

~BETHZATHA (83)
(Beth-za'tha)

- The name occurs with reference to a pool bearing this name at which Jesus healed a man who had been ill for 38 years.
- After these things there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. (John 5:1)
- Now in Jerusalem at the sheepgate there is a pool designated in Hebrew **Bethzatha**, with five colonnades. (John 5:2)
- In these a multitude of the sick, blind, lame and those with withered members, was lying down. (John 5:3)
- But a certain man was there who had been in his sickness for thirty-eight years. (John 5:5)
- Seeing this man lying down, and being aware that he had already been sick a long time, Jesus said to him; Do you want to become sound in health? (John 5:6)
- The sick man answered him; Sir, I do not have a man to put me into the pool when the water is disturbed, but while I am coming another steps down ahead of me. (John 5:7)
- Jesus said to him; Get up, pick up your cot and walk. (John 5:8)
- With that the man immediately became sound in health, and he picked up his cot and began to walk. Now on that day it was a Sabbath. (John 5:9)
- Now in Jerusalem at the sheepgate there is a pool designated in Hebrew **Bethzatha**, with five colonnades. (John 5:2)
- Some manuscripts and translations (KJ, NE) read **Bethesda**. The pool is described as having five colonnades, in which large numbers of sick, blind, and lame persons congregated, evidently attributing healing powers to the waters, particularly so immediately after the waters were disturbed.

- The last seven words of verse 3 as found in the **King James Version** and verse 4 of this chapter, attributing the disturbing of the waters to an angel, are not found in some of the oldest Greek manuscripts and are viewed as an interpolation. Thus the Bible does not give any indication as to the cause of the water disturbance but merely shows the peoples belief in the curative powers of the waters.
- The location of the pool is indicated by the evident reference to the sheepgate although in the original Greek the word gate must be supplied, which gate is generally held to have been in the north part of Jerusalem.
- And Eliashib the High Priest and his brothers, the priests, proceeded to get up and build the Sheep Gate. They themselves sanctified it and went setting up its doors, and as far as the Tower of Meah they sanctified it, as far as the Tower of Hananel. (**Nehemiah 3:1**)
- Shows that this gate was built by the priests, and hence it is assumed to have been an entrance near the temple area. Additionally, the name **Bethzatha** is associated with the section of ancient Jerusalem called **Bezetha**, located to the north of the temple area.
- In Jesus day this sector lay outside the city walls, but Herod Agrippa I, **who died 44 C.E.**, added a third northern wall to the city during the rule of Claudius, **41-54 C.E.**, and this placed Bezetha within the city walls, so that John could properly speak of the pool as being in Jerusalem, as he had known the city before its destruction in **70 C.E.**
- In **1888 C.E.** excavations just to the North of the temple site revealed a double pool divided by a rock partition and embracing an overall area about 46 by 92 meters (150 × 300 feet). Evidence of colonnades existed and a faded fresco portraying an angel moving the waters, although the painting may well have been a later addition. The location seems to fit the Biblical description.