

The Gospel According to John

1-13-2021

1. Last week I taught the events surrounding Jesus' healing of the nobleman's son and when the clock tolled 7:45 we were about to exegete Joh 5:1-17 where Jesus healed the man from Bethesda.

KJV

Joh 5:1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Joh 5:2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

Joh 5:3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water ...

Joh 5:4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

Joh 5:5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

Joh 5:6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

Joh 5:7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

Joh 5:8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Joh 5:9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

Joh 5:10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

Joh 5:11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

Joh 5:12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

Joh 5:13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

Joh 5:14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Joh 5:15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

Joh 5:16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

Joh 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

NIV

Joh 5:1 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews.

Joh 5:2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.

Joh 5:3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie--the blind, the lame, the paralyzed ...

Joh 5:5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

Joh 5:6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

Joh 5:7 "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

Joh 5:8 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

Joh 5:9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath,

Joh 5:10 and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat."

Joh 5:11 But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

Joh 5:12 So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?"

Joh 5:13 The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

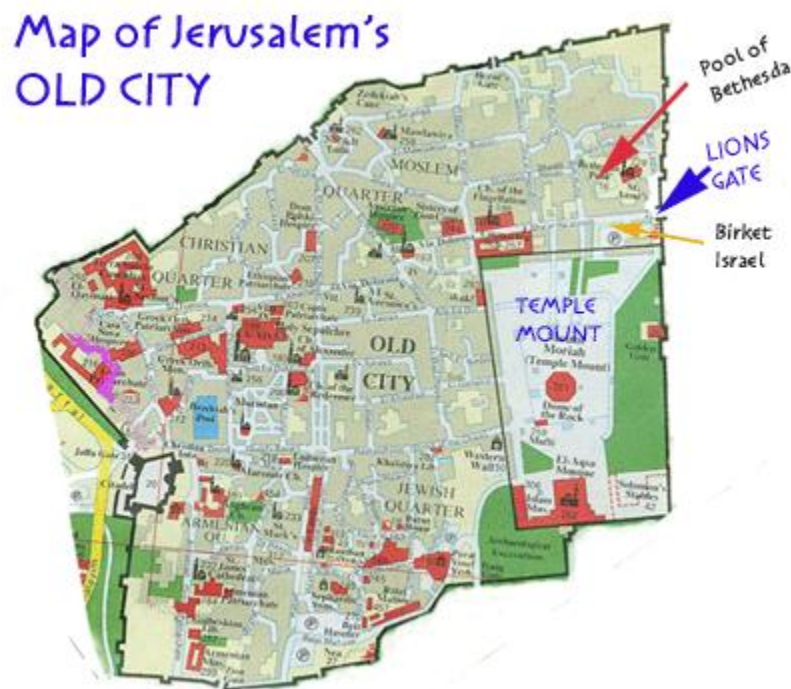
Joh 5:14 Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."

Joh 5:15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Joh 5:16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him.

Joh 5:17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

1. Let's begin by taking a look at the location of the pool of Bethesda and then I want to review the Doctrine of Divine Healing.



2. Divine Healing

2.1 The Bible teaches that human beings may look to God for direct healing. Divine healing is a subject over which differences of opinion have existed from early in the history of the Christian church.

2.1.1 Protestants and Roman Catholics have claimed to practice healing as well as Christian Scientists and many of the ancient pagan mystery religions. Bible believing Christians agree the Bible teaches God has healed and can heal every kind of disease.

2.2 In proclaiming "I am the Lord, your healer," God promised the Israelites that in consequence of their obedience He would put upon them none of the diseases of the Egyptians.

Exo 15:26 And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD ... I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

2.3 David testified regarding the God-fearing man.

Psa 41:3 The LORD will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness.

Psa 41:4 I said, "O LORD, have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you."

2.4 The psalmists in Psalm 30 repeatedly thanked God for his healing:

Psa 30:2 O LORD my God, I called to you for help and you healed me.

2.5 Obedience to God's Word can result in healing and health.

Pro 4:20 My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words.

Pro 4:21 Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart;

Pro 4:22 for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body.

3. Some of the healings recorded in the Bible were with means as in the case of Hezekiah where the means used was a poultice of figs, wine was a means in the case of Timothy and music in the case of Saul.

2Ki 20:7 Then Isaiah said, "Prepare a poultice of figs." They did so and applied it to the boil, and he recovered.

1Ti 5:23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

1Sa 16:16 Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better."

3.1 Others were without any means as in the case of Miriam.

3.2 Certainly the Bible is not opposed to the use of means for healing since Christ Himself considered it normal for people to go to a doctor.

Mat 9:12 On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

3.3 In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus states that oil and wine were poured on the wounds of the beaten traveler.

3.4 It is significant that Paul chose Luke, a physician as his traveling companion, given the fact Paul was never a healthy man.

3.5 There is also a class of healings in which certain additive factors have a part, though many are not of themselves actually therapeutic but rather symbolic of deeper meaning.

3.5.1 For example, in the healing of Naaman, the Syrian General with leprosy, his stepping into the river Jordan appears to speak of faith on the part of Naaman and cleansing on the part of God.

3.5.2 For the blind man from Bethsaida Jesus made a salve of clay and spittle; an ancient custom and means of healing, e.g., Tacitus writes of Vespasian in Alexandria Egypt, being asked to sprinkle the eyes of a blind man “oris excremento.”

3.5.3 The healing of the blind man of Bethsaida was unique in that it consisted of two stages. After the first, the man saw people indistinctly as moving objects, like trees walking.

3.5.4 The second stage of healing was the touching of the eyes. Given the context of Mar 8:17-22, the gradual healing was meant to symbolize the slowness of the twelve disciples in attaining spiritual insight. They got their eyes opened very gradually like the blind man of Bethsaida.

3.5.5 The laying on of hands upon the sick both by Jesus and by the disciples and anointing the sick person with oil were symbols of a divine presence and healing power though the use of oil was also a therapeutic means.

Mar 6:13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

4. Many false concepts about healing have developed. For example:

4.1 When a person seeks healing from God, some conclude he is making a choice between God and the doctor. Christian Scientists go so far as teaching that the use of a doctor is a sin.

4.1.1 In the case of Asa which has been quoted as an example of how choosing a doctor over God. This reflects a lack of faith on the part of the believer. Asa's choice was one of choosing the equivalent of "witch doctors" over God. The word in the NIV translated physicians might better be rendered "pagan sorcerers."

2Ch 16:12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians.

4.2 Some believe that physical healing is as much a part of the salvation purchased by Christ on the cross as is the forgiveness of sin. Isa 53:4a and 5c are often quoted as proof of such a position. Most evangelicals disagree, however, with such an exegesis and analysis.

Isa 53:4a and 5c "Surely he took up our infirmities ... and by his wounds we are healed."

4.2.1 In only one other place in the New Testament is there any suggestion of healing in the atonement.

4.2.2 Peter in 1Pe 2:24 connects "by whose stripes ye were healed" with Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, but there is no explicit mention of physical sickness and most would agree 1Pe 2:24 is used metaphorically.

4.3 There are also those who contend healing was a first installment of the resurrection promised for our mortal bodies through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

4.3.1 Most evangelicals believe the reference to "life to your mortal bodies" refers to temporal sanctification.

4.4 There are those who contend that sickness is always the result of sin. This is the view of the Christian Scientist. The Christian Scientist, like the cereal Grape Nuts, is neither Christian nor Scientific.

4.4.1 While it is true that many sicknesses are a punishment sent by God for sin; e.g., the plagues which struck Israel when they rebelled against God in the wilderness journey. Balaam the prophet and Balak the Moab King conspired to defeat Israel and God intervened.

Num 14:36 So the men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumble against him by spreading a bad report about it –

Num 14:37 these men responsible for spreading the bad report about the land were struck down and died of a plague before the LORD.

Num 25:1 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women,

Num 25:2 who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods ...

Num 25:6 Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

Num 25:7 When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand

Num 25:8 and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them -- through the Israelite and into the woman's body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped;

4.4.2 There are still other sicknesses which are used uniquely for His glory.
Joh 9:1-3

Joh 9:1 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

Joh 9:2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

Joh 9:3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

4.4.3 Then there are sicknesses directly used for the good of the sufferer.

2Co 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

2Co 12:8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

2Co 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

4.5 That sickness is to be attributed to the devil is also a fairly popular contention. Those of this persuasion base their argument on what Peter said to the Gentiles concerning Jesus' ministry, He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil."

4.5.1 While it is clear from Scripture that Satan often does inflict sickness upon men, it is equally clear that this occurs only with God's permission. God as sovereign can and does use all manner of suffering for His own purposes and glory.

Rom 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

5. Cause of Sickness

5.1 Suffering in general is the consequence of the curse that came upon man after the Fall.

5.1.1 In this sense, all sickness stems from man's first sin, though it does not follow that an individual's personal sickness is due to his own personal sin. Prior to the fall man had a means of maintaining health and longevity by eating from the tree of life. A similar tree will also exist in the Millennium.

Gen 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground -- trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ...

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Gen 3:23 So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

5.1.2 There is also a similar tree with all manner of fruits for the healing and enjoyment of the millennial citizens.

Eze 47:12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for enjoying the perfect environment of the Millennium.

Rev 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree provide pure deliverance from the ills of life which characterized their lives before Christ's millennial reign.

5.1.3 Let's analyze categorically Eze 47:12 and Rev 22:1-2 that tell us that there is a tree in the garden which provides healing:

- We could conclude there will be no healing in the eternal state because there will be no sickness.
- This would logically follow given the fact that the citizens of eternity future are "reborn" and the new covenant makes them perfect.
- Walvoord writes in his book *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* "The intimation of the above passages is that while it is not necessary for the believers in the eternal state to sustain life in any way by physical means, they can enjoy that which the tree provides."

5.2 There are many cases where sickness is caused by man's ignorance and also by his own carelessness. We must understand all such illness like everything else becomes a reality only by the permissive will of God.

5.3 Sickness may be directly caused by man's sin, as in the spread of venereal disease, or chronic illnesses resulting from alcoholism, in some cases AIDS, etc. But again, we must always remember God is sovereign and often there are exceptions. Sickness may be sent by God as punishment, e.g., King Uzziah's sin.

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