. They have come to identify with their pain but bitterness and pain has turned on them.

The question is pertinent, “Do you want to be made well?”

John 5:7 NKJV The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

The man did not know that the Healer was in the house. He was still looking at the pool for an answer, but Jesus was present. He was stuck in his traditions and fables and did not know who Jesus was.

All he knew was someone else would get into the water before he could move. Something drew his desperate soul to this place. He wanted to be healed, so he had friends or family bring him to the pool. Just maybe... this would be his time.

Jesus said: “Do you want to be made well?”

The man had to decide: “*Do I want to be healed?*” He chose healing. Jesus saw a positive response from this desperate man who had been sick for 38 years. Compassion pulled Jesus to speak life into that miserable man's body.

Jesus understands the depth of your suffering and distress. Jesus went out of His way to help the man at the Pool of Bethesda. For 38 years the man had been in a mob of people who wanted to be first. Other people had ignored his cry for help and had no real solution for what he was going through.

John 5:8 NKJV Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.”

Jesus did not say, “Let me help you get to your feet. Now I know this is going to be new for you, so be careful. Take it easy now and let's try to get up.”

NO, Jesus said, “ARISE, GET UP, and TAKE UP YOUR BED and WALK.” This is more of a command than a request. When there was no fountain opened for the man to be healed, Jesus said: “Arise, get up, and take up your bed and walk.”

John 5:9 NKJV And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

As soon as the man heard the words, he started to make a move and he was immediately made well. It only takes the smallest step of faith for the Lord to do the work.

God is waiting on us. Will we respond to Him when He passes by? His mercy is extended and His compassion does not fail. He will send a healing word from heaven and cleanse your sins and heal your body. No one is too wicked or beyond His help. No situation is too far gone. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Psalms 107:19-20 NKJV Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, And He

saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions.

Listen to the rest of the story. The man leaped up and grabbed his bed and started walking and praising God.

Somebody got upset that it was the Sabbath and this man was carrying his bed. Don't expect everyone to rejoice when God does something good for you. When the Lord does something good for you, hold on to it in faith and don't allow anyone to steal your joy and victory.

John 5:14 NKJV Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

Jesus was making some connection between this man's physical and spiritual condition. That is why He said, "Stop sinning so that nothing worse happens to you." Personal sin and bad choices often bring on consequences that result in suffering, misery and distress. Sometimes sickness and disease is a result of a sinful life, but all sickness and pain is not a result of personal sin. This question is addressed several times in the Bible.

- Miriam was struck with leprosy when she spoke against Moses.
- Achan brought down trouble and judgment on himself, his family and all that he possessed when he coveted the Babylonian wedge of gold, the silver and the garments.
- When Jesus healed the man who was born blind, The disciples asked Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9)

We all want to know WHY bad things happen. We look for the skunk in the woodpile. What has caused this or that to come upon us?

Without explanation Jesus found the man in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

Jesus was not just interested in the man being made well, He was concerned about his soul. Some things are worse than not being able to walk. Sin brings a worse thing for the wages of sin is death. The person who sins faces eternity without God. 38 years of paralysis is a long time but eternity in hell is much worse.

The Lord knows where you are and what you are facing. Even if you have been waiting for a miracle at the wrong pool, Jesus has living water and is able to give you new life. He knows what to do with your situation. Nothing is too hard for God. You can be save and healed. Put your faith and trust in Him.