

The Book of John – 27

Introduction - We are now moving into a section in John where we will see the **coming rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ**. It is number three in our main outline.

- I. Prologue – The Revelation of the Word 1:1-14
- II. The Chosen Witnesses of the Word 1:19-4:54
- III. The Coming Rejection of the Word 5-6:71**
- IV. The Conflict with the Word 6:60-12:50
- V. The Comfort from the Word 13-17
- VI. The Condemning of the Word 18-20
- VII. The Epilogue 21:1-25

In the **first four chapters**, John, really the Holy Spirit, presents to us certain witnesses. Let's name a few of the witnesses from the first four chapters to remind ourselves of what we have already spoken about:

With that review in mind of what we have covered, let's read **verses 1-17**.

The first section of this chapter deals with the healing of the impotent man.

A. The _____ at the Pool

Verse 1 gives us a **time marker**, although there is no specific identification as to which feast was being held.

The Bible says **John 5:1**, *“After this there was a **feast of the Jews**; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”*

The book of John is very different from the Synoptic records. John is not concerned with giving a strict chronology of events but rather presents specific signs.

- Water turned into wine.
- Healing of the Nobleman's Son.
- **Healing the Impotent Man.**
- Feeding of the 5,000.
- Walking on Water.
- Healing the Blind Man.
- Raising Lazarus.

1. The Timing of the Event.

This was a feast of the Jews. This expression, the feast of the Jews, is in contrast with the Old Testament expression, the “feasts of the LORD.” (**Leviticus 23:2,4,37,44**) Here, the expression seems to allude sadly to the fact that these feasts were no longer centered around the Lord but were centered around man. I know a preacher I greatly respect who once said this: If God’s people truly understood His holiness, much of what was done in the church house today would not occur. We could rightly ask, **How much of what goes on in the church house is foreign to God and His ways?**

John Philip, in his commentary on the book of John, makes this remark **early on in reference to the Passover feast**, “So deplorable was the spiritual condition of priest and people that John habitually refers to this feast as the “Jews” instead of what was intended to be a feast of the [LORD].” It becomes evident as you read through the book of John that the term ‘**Jews**’ becomes a hostile term.

John 5:10 “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.*”

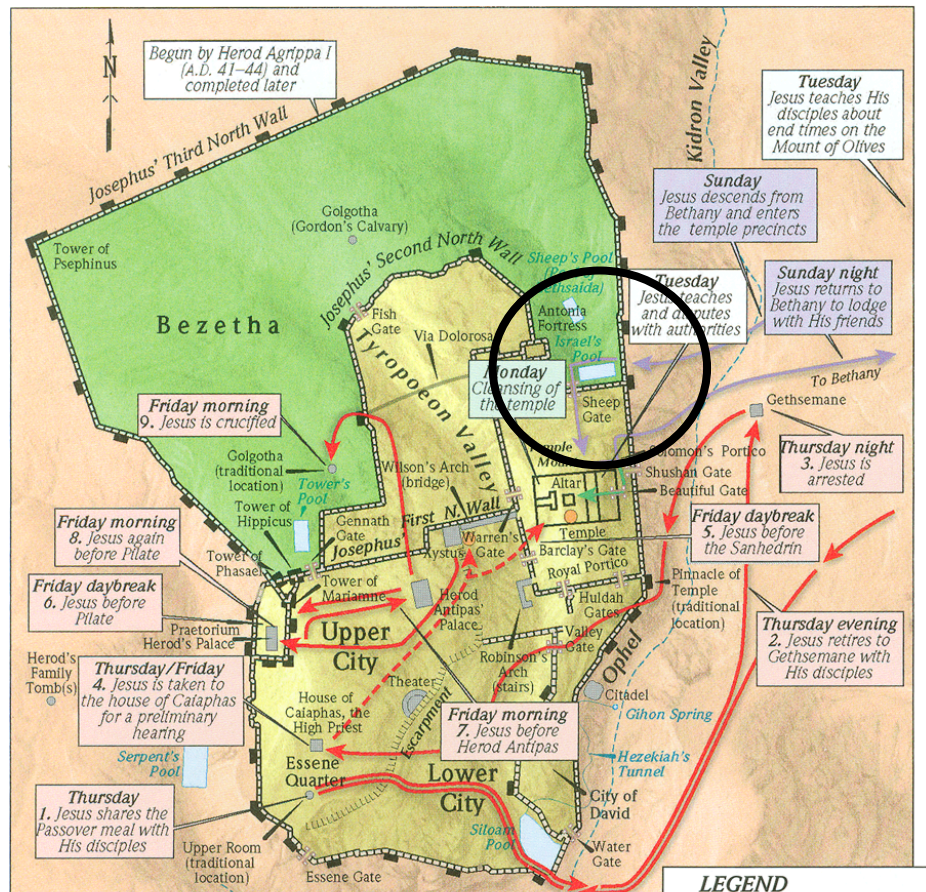
John 5:16 “16 *And therefore did the Jews* persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.”

John 5:18 “18 *Therefore the Jews* sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”

John uses the term from these verses to indicate the folks **who rejected the Lord.**

2. The Location of the Event.

Where did this take place? **Verse 1** tells us that this event took place in **Jerusalem**. More specifically, this event would begin at the sheep market pool, which is called **Bethesda**. This is found in **verse 2**.



John 5:2 “2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue **Bethesda**, having five porches.”

The meaning of the name Bethesda is “House of Mercy.” This place, Bethesda, is said to be by the sheep market. It has been noted that the term ‘sheep market’ might be rendered ‘Sheep Gate’ and, therefore, would be the entrance **where sheep entered the city for Sacrifice.**

According to Albert Barnes, the term ‘porches’ “commonly means a covered place surrounding a building where people can walk or sit in hot or wet weather. Here, it probably means that there were five covered places, or apartments, in which the sick could remain, from each one of which they could have access to the water.”

3. The **People** of the Event.

Notice with me in **verse 3**. The Bible tells us, **John 5:3**, “3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for **the moving of the water.**”

Every manner of debilitating sickness is described here.

Some were **impotent**, meaning weak or without strength.

Some were **blind, unable to see**, and could not be mobile without someone to guide them.

Some were **halt** which means crippled, limping, or perhaps even deprived of a foot.

Some were **withered**.

I would also like you to consider this: the Lord Jesus Christ specifically dealt with one man. Yet the Lord could have healed all of them. This tells us there is more to **this event's scope and purpose** than just providing physical healing. The Lord is not indifferent to our physical problems, but the higher need for people is **not just physical healing but eternal salvation**. Disease and suffering **are a result of our corrupted bodies**. In some measure, they remind us of the fall and the penalty of sin, which is death. The Lord **chose this man to heal him physically and teach truth to all**. It is easy for us to look around and realize that great need exists.

Some folks are **in need of spiritual regeneration**.

Some folks are **in need of spiritual revival**.

But there are also folks who are **in need of emotional help and suffer from great physical ailments**.

I am reminded of the words of Job, a man who suffered much. He declared in **Job 10:1**, *“1 My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.”*

The psalmist declared it this way in **Psalms 31:10**, *“10 For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: My strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.”*

4. The **Reason** of the Event.

In the latter part of **verse three**, we are given a description of why these folks were here. The Bible tells us they were *“waiting for the moving of the water.”* (vs.3)

In **verse four**, the Bible tells us, *“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.”* Perhaps the word that most people focus on is **‘angel.’**

There is a lot of discussion among Bible scholars as to whether this is, in fact, something that was taking place or if it was the mere common thought of the day. Albert Barnes stated this in his commentary, “It is not affirmed that the angel did this “visibly,” or that they saw him do it. They judged by the “effect,” and when they saw the waters agitated, they concluded that they had healing properties, and descended to them. The Jews were in the habit of attributing all favors to the ministry of the angels of God,” The word I would like for you to key on though is the word **‘waiting.’**

“Thirty-eight years of sickness would indicate hopelessness from the physical standpoint, but there was a hint that the man was even more hopeless psychologically. He had become resigned to his fate and had accepted the inevitable.”

As we think about the picture that is being illustrated to us by this event, we are reminded that there a myriad of folks all around this world waiting on some empty form of religion.

If you were to travel to India you would see multitudes of Temples. I am told by some counts roughly 649,000. If you were to go to predominately Muslim countries, you would find multitudes of people praying in vain five times a day facing toward Mecca. Others taking holy pilgrimages to sacred sites. Then there are those who worship the form of religion in Catholicism which is filled with symbols and syncretism to include just about anything imaginable that men worship. The multitudes are waiting and have placed their hope in some empty religion, superstition, or vain supposition. And just like this man it is always **seems to be just out of reach**. Here in the ‘house of mercy’ there was no mercy, and yet mercy was among them and they knew Him not.

John 1:10–11 *“10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”*