

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

July 15, 2020

John 5: 1 - 6

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. 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. 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?

Verse 1

“After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”

* To understand the setting of this story, we need to look at Leviticus 23 for a listing of all the feasts that the Jewish men (those of the age of accountability) were responsible to attend or keep.

Feasts listed in Leviticus 23

Weekly Sabbath

Passover

Unleavened Bread - probably the one mentioned in John 5

Firstfruits

Pentecost

Trumpets

Day of Atonement

Tabernacles

Specifically in verses 1 - 3, we learn the conditions for keeping these holy days:

Leviticus 23: 1 - 3

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. 3 Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.”

*The 7th day - the Sabbath day of rest - Do no work. Pastor Tom asked the group to recall how Sundays looked when we were growing up.

*Feasts do not mean food or banquets here in the Bible. They are a holy convocation, a remembrance, a duty.

(Also an aside from Pastor Tom: When things get back to ‘normal’...we should be inviting new visitors to the church for a dinner in our home to make them feel welcomed into our community of faith.)

All this background will be important in later verses of John 5

Verse 2

“Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.”

*This is a brief description of the Pool of Bethesda, located in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate. Meade Bailey and Pastor Jon gave accounts from their trip to Israel of this place.

(A suggestion is to research through Google Images of the Pool of Bethesda then and now)

Verse 3

“In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.”

*Porches could be covered waiting areas or arches. Multitude means many, many disabled, weak, distressed people there, waiting with great faith for a miracle.

Verse 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.”

*Angels are messengers from God, coming *down* because they came from up in heaven.

* Only at certain times, not scheduled, so everyone had to be ready all the time for the stirring of the waters.

* Several people shared their experiences encountering angels.

Verse 5

“And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.”

*This man had on-going distress for 38 years! What kind of words could even begin to comfort him...or anyone in distress today. Pastor Tom admonished us to choose our words carefully when talking about or with distressed people. More often we should just listen to them, be their sounding board for anger and frustration and be a messenger of God when the time is right to speak Jesus to them.

Verse 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?”

*Jesus always has a purpose for what he does. Jesus knew all about who this man was and why he was at the pool.

*So...why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?

Because God has a purpose/reason for everything and we don't always know it.

Sherri shared an answer she gives when the question comes up - In all the world, do you think nothing bad will ever happen to you?

*Sometimes the answer is just 'I don't know'.

*Discussion then turned to Job:

Satan can initiate the bad things - he pointed out to God that Job was faithful because he had a good life from God. But God allowed Satan to mess with Job...nothing happens that is not outside of God's will.

God can take what Satan means for harm and turn it into good for us. We've got to believe that God is in control of all things. And He is seeing how we react to or handle all situations. Give Him glory for all things.

*Pastor Tom also quoted Ken Turgeon with this wisdom:

“Calm seas do not make a good sailor!”

*Then Jesus asks the man, “ Do you want to change and be made whole?”
Ending our study with this question for next week, Pastor Tom asked, “Does the man know who Jesus is?” Like the woman at the well, does the man recognize Jesus for who He really is?.....to be continued next week!

*May the Lord watch between me and thee,
While we are absent one from the other.*