

In The Beginning Was The Word

John 5:1-15

INTRODUCTION:

Samaria.

In 721 B.C. the Northern Kingdom of Israel finally collapsed under the onslaught of the armies of Assyria. A large portion of the Hebrew population was deported into captivity. In the years that followed, refugees from other Assyrian conquests were resettled in this area so that they eventually began to intermarry with the surviving Hebrew population.

In 586 B.C. the Southern Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonian armies of Nebuchadnezzar and now these Jews also suffered a deportation to a foreign land.

However, the Babylonian Empire declined quickly in the years that followed and its fall came in 539 B.C., brought about through the conquests of Cyrus the Great.

Under Cyrus and his Persian Empire, the Jews were allowed to return to the land of Judah and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

When the Samaritan population offered to help in this rebuilding program, they were refused. This sparked off a dispute that was to last for the next 500 years.

TODAY WE SHALL BE LOOKING AT THE SCRIPTURE

John 5:1-15

- The ministry of the Lord was a continuing ministry. It was not a ministry of isolated incidents.

The Lord was continually about the ministry that His Father had sent Him to do, and that ministry was nothing less than to “seek and to save that which is lost”.

Luke 19:10

*For the Son of man is come to **seek and to save** that which was lost.*

The idea of so many lost souls had even led the Lord to weep as he looked upon the harvest fields of salvation.

The bible says that in John 11:35 “Jesus wept” as he had compassion on Lazarus who had died. It was much more than tears for Lazarus death, but more so for tears of the fact that, the Jews did not believe to a point of salvation, until a miracle was performed.

The act of calling Lazarus was publicly for the sake of the unbelieving Jews present at Lazarus tomb. We see that in the text of John 11:42

John 11:40-43

⁴⁰ *Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?*

⁴¹ *Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.*

⁴² *And I knew that thou hearest me always: **but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.***

⁴³ *And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.*

The scripture in John 11:45

⁴⁵ *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, **and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.***

John 11:45 gives us the reason why Jesus had performed this miracle at such a late date, which was after Lazarus had died.

It was for the sole reason of letting the Jews see who He was revealing his deity, and what he as capable of doing. The keeper of mans soul was in Jesus hand. The bible says here in John 11:45 that many of the Jews believed on him for that very reason.

- But here in our text this morning in John 5:1-15 we see something very similar happening.
- Here the Lord is still busy with His work.

After we had seen the second miracle that the Lord had done in the closing chapter of John 4 with the nobleman's son who was sick and dying. There we saw also how that the nobleman himself and his whole household had believed on the Lord as a result of the miracle which Jesus did by saving his son from death.

The miracle was the necessity to cause those unbelievers in the household of the nobleman to believe just as it caused the Jews to believe at Lazarus tomb as the Lord called him unto life from the dead.

So now we again see again the Lord leaving Cana in Galilee to return to Jerusalem.

John 5: 1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Notice how the Lord has been very involved at the feast of the Jews on several occasions. This was central to His ministry to demonstrate his Kingship of Messiah unto them.

At these events many people came to a central point which meant that in Jesus' 3 and a half years of ministry he could reach a large portion of the Jewish population with his Fathers ministry of seeking and saving that which was lost.

The Jews came together on many occasions to celebrate their feasts.

Three of these feasts were:

1. The feast of Passover and unleavened bread.
2. The feast of Weeks, (also called Pentecost).
3. The feast of Tabernacles.

In either of these feasts all Jewish males were required to come to Jerusalem.

This event drew many multitudes of Jews which was the ideal audience for the Lord to witness to. He wanted them to recognise Him as their messiah that had been prophesied in the OT as the one who would take away their sins that Isaiah spoke about.

The feast was already now in progress as the Lord arrives.

The bible opens the scene for us here in John 5:2 in the following way.

² Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

This was a place that John describes for us as a place where the sheep were kept that were sold to the temple worshipers at the feast.

These sheep were the sacrificial sheep that were sold to the feast worshipers who offered these sheep for the sins of men as well as for thanksgiving for the Lord for the various feast events taking place.

1. Little did they know that the real sacrificial sheep (The Lamb of God) was waiting there in the very same place?
2. Little did they know that it would take one Lamb of God to take away their sin unto everlasting life?

However as we look at verse 2 it brings to mind those Sunday school lessons that some of us remember about Jesus healing the man from the pool at Bethesda.

Here at the entrance to the temple was a pool of water, which had traditionally been used by the Jews to perform a cleansing before entering the temple.

Now even on these occasions it was being used predominantly disabled or sick Jews who had need of special miracles.

This was a pool which hosted many sick Jews which as tradition held would be healed by some angel of a divine miracle if they were persistent and faithful to the Jewish religion.

This is the testimony of a man who had been coming here to this pool for 38 years and still was waiting for a miracle to be healed, by an angel that they believed who would heal them.

The account is here for us in the scripture to read.

³ In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk (sick), of blind, halt (lame), withered (paralyzed), 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.

1. It was believed by the Jews that an angel sent by God would deliver the first man to step into this pool and he would be made well from his disease.
2. The certain season was supposed to coincide with their feasts to show the loyalty of God to them for them in turn being loyal to God.
3. The obvious problem with this was that you first had to be fit to beat the next person into the water or you would sit there forever as was the case with the man who had been coming to this pool at Bethesda for the past 38 years.
4. Who was going to help him? And what chance did he have under their system of belief? – the Jewish religion

What a disappointment it must have been for this sick person to come year in and year out to be healed and nothing happened.

1. He could not and did not even make it into the troubled water in time?
2. And for 38 years no one had even offered to help him into the water anyway to even give him a chance at being healed?
3. What kind of grace did Judaism offer? – The answer is none?

It is for this reason that we see the Lord stepping in and helping others who cannot help themselves.

- In essence we cannot help our self to salvation we have to rely on the Lord to help us in delivering us from this lame body of ourselves.
- It is the Lord who has to lift us up? And place us on his alter of healing.

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?

1. Our Lords compassion was great because he knew that people needed to believe on him in order for them to be healed totally.
2. Our Lord was after the healing of the soul not just the healing of the body.
3. But this miracle was to be the major miracle in changing the Jewish attitudes toward him.
4. Check out the following verse with me, and we will find that the Jews did not like the fact that many Jews were giving up their traditional Judaism to follow Jesus.

⁷ The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

⁸ **Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.**

⁹ **And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.**

¹⁰ **The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.**

¹¹ **He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.**

¹² **Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?**

¹³ **And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.**

¹⁴ **Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.**

¹⁵ **The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.**

1. The healing of the lame man caused the Jewish leaders, namely the priests and their religious Rabbi leaders to rebel against what was happening.
2. Their phoney belief in the angel that troubled the waters that would heal those that first stepped into the water was now in a sense “blown out of the water”.
3. And now the person who had done that and gone against their system was now telling everyone it was ok to take up your bed on the Sabbath day and walk. That was none other than our Lord who had said that to the Jews.
4. And the fact that this was work done on the Sabbath meant that this person was diminishing the emphasis on Judaism which said that man could not work on the Sabbath day.
5. What an excuse it was, but this would be the very excuse that they would need to kill Jesus.
6. Verse 16 was their final straw against this man who they said was empowered by a demon.

¹⁶ **And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.**

But hang on.....did not the Lord say that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Yes it was.

Mark 2:27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

- So what right did they have to say what they said? None.

Mark 2:23-28

²³ *And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.*

²⁴ *And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?*

²⁵ *And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?*

²⁶ *How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?*

²⁷ *And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:*

²⁸ *Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.*

- From Mark 2 this is an extract of when David was hiding out from Saul when he was being persecuted by Saul and when Saul wanted to kill him. This was also when David went to Abiathar the high priest for food when he was hungry and Abiathar the high priest gave him the showbread to eat.

1 Samuel 21:6⁶ *So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.*

1. The Jewish Rabbi religious leaders and those Jewish priests called Jesus a demon possessed person.

John 8:48⁴⁸ *Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (demon)*

2. The Jewish religious leaders and their counterparts needed to protect their religion from being high jacked and so the only way that they could do this was by saying that Jesus was filled and demon possessed and that these miracles that he had done was by a demonic power.
3. The only way that the Jewish leaders could rule their people was through fear and this was the way that they would keep the fear over the people by saying that Jesus was demon possessed.
4. They also told the people that Jesus does what he does by the power of Beelzebub the prince of the devils.
5. In other words they said Jesus did what he did by the power of Satan.
6. They even referred to Jesus as a Samaritan the lowest name for any person.

Matthew 12:24²⁴ *But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.*

7. They did all this so that the people would remain faithful to them the Jewish leaders and their system.

- We have to remember that these people were under a false religion for generations and it had the power over them.
- That is why we have to remember what the apostle Paul says to us and the church at Corinth in 2 Corinthians 10:5

2 Corinthians 10:5⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

- The Jews had been held captive to their own religion for hundreds of years, just like the Catholic Church and other religions of today from which it is hard to deliver them.
- The church is therefore warned by Paul to cast out these imaginations that Christ can be exalted.

8. After the lame man was healed, we find that the lame man went straight to the temple to worship.

¹⁴ Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

This man knew that it had to be a divine power that healed him, that is why you find him in the temple worshipping God. He did not know who it was that healed him until Jesus showed himself to the healed lame man in the temple and told him.

- 9. The man was overwhelmed at this miracle and began to tell others around him including the Jews. (Well who else was there to tell but Jews?).
- 10. Jesus knew where to find him? Just like the same Jesus our Lord knows where to find you and me?
- 11. Go sin no more were his departing words to the healed man.

We can be very thankful that Jesus has called us into the light, unlike the Jews who still lie in the shadows.

PRAYER.....CLOSE