

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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John 5, Stirring the Waters - Part I

John 5:1-3: *1. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep (market) a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. 3. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.*

Feasts of the Jews: The word “feasts” can be misleading to the western mind-set. The Hebrew word (*moed*^{h4150}) actually means *appointed, or set times*, of which there are seven, and three of which include seven day feasts. Jesus had attended the first and second set times (Passover & Unleavened Bread, John 2:13) right after he began his ministry. The feast above is not named. However, all able bodied males were to attend three major feasts at Jerusalem during the year. **Deuteronomy 16:16:** *Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty:* The Feast of Weeks is also called Feast of the Harvest, firstfruits of their labors which they have sown in the field (Exodus 23:16).

Because of the event at the pool of Bethesda, I am inclined to think this was the fourth set time of the year, or the Feast of the Harvest, when the firstfruits waved were two loaves of leavened bread. This occurred 50 days counting from the Wave Offering during Unleavened Bread, and later came to be called Pentecost, the Greek name for the fiftieth day (*pentekoste*^{g4004}). The Wave Offering was made from the firstfruits of the Wheat harvest (Leviticus 23:15-17). God’s people have been fed with the leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:5-12) all their lives. Unleavened bread is pure truth that is not mingled with men’s opinions (unsanctified leaven). The two leavened wave loaves at Pentecost are a type for the understanding of the Son of God as the Divine Son, and as the Son of man - the Truth as it is in Jesus (John 14:6), and not the error universally taught in all religions. All the set times are types of our experiences through which Jesus brings us with him. He died on Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7-8), met with the disciples and others for 40 days after his resurrection (Acts 1:3), ascended into heaven and 10 days later, a total of 50 days (Acts 2:1), poured out the Spirit. The firstfruits of the harvest were 120 men and women (Acts 1:13-15) in an upper room (in the heavens). **Acts 2:2:** *and there came suddenly out of the heaven a sound as of a bearing violent (or, mighty) breath, and it filled all the house where they were sitting* (YLT).

Sheep Gate: Bethesda means “city of mercy/kindness,” which is a component of God’s grace. The word “market” is a supplied word, which in most versions is supplied more accurately as “gate.” The “sheep gate” was on the north side of Jerusalem, not far from the temple, through which were brought animals for sacrifice. There were five porches around the pool wherein laid a great multitude of people who feeble, sick, without strength, blind, lame and cripple, and who desired to be healed, when the water of the pool was stirred by an angel (messenger). **John 5:4-6:** *For an angel (messenger) went down at a certain season (a set time) 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. 5. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. 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? Will you be made whole? Jesus chose one man and only healed him out of the multitude under those porches. Why only one, and why this particular man?*

Season, or a set time: Though not mentioned, this allusion to the Harvest is a type for the firstfruits of truth we receive when we begin to hear and obey (i.e. enter Canaan). Jesus chose a man who had an infirmity 38 years. Looking at Israel's experience after they left Egypt, they came to Kadesh, from where they sent spies into the land of promise. Their report discouraged the people (Deuteronomy 1:21-28) and they rebelled. They were told to go back into the wilderness where they remained until they came to Kadesh a second time, 38 years later (Num 14:22, 25; 20:22; Deuteronomy 2:14). This was the launching place to enter the promised land. The only feasts kept in the wilderness were Passover and Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:10). The first appointed time to keep in the promised land was the Wave Offering that happened after the Sabbath which would occur sometime during the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Upon entrance to Canaan, all the males born in the wilderness were circumcised (Joshua 5:1-5) and they ate of the fruit of that land, and the manna ceased (Joshua 5:11-12). All who were circumcised in Egypt died in the wilderness, except two (Numbers 26:65). A new generation was circumcised in the promised land. Historically, all who were part of the continued reformation in the mid-1800s have died, and a new generation are entering the true understanding of the gospel when their hearts are circumcised a second time, this time with the correct understanding of the Son of God. The manna is a type for the written word, eaten by those freshly delivered from Egypt and who all died in the wilderness under the law.

John 5:7-9: *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 steps down before me. 8. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. 9. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.* The multitude waiting to be healed lay under five porches by a pool near the sheep gate. The number four, a symbol for earth plus the one God makes the number five, a symbol for grace; the man was resting on his bed (understanding) next to a pool (earthly understanding), waiting for the Shepherd of the sheep (John 10:7) to stir the water (Proverbs 18:4) so that he could be immersed in Christ's understanding and be healed.

The man said, *while I am coming, another steps down before me.* This has happen to all of us - The Spirit led us to the Lord, then another stepped in before we learned to listen to the voice of Christ and put us under the law; And there is therefore, no inward healing. Jesus is the messenger, he is the Shepherd who enters the gate of the heart and who stirs our thoughts to turn them toward God. Arise! Lift up your way of thinking (bed) to the heavens and let Jesus stir your water, and you will be soon healed. **Job 33:14-17:** *14. For God speaks once, yea twice, yet man perceives it not. 15. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumber upon the bed; 16. Then he opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction, 17. That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

And it was the sabbath (rest). Healing of the man on the Sabbath is significant, as it is indicative of entering the rest in Jesus Christ. **John 1:17:** *...the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* All are, or have been in the wilderness. Healing cannot take place until one learns to listen, understand and obey the voice of Christ which speaks to the conscience (enter land of milk and honey). **Hebrews 4:14-16:** *14. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Amen.*