

JESUS HEALS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA

New Testament Lesson #32

Jesus was in Jerusalem for a Jewish religious festival. While he was there, he went to the pool of Bethesda, where a great number of disabled people were gathered. They included people who were blind, lame and paralyzed. One man in the group had been an invalid for 38 years.

Jesus saw the man lying there and learned how long he had been afflicted like this. He asked the man, "Do you want to get well?" The man indicated that he was not able to get into the water when it was stirred before someone else did (see Points to Consider about the water stirring). Jesus told the man, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." Immediately, the man was cured. He picked up his mat and began to walk.

The man was healed on the Sabbath day. When the Jews saw him walking and carrying his mat, they told him that it was unlawful to be carrying his mat on the Sabbath. The man explained that the person who had healed him told him to do it. The Jews questioned him as to who it was, but he did not know it was Jesus because Jesus had slipped into the crowd.

Later that day, Jesus found the man in the temple. Jesus told the man that he was now well again. He cautioned him to be sure to live according to God's principles so that something worse wouldn't happen to him.

The man then knew that it was Jesus who had healed him. He went to tell the Jews that it was Jesus. Because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, he was persecuted by the Jews.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Regarding the stirring of the waters, some biblical manuscripts include more information in verse 3 and add a verse 4, as follows: 3b ... "paralyzed – and they waited for the moving of the waters. 4. From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease he had." This information appears within the text of the King James Version and as a footnote in several other Bible translations.

- Bethesda means "house of mercy."
- The healed man was criticized for carrying his mat on the Sabbath day, because carrying the mat was viewed as "work," something forbidden on the Sabbath.
- The "Jews" who persecuted Jesus were the Jewish religious leaders, not the common people.

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- I. Jesus went to the pool in Bethesda.
 - A. Many disabled people gathered there.
 - B. Some were blind, lame or paralyzed.
 - C. One man had been an invalid for 38 years.
- II. Jesus asked the invalid if he wanted to get well.
 - A. The man said he couldn't get into the water in time.
 - B. Others entered the water ahead of him.
 - C. Jesus told the man to pick up his mat and walk, and he did.
- III. The Jews saw the healed man carrying his mat and told him it was unlawful.
 - A. The man replied that he was following instructions from the man who healed him.
 - B. When questioned, the man said he didn't know the name of the man who healed him.
- IV. The man went to the temple. Jesus found him later and told him to live according to God's principles.
 - A. The man realized Jesus had healed him.
 - B. He told the Jewish leaders about Jesus, and the leaders persecuted Jesus.