

The Man at the Pool Healed

John 5:1-18

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After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. ³ In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.

⁵ One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" ⁷ The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." ⁹ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." ¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. ¹⁴ Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. ¹⁶ And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

¹⁸ This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

ESV

Which feast?

If the feast is Passover then John mentions four Passovers and Jesus' ministry is 3 ½ years. If this is some other feast then John only mentions three Passovers and Jesus' ministry is 2 ½ years. The feast mentioned is probably Passover since a lesser feast probably would have been specifically named.

It was a Sabbath and Jesus goes to a certain pool where a certain man was laying.

The pool is at Bethesda, which is the “House of Mercy [Grace]”.
This man had been in his pitiful condition for 38 years!

Symbolism:

The “five porches” may represent the five books of the law.

The 38 years may represent the time of the wandering in the wilderness after the provocation. This may be a picture of the impotence of the law to heal.

Jesus knows the condition of this man, yet He asks the man
“Do you want to be made well?”

Is the question to arouse hope in a man that has long ago given up any hope?
See the man’s answer. “Sir, there is no one who will help me.
Will you stay with me until the water moves and help me to get into the pool?”

There is no need to doubt the validity of the text from “...waiting for the moving
of the water ... whatever disease he had.”

“Rise up...!” And the man does get up!
He simply gets up and walks without a word to Jesus.

But it was a Sabbath!

He doesn’t get very far until the Jews, who cared nothing about mercy, charged the man with breaking the law! It doesn’t matter that the man had been in this condition for many years. All they could see was the letter of the law in their interpretation of the law. Of course Jesus did not break the law of God and He did not cause anyone else to break the law.

The man’s logic is irrefutable. My healing justifies my obedience!
Whoever has the power to heal me must be obeyed, Sabbath or not!

They can’t deal with the man’s logic so they ask him who told him to get up. But the man could not say and Jesus had left and so the man continues on his way.

Jesus later seeks out the man and the man is confronted like the woman at the well by the One who knew all that he ever did!

From what Jesus said this is a case where sin is connected with an affliction.

That is not always the case: Chapter 9.

John 9:1-7

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. **ESV**

5:14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."

Something worse than being lame for 38 years? What?

The man goes to the Jews. He intended no harm but thought they needed to know who it was that had made him well.

The Jews are outraged and plot to kill Jesus because they believed He had violated the Sabbath. The Answer that Jesus gives allows for no equivocation.

17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

Jesus is either God or He is a blasphemer. It is completely ignorant to claim that Jesus was a "good" man but not God! A "good" man does not lie about being God!

Jesus sermon on His deity that follows in this chapter is not part of the miracle but is the exposition of it.

Why did Jesus heal only one man when He could have healed them all?
He healed one more than deserved to be healed!

What is your concept of mercy? Is mercy deserved?
Then it becomes an obligation to God and is not mercy.

Jim Gunn
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