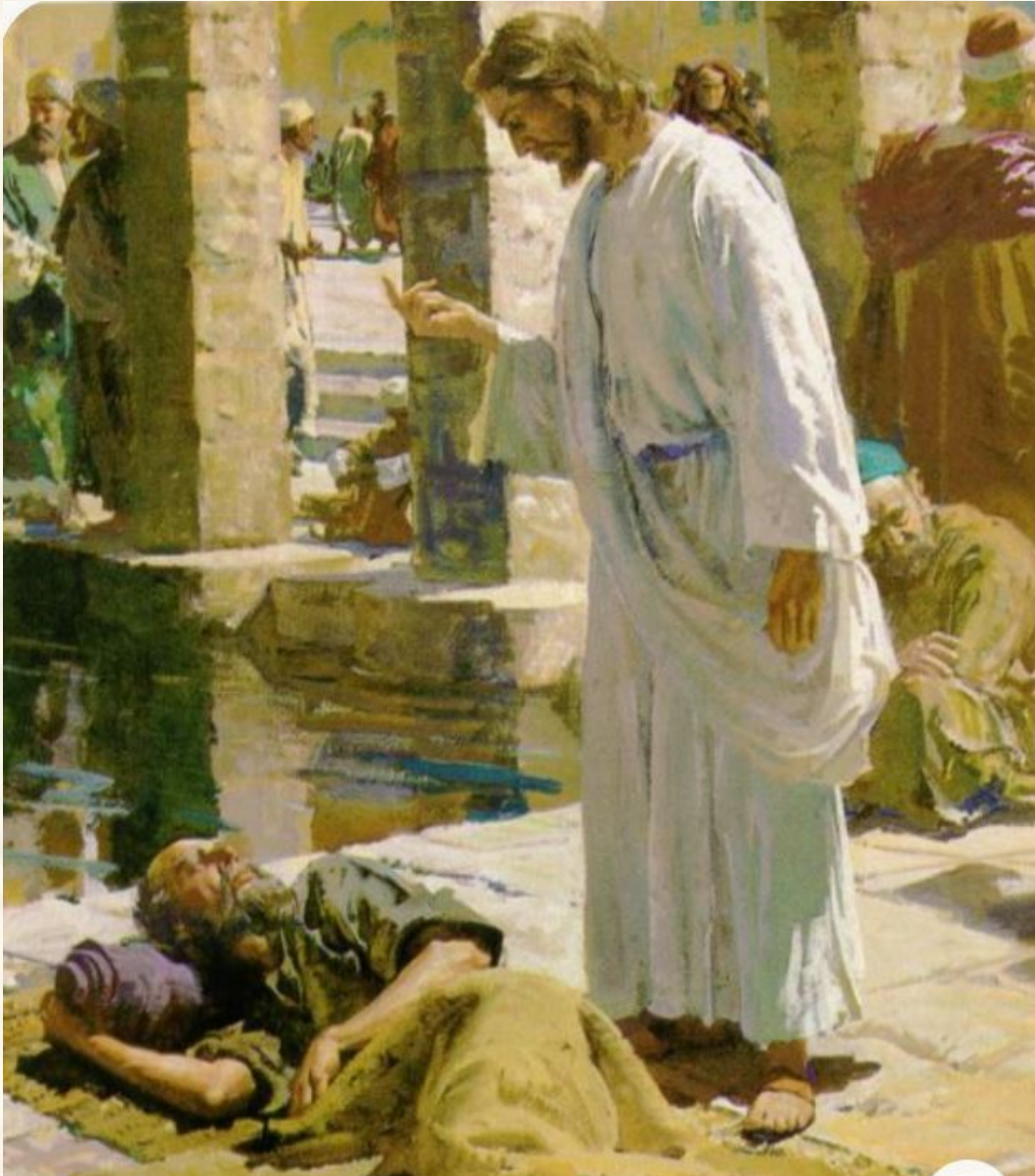


John 5 v1-15 Healing the lame man



JERUSALEM
IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES
20 B.C. - 70 A.D.

Pool of Bethesda

Fortress of Antonia

Sheep Gate

Garden of Gethsemane

To Mount of Olives and Bethany

Beautiful Gate

Solomon's Porch

Court of Women

Herod's Temple

Court of Gentiles

Royal Porch

Mulda Gate

Bridge

Xystus (Market)

Council House

Hasmonaeon Palace

Palace of Herod

UPPER CITY

House of Caiaphas

House of the Last Supper

Lower City

Tyropoeon Valley

Pool of Siloam

Lower or Old Pool

Gihon Spring

Valley of the Kidron

THIRD NORTH WALL

SECOND NORTH WALL

Golgotha Calvary (Church of the Holy Sepulchre)

Pool of Amygdalon

Gennath Gate

V1

In NE corner.

House of mercy

The pool:



Photo of the Pool of Bethesda in a 1:50 scale model of Jerusalem in the period of the Second Temple, constructed by Israeli archeologist and historian Michael Avi-Yonah (1904-1974) at the Holyland Hotel, now at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

The pool of Bethesda was 50 x 100m approx

Surrounded by 5 covered colonnades (v2)

Unearthed by archaeologists (no fairy tale)

Divided into two pools by a central partition. The southern pool had broad steps with landings & would have been used by pilgrims for ritual washing (mikveh) before worship.

Compassion:

Here a great number of disabled people used to lie (the blind, the lame, the paralysed v3)

Earliest manuscripts did not have v3b-4 (not in NIV & probably a later scribe explaining a superstition)

Imagine the life for the regular sick waiting by the pool.

The superstition gave little hope of healing.

& even less if you could not move!

No welfare state here!

What about broken people today?

There are plenty around us.

How do you & I feel towards broken people?

How did Jesus feel towards this broken person?

One there had been an unable to walk for 38 yrs (v5)

Imagine the scars life had inflicted on him.

“When Jesus saw him lying there & learned he had been in this condition a long time he asked him, ‘Do you want to get well?’” v6

Jesus felt compassion for him.

One who drew large crowds also thoughtful one to one.

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Matt 9 v36.

“Do you want to get well?” v6b

A penetrating question!

Which could prompt a variety of responses:

- Why do you think I'm here waiting for the waters to stir?
- He was probably an old man & if cured his begging income would stop & he would have to look for paid work.
- Most likely limited social skills & 38 yrs begging not looking good on his CV!
- We don't always want change – even if it's for the better!

What does he say?

“ I have no one to help me get into the pool when the water is stirred . . .
someone else always gets there ahead of me . . .” v7

Depressed & defeated – deep emotional scars

Raised with a word:

Jesus says “Get up! Pick up your mat & walk.” At once the man was cured, he picked up his mat & walked.” v9a

Remarkable power over

long term disability.

Mercy indeed!

The OT predicted things like this:

“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.” Is 35 v5-6



Are we surprised more were not healed?

We live in times of the 'now & not yet'

God chooses to work through us (fragile, sinful vessels).

God is capable of dramatic physical healing today

But in the 'now & not yet' we must not presume upon it.

But we should be willing to pray for big things as well as small.

Where do we start when we are broken?

We can do so little.

Starfish story.



Opposition:

“The day on which this took place was a sabbath.” v9b

“and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, ‘It is the sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.’” v10

Can you believe it?

“The man who made me well told me ‘pick it up & walk.’” v11

“Who was he?” v12 the Jewish leaders asked

He had no idea. “for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.”
v13

What did God’s law say about the sabbath?

“Remember the sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour & do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, servants, animals, or foreigners living among you.” Ex 20 v8-10

They were to refrain from daily work but the Jewish leaders had added extra rules (not in God's law).

“39 extra categories of work were identified which breached the Sabbath law. These included carrying anything, except in cases of compassion.” J Stott

OK for others to carry a sick person on his mat!

Not OK for anyone to carry a mat on your own!

“So because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath the Jewish leaders began to persecute him.” v16

As his father was always at work so too was Jesus.

“Because of this they tried all the more to kill him . .” v18

Repent:

“Later Jesus found him at the temple & said to him, ‘See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.’” v14

Jesus looks beyond the man’s body to his soul!

An individual’s sin is rarely the direct cause of being sick.

In this case however it was.

We don’t know how he responded . .

But he betrayed Jesus to the Jewish leaders

“The man went away & told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well,” v15

Summary:

Do you allow the needs of others to impact you?

The compassion of Jesus towards a broken person is a challenge to us.

If overwhelmed just focus on one or two people

In our conversations find your own way of asking “Do you want to get well.”

There's none so blind as those who will not see.

Stand in awe of the power of God.

This healing was no magic trick!

His kingdom has broken in – though still there is ‘now & not yet’

Think of people's souls as well as physical needs.

Jesus looked beyond physical healing to the state of the man's soul.

Don't be surprised that many don't respond well to Jesus.

Neither the man healed or the Jewish leaders do well in this story.

God's truth divides people

Keep praying – we live on a battlefield

Seven sign miracles in John's gospel – this was no.3

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, & that by believing you may have life in his name."

John 20 v30-31

Do you believe that Jesus is the Messiah?