



Healing the  
**Hopeless**

## Healing the Hopeless

Welcome to Jesus Time where we spend time with Jesus in His time and culture.

Spring had become summer and now fall was upon the first year of Jesus's public Ministry.

By now quite a lot has happened; not only has Jesus provided healings and proclaimed teachings, the Lord had also regathered His Disciples and traveled many miles throughout all of Galilee preaching.

Now John's Gospel does detail for us the next watershed event within the human life of our Christ.

This also happened to be on another Jewish feast day, albeit one that we would call a minor holiday.

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

John 5:1 KJV

Now without knowing Jewish culture & Law of the first century AD/CE many automatically make the assumption that this particular feast day was either Pentecost or the feast of Sukkot aka Tabernacles.

Because these two are the more well known latter Jewish holidays requiring travel to Jerusalem.

As such Pentecost can be relatively easily dismissed at this time due to all of the Synoptic Gospel recoding's of the events pertaining to Christ that had already transpired at this time.

Simply put; there was just not enough time in between Passover and Pentecost- a mere fifty days, for all of the recorded Gospel events of Christ's life this past summer to have transpired considering the Lord traveled mostly by foot, save for those few occasions when Jesus and the His Disciples moved about the Sea of Galilee using Peter's boats.

So logically many conclude this event had to have taken place during the fall Sukkot festival of Booths.

Many argue that John does not identify which festival or when it happened because our Revelator simply says some time "later" Jesus went "up." As in to literally go up into Jerusalem because the city itself sits atop 7 hills. (Uh oh just like Rome! For those of you who know exactly what this means.)

Galilee is actually north of Jerusalem so Christ would have travelled south or down into Jerusalem except for the fact that everyone has to go up into the Faithful city no matter their direction of arrival.

But here we have a quandary, John as well as the other Synoptic Gospel writers often painstakingly detail Jesus's visits to Jerusalem on the correct required feast days but not this time?

Because there was another smaller festival after Pentecost and before Tabernacles that was open for all to celebrate. It was called the Festival of Wood. (Offering)

As in prior to Tabernacles in which many Gentiles from the whole Jehovah Believing Roman world would attend the fall Festival to celebrate the harvest, and for the Jews they too celebrated harvest as well as Sukkot/Booths in order to also Biblically commemorate their Exodus from Egypt.

Get that? An entire week of camping-out near Jerusalem by tens of thousands of people.

All needing what?- A weeks supply of firewood.

Yes, this small Festival of Wood before Tabernacles which according to the McClintock & Strong Biblical Cyclopedia was to be celebrated by all Jewish people without any distinction of tribe or Grade.

Meaning anyone could bring wood to the Temple in Jerusalem on the last legal day in which wood could be felled in Israel for Sacrificial use- because the daytime heat needed for the proper drying of the wood begins to let up after this date.

The Temple of course had contracts with various communities & business partners in order to supply its wood, but we can hardly imagine the quantities of wood that was actually required for the feast of Tabernacles and we have already seen Why? Would the Pharisee's buy, all of the wood they would need if they simply could require various people beforehand to supply them their wood for free.

As for Israel's lack of trees today; it was the Romans who felled them initially in order to deny the Jew wood for living and worship while likewise the Islamic Caliphates beginning in 632 AD/CE actually had a tree tax within Palestine so most residing in Israel at this time actually cut down their trees.

The Mishna, Taarnith 4:8- this being an recording of Jewish oral traditions states this minor holiday ( of the Wood offering) was to be celebrated on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Av or approximately latter August.

While the Jewish historian Josephus credits this minor holiday to be on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Av.

However The Babylon, Genzara, ibid.30a- another historical document does concur with the Mishna while many have presented the idea that the date offered by Josephus was simply copied down wrong as his texts were being preserved.

Just remember people who study such things will indeed get all worked up in a snit over a single day & that my studying friends is actually good for us, as in maintaining a standard of historical accuracy.

Ok- the short answer as too the tradition and authority of this minor feast day to provide wood for the Temple comes from Nehemiah 13:31 NET:

✚ I also provided for the wood offering at the appointed times and also for the first fruits.

Today this late summer festival of Av is known as the "Love" Festival.

As many Weddings still do take place upon this date. Meaning this really is an official "date" night.

In fact as far as Festivals go- the great Sages these being the interpreters of Jewish Law, have declared that the 15<sup>th</sup> of Av "Wood/Love" and "Yom Kippur" the 10 day season of Fasting & Prayer known as the 10 days of repentance & is often called "The Sabbath of Sabbaths" in order to achieve reconciliation with GOD.

While the 11<sup>th</sup> day is "Rosh Hashana" on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Tishri, this is the Jewish New Year roughly mid to late September the point being each of these two are considered to be the two greatest Jewish holidays. Ever remember Judaism is all about works and deeds in order to justify oneself automatically for Salvation- that is if one is born Jewish and religiously complies.

Never forget all manmade religion always depends upon human efforts to reach and restore oneself before Jehovah. Mans plan for GOD no less. Not Christ in Jesus- as in GOD'S plan for man.

So, this feast Festival of "Wood" was the only one in which everyone could gather; male or female, slave or no, Jew or Gentile Proselyte convert, each with a rented or borrowed white garment- not their own, meaning all garments were the same with no variance and then the people would sing and dance while offering praises to GOD.

The Festival of Love/Wood- was one of the only two times per year in which young maidens were gathered at special places such as vineyards, and then they were allowed- as long as they were accompanied by their families, to attend dances and events with their faces uncovered and it was expected of them- the young maidens, to dance as a group, in what was known as;

"the time for attractions" to become publicly known.

Because the Talmud does record this concerning the festival of Wood/Love:

"Whoever did not have a wife would go there to find himself a bride."

Work did continue on this holiday but fasting, penitential prayers, and mourning for the dead- was strictly forbidden. See Mishna, Megilla, 4:8.

Because this was to be a festive time of finding love & marriage as well as providing for Tabernacles.

As such "Yom Kippur" a month later was the second festival in which young women gathered and danced in the vineyards & groves locally. Meaning at the first dance a couple could be introduced and a month later they could each be reassured of their attraction to ponder any future decisions.

Following this was the required Temple Pilgrimage Feast of Sukkot/Tabernacles about a month hence.

Continuing

✚ Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. John 5:2 ESV

Aramaic was the primary language of Jesus Time, however Greek, Hebrew, & Latin could also be heard within Palestine along with the many foreign tongues of the Empire coming into Jerusalem. As such “Bethesda” is actually an Aramaic name which means “house of mercy.”

This pool complex was located in Jerusalem near the modern day church of St. Anne, which is a French Roman Catholic Church located today within the Muslim Quarter of the old city. Some ruins still do exist today, and this pool complex was recorded within several Crusade records. In Jesus Time this pool was near the sheep market noting the entrance name of the sheep gate. Having two pools being divided down the middle by colonnades that were similar to what we would today call pavilions. These being more elaborate and ornate as they were constructed of stone using a Greek Hellenistic influence.

Basically Colonnades were rows of opposing columns covered by a supported stone roof.

Four of these pavilions surrounded the pools- one on each of the four sides with another fifth colonnade built atop the separating wall in between the dual north and south pools going right down the middle separating the water into 2 distinct areas.

Biblically speaking the number of 5 means “GOD’S Grace” as in His Goodness and favor.

Steps led down into the water, from the water side of each pavilion with the colonnade in the middle having steps down both sides into the water so someone could enter into either pool.

One could walk the entire pool complex perimeter within these porches or even cut across in between them.

So, the people of Jerusalem in Jesus Time knew the name of Bethesda meant house of mercy and the number of five colonnades represented GOD’S Grace.

Continuing

✚ In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. <sup>4</sup> For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. John 5:3-4 NKJV

Those being sick or lame who were literally deposited in this pool complex known as the “house of mercy” containing Jehovah’s number of 7 which means GOD’S Grace, were here because it was by the Pharisee’s, this manmade tradition of superstition was perpetrated that an Angel would stir the water and the first needy person into the pool would then be healed of whatever ailment they had. Obviously some type of provisions and public facilities for human waste had to have been present because this false hope provided by the Jewish religious elite making those in need willingly self exile & contain themselves away sight unseen within this truly awful place of deception & disgrace. A created place of false hope to dispose of the sick or lame. This being the very definition of shame. These desperate people lived day by day hoping someday that they will be the first to enter into the water when an Angel arrives. Make no mistake- here the Bible is NOT endorsing this, as in it is not saying this was true, that healing happened here, Holy scripture is merely reporting what was as an historical narrative. In fact archaeological expeditions of this Roman period have uncovered inscription stones with the rules of the “health rite” procedure with the instructions to jump into the water if your sick when the water moves or was agitated. Cruel for one who can not move quick.

The sick people lying here only lived by a falsehood lie to pacify them into silence and isolation. False hope, Regulation, Taxation, & Subjugation were always the ways of the Pharisee's, Scribes, and Sadducee's.

The exhibition of human misery and suffering in this place at this time is beyond description. The crippled, lame, injured, or those afflicted with a non defiling non contagious disease, were literally outcast and forbidden to go into the Temple in Jerusalem- thusly seeking medical, or mental help if one was discovered in such a need they were quickly deposited at the pool of Bethesda. Because the Pharisee's allowed nothing "Blemished" to even approach the Temple complex. Especially broken people who just might be- of their, in Israel's religious elite's need. In Jesus Time and indeed down through the centuries most Governments have left the care of and the perceived needs of the people unto charity- especially to those within organized religion. So, lets make no mistake; contained here within the original Greek, this coming clash between Christ and the Pharisee's- our Lord's tone is one of annoyance and great displeasure about this whole heartless situation.

Continuing

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

John 5:5 KJV

Get that?

Jesus upon His arrival to this forsaken place had taken His time by Divine insight and sought out whom Christ knew was the person who had been here the longest.

Someone who had been there for 38 years at this time would be for many a lifetime.

Meaning for most people- there had never been a time in which this infirm man had not been there.

These Scripture passages do not tell us how old the man actually was beyond these 38 years.

Most likely anywhere from his 40's to his 60's. Look at the above Passage again- the Scripture just said this man had been living with his condition for 38 years when Jesus arrived.

The King James uses the correct word "Infirmity" used within the Greek and is Strongs number 769.

The exact definition is: a feeble malady of weakness, or sickness of body or mind.

Most think this means to be paralyzed however I'm not so sure.

Scripture always uses the word paralytic each time Jesus our Christ heals someone who was paralyzed.

In any case this man had some type of Infirmity that hindered his movement.

Was he born this way? Or Injured by an accident? Had he contracted or come down with something?

We do not know, but obviously Jesus knew!

Meaning Jesus has just sought out the most dejected and hopeless person in this hapless place.

Continuing

✝ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, 'Do you want to be made well?' John 5:6 NRSV Anglicized- (converted to English)

No matter which version or translation one might be reading of this passage it just seems to be odd. Especially considering this man was infirm for so long and then asking him if he wished to be healed.

The short answer is; this man had nowhere else to go and he had given up hope long ago.

If healed this man would have to learn to live and fend for himself again and that can be fearful.

We today call this institutionalized. Meaning when someone is so dependent upon their current environment- even one that is bad, they can not accept life by any other means. Jesus knew this.

Jesus was seeing if this man had the will and faith that he could live free of his infirmity. Providing for his own care and needs apart from the meager support system which surrounded him. Think about it- in person at this time, Jesus deliberately angered this frail man on purpose just to get him to reveal his true hearts desire- especially to himself, did he have any strength or hope left? We are about to find out that his answer will be Yes!

Question? Does this mean Jesus our Christ will let circumstance of happenstance occur in our own lives which we might find to be a hindrance or annoyance just to get us to face our own motivations. Of this reality I have no doubt.

Continuing

✝ The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

John 5:7 NASB

Get that?

Exasperated this man exclaims to Christ that he has never quit trying to reach the water when people yelled “look the water moves!” & then everyone rushes into the water always ahead of him.

GOD in Christ knew this poor Soul has struggled to jump first into this pool of desperation for over 38 years. Imagine that, day after day, season after season, year after year, Sabbatical cycle after Sabbatical cycle. Herod the Great had died long ago whom was King of Israel when this man was deposited here. Likewise Emperors of Rome have come and gone & yet this man remained lying on stone by this pool hoping that maybe tomorrow it would finally be his day.

Why? Had no one, not even one non corrupt caring Pharisee dare to have the crowds restrained and seen to it that this man was carried down first into the stirred water? Because it was all a lie.

As such did the Pharisee’s actually stage false healings? In order to maintain the illusion- Probably.

Continuing

✝ Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” <sup>9</sup> At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

John 5:8-9a NIV

What we miss here is that Jesus was truly offended and upset at this whole situation.

English fails us as too the raw emotion & outright disgust our Lord Christ expresses.

Messiah Jesus actually ordered firmly this infirm man to Get up!

In Greek this is an absolute command as in “do it now!” “Take that mat and get out of here!”

Make no mistake Jesus is not angry with the now instantly healed formerly infirm man.

With Righteous Indignation Jesus is truly seething inside at the unfair and unjust treatment for each and all at this pool, not only now- but for everyone who had ever suffered by laying here discarded with only a false deceiving hope.

Get that? Those in need laid here on stone day after day, winter or summer, cold or hot.

& this man had lived in such conditions without mercy for 38 years all because those who should have been helping him and all the others with additional needs cared only for themselves.

Continuing

✝ The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, <sup>10</sup> and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

John 5:9b-10 NIV

By all science and medicine this was an impossibility, for this man to be walking.  
As even it would be for us today within the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Yet while he was walking when carrying his mat all the Pharisee's could say was: "this is the Sabbath and you are breaking our rules by carrying that mat!"

The Pharisees used their "Halakhah" or the totality of Jewish religious laws based upon each the Torah & oral traditions in this case- it was Jeremiah 17:21-22 & 24b that they felt this man disobeying:

✝ This is what the LORD says: "Take care for yourselves, and do not carry any load on the Sabbath day or bring anything in through the gates of Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup>You shall not bring a load out of your houses on the Sabbath day nor do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, just as I commanded your forefathers. "to bring no load in through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but to keep the Sabbath day holy by doing no work on it,

NASB

This man had brought nothing from his house because he had no house. His mat was all that he had. The man carrying his mat as the Lord had told him to do- was not against the sense or meaning of GOD'S Word as in to labor or work for profit or gain. Also the word used for pallet in Greek was one for which we would call a bedroll. A bed someone could easily roll up and carry with themselves.

Get that? The Mishna allowed an infirm man to be carried on a pallet but not a man to carry a pallet. The Pharisee's had become so bound by the letter of GOD'S Law that they had lost sight of the flavor or meaning of GOD'S Law. To the point of someone carrying a bed roll had angered them.

Further if we are splitting legal hairs the "Mishna" or written Oral Laws, had a provision known as "eruv" which allowed necessary functions within city limits such as the caring for animals or children. As such this man was within Jerusalem city limits and he was clearly not making any money by carrying his bed mat out of the Bethesda pool area.

Also notice the strange lack of rejoicing or compassion from the Pharisees concerning this man being healed after so many years as in they totally dismissed a true act of mercy that indeed glorifies GOD. So, all the Pharisee's were interested in was this mans breaking of their add on traditions upon GOD'S Law. Remember the Pharisees had developed and implemented hundreds of burdensome laws on top of GOD'S Law, and as such they even had volumes of interpretations by accepted Jewish sages that were used as commentary and regulations piled upon their addons onto GOD'S Law.

Continuing

✝ But he ( the man) replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' "<sup>12</sup> So they (Pharisee's) asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?"<sup>13</sup> The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

John 5:11-13 NIV

Jesus neither demanded nor did He desire any fanfare, no celebration, or any declaration of publication that a true supernatural healing had just taken place by Him using only His Word.

Continuing

✝ Later Jesus found him ( man) at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." <sup>15</sup>The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well. John 5:14-15 NIV

The now healed man did as the Lord had told him to do, He picked up his matt and walked right into trouble. He was then unable to explain who had healed him, because the man did not know Jesus's name. But now that is about to change.

Jesus found the man again a second time- but this time within the Temple of Jerusalem. It was the Sabbath & because of Jesus- after 38 years, this man was able to walk himself to Worship. Christ our Lord has once again sought out the man and gave to him His final warning: "Sin no more or something worse will happen to you."

Question? Does this mean the man was injured doing some sort of illegal activity to begin with. If so- exactly what was this mans Sin?

We do not know because the Lord kept what Sin was between him and GOD as private.

All we know is evident in Christ's Words- Sin brings consequences.

Always has always will. Either in this world or the next.

Because all Sin, meaning all wrongs, are ultimately against GOD and His Law.

Ok, so now this man can clearly identify Jesus in person, in the Temple, on the Sabbath.

& he does- we can still almost hear the echo of his words:

"Excuse me Rabbi, see that man right over there?"

"Yes, that's the man! He's the one who healed me, and then he told me to walk with my mat."

Get that?

Jesus went deliberately to the Temple and sought out the now healed man knowing full well the following escalation of contention between He and the Pharisee's was about to occur.

Meaning "Consideration" of Jesus as Christ, had already moved into "Controversy" about Jesus being the Messiah, and now the Lord Himself is now advancing His situation into "Contention" about Jesus being the Son of God. As in He just PROVED it at the suffering deceitful Sinful Pool of Bethesda.

Again on a Sabbath ! Within Jerusalem now in the Temple during the first century AD/CE.

Yes, for all intent of purpose Jesus our Christ is picking a fight. A Theological one.

Against so called superior educated men with all corrupt power & final Jewish religious authority.

So much for that genteel almost timid image most of us have of Christ Jesus today- He was not afraid.

✝ Now because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began persecuting him. <sup>17</sup> So he told them, "My Father is working until now, and I too am working."<sup>18</sup> For this reason the Jewish leaders were trying even harder to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was also calling God his own Father, thus making himself equal with God. John 5:16-18 NET

The Pharisee's were offended by Christ's breaking of their self imposed superstitions of tradition in order to deflect the peoples attention from the fallout of their failure to heal anyone at the "Pool of Mercy."

But now Jesus Himself in person, on the Sabbath, in the Temple has issued to them a direct challenge. When our Lord said "He like His Father is always working" this means Jesus had just said my miracles are complete and miraculously self evident of my Deity as The (human) Son of GOD.

Meaning GOD'S human Heir and by Legal Jewish standards GOD'S equal.

As in all that was of GOD and belonging to GOD did also belong to Jesus. The Gospels in several places make it clear that Jesus as Christ always subjugated Himself Faithfully unto His Father. Always.

& yet religiously and legally Christ in Jesus as a man did and still has His claim as Deity.

This also implies that Christ our Lord was above any and all manmade Law of tradition or superstition.

& as The Christ- He is.



God's Law was and is Holy and Righteous and Good.

The requirement to observe the Sabbath and to keep it Holy- was intended to provide all people with a pause from exhausting toil and labor- by setting a weekly time in which one could reflect upon their existence in reality from, by, & for Almighty GOD.

The Pharisee's by adding traditions and superstitions upon God's Law, they had placed a manmade barrier between GOD'S Law and mankind, leaving them alone as the official intercessors. This in a word = Sinful.

The late great Charles Hodge within his work of Systematic Theology Volume 1 page # 504 states it like this: : " When He (Jesus) healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, restored the lame, raised the dead, fed thousands with a few loaves of bread, calmed the raging of the sea, it was by a Word an effortless exercise of His Will. He thus manifested forth His Glory, giving ocular (visible) demonstration to those who had eyes to see (Spiritual Insight) that He was GOD in fashion as a man. ( Jesus as part of The Great I AM.)

Get that?

Jesus had the authority to either duplicate or continue His Fathers ( Jehovah ) Will & Work.

To give or to take life ( Physical & Spiritual), to heal and forgive, & ultimately to execute all Judgement.

✝ If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

<sup>38</sup> But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 10:37-38 KJV

Did you know?

That this miraculous supernatural healing by Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda is not disputed or even denied to this day by the enemies of Christ. This miraculous healing by Jesus' offers hope to the most hopeless. You see by the examination of these scriptures it becomes quite evident that this man was injured or infirm due to some misdeed of Sin within his own past. & Just like this man- we too, can take comfort that Jesus can reach us within our need even when we know He perceives we do not deserve His mercy.

His Grace along with our Lord's miracles which serve Him and us as evidence unto His Deity.

The elite Jewish religious leaders to this day do not dispute Christ's healings because it was and still is a Sin for them to lie or to try and deny the truth.

As such many of Jesus's miracles are in fact recorded or at least mentioned within the Babylonian Talmud or written within the Jerusalem Sanhedrin from Jesus Time & ultimately used as charges against Him.

As in the elite unable to heal people themselves claimed only by the demonic could these miracles by Christ have taken place. Think about the absurdity of that statement. Evil never does right or good.

So finally in summary of conclusion:

Jesus has really just stirred the waters up of the fanatical unreasonable Pharisee's into a frenzy that will now only end with either His rejection and complete destruction, or the total elimination of not just Rabbinical Judaism- but of all manmade religion and traditions.

It just can not be defined any easier than that.

My friends Jesus arose alive again.

When they; the religious elite of Israel by using Roman authority and power did their very best or call it their very worst to destroy Jesus as The Christ.

He's Alive! & upon Christ's second coming of Advent, all in GOD'S good time, this is exactly what is going to take place: First Jesus is going to restore The Kingdom of GOD and take His place as our King and High Priest. . As well as being our Lord & Savior for a final 7<sup>th</sup> Day of one thousand years. (Revelation 20-22) . (The Talmud & Scripture divide human history into six 1000 year days with a 7<sup>th</sup> day to follow.)

After the one thousand years are over, this world and its Prophetic given timeline comes to an end. Then- according to GOD'S Word, this is when, Eternity for the Believer does begin. So have Hope!!