

The Chosen: *The Healing of the Man at Bethesda Pool*



Today we look at our second episode of the Chosen where Jesus went to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda. Around the pool lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 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?” 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 person steps down before me.” Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

As you watch the video think of the following questions

- What struck you the most?
- Did anything surprise or challenge you?
- Were there bits you didn’t agree with?
- Are there bits which change the way you see the story?

Video: The Healing of the Man at Bethesda Pool

When we look at the story it was the Sabbath, the man who had been healed was told by the Jews that it as the Sabbath and it was not lawful for him to take up his bed and walk. He told them the man who healed him told him to take up his bed and walk but he did not know it was Jesus as he had moved away from the crowd.

Pools like this were thought to have miraculous powers of healing as some thought God had blessed these places. The pool at Bethesda, possible an underground hot spring, was known only to heal at a specific time when the waters had been stirred up.

Across the world there are pools of ‘water’ and ‘springs’, like Lourds and Walsingham where individuals with debilitating sicknesses, injuries of birth defects will congregate, just as the man at Bethesda did, in the hopes of having their sickness healed. Some of you may have visited these ‘special places.

What do you think it would be like to be a person around a pool like Bethesda with the hope of having a sickness or disability healed?

What emotions do you think you may have felt?

Jesus tells his disciples to stay and watch.

Here in this Gospel, when Jesus sees the invalid lying by the pool of Bethesda, he asks him ‘do you want to be healed?’ He gives him the choice. What would you say in this situation?

Why did Jesus ask him this question and what did it mean? The man didn’t reply directly, he explained why he thinks he couldn’t get well as he had no one to put him in the pool at the time it was stirred.

We do not see on the video afterwards where Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.” The man then departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.