

The Gospel of John 5

Isa 35:3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. 35:4 Say to them *that are of a fearful heart*, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with vengeance*, *even God with a recompence*; he will come and save you. 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 35:6 Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 35:7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, *shall be* grass with reeds and rushes. 35:8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*. 35:9 No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there*: 35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Notice John did not tell us which feast it was, whether it was: Pe-sach which is Passover, Suk-kot which is Tabernacles, or Shav-uot which is the Feast of Weeks. Even though it was John's custom to cite clearly each festival of which he speaks cf: John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 7:2; 10:22; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:39 & 19:14 here he did not do so. Therefore it must be design and inspiration that he omits the name of it here. It appears to be omitted here so the reader will not attach a significance that was not intended. When Jesus enters into the Jewish temple cf: John 2:4, His words can only be understood by those who recognize that He is Himself the true Temple of God. All the feasts of the Jewish nation find their fulfillment in Him. Therefore, it must be to concentrate our thoughts on the Sabbath shortly to be mentioned and not the feast that what feast it was is not named. The context of the whole conflict to follow is about the Sabbath day.

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

Notice “is” is present tense and some learned men believe it shows John was written early before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD instead of the late date of 90 AD.

We now know from archaeology that the pool of Bethesda was a Ritual bathing pool or baptistery. Ritual immersions occurred only in the southern pool, Hebrew mik-veh which means a pool or baptistery. The northern pool functioned as a Hebrew ot-zer a kind of reserve pool or storehouse.

According to Jewish law Hebrew hal-ak-hah the water in a mik-veh must be water given by the hand of God “living water” as opposed to drawn water. After many baptisms the water in the mik-veh would become impure but could be purified by adding “living water” from the otzer or storehouse.

John 5:3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

When water was added from the upper pool, it obviously caused the “moving of the water” spoken of.

John 5:4 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.

Many think this verse is a scribal interpolation in which some monkish copier added his 2 cents worth or opinion to the original text.

John 5:5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

On the porches around this pool a great number of afflicted person were gathered in the belief that the “living waters” had a miraculous healing powers. One was probably a par-a-lytic who had been diseased 38 years and he had by this time had been long waiting at the pool.

John 5:6 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?

On the Sabbath day, knowing this man had been there a long time without relief, Jesus asks him if he wants to be healed? Jesus asked the question to get the man’s attention. In almost every miracle Jesus requires attention

and an act of the will on the part of the subject. Also, in the healing of sin the will of the sinner must be reached followed by an act of obedience in order that he may be saved. Almost every miracle is a parable of redemption of some soul.

John 5:7 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.

“Troubled” in Greek is “tar-as-so” to stir, to agitate. His attention was excited but his only thought was that of being healed. His answer reveals the ideas that prevailed at Bethesda. The water was agitated at intervals when the fresh “living water” was added and they supposed that the first one to enter after that would receive the healing benefit. They believed only one could be healed at a time.

John 5:8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Jesus spoke not as a man but as the Son of God. He healed not by some other power as did the prophets and the Apostles, but by His own power. His commands are always imperative whether to the winds, waves, the dead, the sick and infirm are always followed by immediate obedience. The powers of nature recognized His voice as the same that said let there be light. While Christ speaks with divine authority an act of obedience is required. The man must rise up, take up his mat, and walk. This showed that he was a perfectly healed man.

John 5:9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

Nature at once recognized Jesus as her King. There was no slow process of healing, the cure was immediate. Christ commands the man. The man obeys, and obedience is the act of faith. In the act of obedience he is healed.

John 5:10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

Therefore points to the fact that he was carrying his bed on the Sabbath day. The term Jews does not refer to the people but to the authorities and rulers. The man was officially stopped and questioned. The bearing of burdens was forbidden by the law. Cf Exodus 31:13 & Jeremiah 17:21, but the Pharisees had carried the matter to extremes. Their doctors of the law gravely decided that a nailed shoe could not be worn but an un-nailed shoe could. A person could go with two shoes on but not with one. One man could carry a loaf of bread, but two men could not carry it between them. The spirit of love, rest worship and peace found in the original Sabbath had given way to iron bondage of formality. It was needful for the Lord of the Sabbath to teach them the Sabbath was made for man. These rigid martinets delighted in ritualism and forgot the spirit of the law. They had immediately interrupted the man who was healed, and accused him of breaking the law.

John 5:11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

The defense of the man is he was ordered to do it. He had never seen the Lord before, the Lord had suddenly appeared spoken the words of healing and the disappeared in the crowd.

John 5:12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

The question exposes the narrow bigotry of the officials. They did not ask who healed him but confined themselves to the charge of Sabbath breaking. They care nothing that he man is healed and would rather that he was still lying on his mat sick and unable to move than he should carry it on the Sabbath day.

John 5:13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

As Jesus spoke the words, he disappeared in the multitude. Christ never worked miracles for popular applause or to be observed by an audience.

John 5:14 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.

The man probably went there in gratitude to give thanks for the great mercy that he received. Now he had a chance to visit the temple from which he had long been excluded. His own sins thirty-eight years before had brought on his sickness. What was the nature of his sins, were not informed, but we know that often our fleshly desires can cause us sickness and death. The words of Jesus showed him that Jesus knew his whole life and must have brought up a flood of memories. His sins when he was young had ruined his health, now he is warned to beware lest a worse thing come upon him.

John 5:15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

The second time he saw him he learned it was Jesus who healed him. The authorities only wanted to know who told him to break the Sabbath. He thought of only being made whole.

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

Persecute can be translated pursued, the Jews that once hunted Him. The officials come to Jesus to learn why he had done this act. This is the second time they had met Him face to face. The first time was on the previous Passover after He had cleansed the temple cf:

John 2:14-16 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: 2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; 2:16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

Then He had claimed authority over the temple as His Father's house. Now He laid his hand on the Sabbath and claimed to be his Lord.

Matthew 12:8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

Mark 2:27-28 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 2:28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Jesus' answer goes to the root of the matter. The basis of the Sabbath was that God rested and ceased His creative labors on the seventh day. Jesus shows that God's rest was not idleness. His government, providence and direction of nature was not suspended on the seventh day. The father had continued His works of love and mercy right up till Jesus came. Now Jesus said "I work as my Father works". This example shows that work of love and mercy is not a violation of the true Sabbath law. There is rest by a change of work to a higher kind of activity.

John 5:18 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.

The Pharisees are horrified at the higher ground on which the Lord placed His defense of breaking the Sabbath. They could not understand how the Sabbath could be kept without placing the soul under bondage to outward forms and rituals. The Pharisees would have kept him on his bed all day. Christ bids it him to take it to its proper place so that he may appear in the temple and worship. Christ frees him and allows him to keep the day and worship God. The high claim that God was His father seemed blasphemous. They understood His language, that He was personally God's own Son therefore of Divine nature and equal with God. They did not take to carry out His death at once for that was not possible except by outright murder, but to prepare the way for killing Him. It was two years later on this very charge that He was condemned cf:

Mark 14:61-64 Mar 14:61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 14:62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 14:63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 14:64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Jesus asserts His Sonship and shows the power of the Son comes from the Father. Perfect Sonship involves perfect identity of will and action, therefore what things so ever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

John 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

The miracle of healing that has just occurred shall be followed by greater works because of the love of the Father. The Son will be permitted to do greater miracles.

John 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

**The Father is the fountain of life and can restore life to the dead.
The son possesses the same powers.**

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

In the 20th , 21st, and 22nd verses are given three proofs of the exaltation of the Son. All interduced by the word "For".

John 5:23 That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Because the Son speaks the words and does the works, He is therefore the manifestation of the Father.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

The conditions of eternal life are knowledge of the revelation of the son, a belief in the revelation as to cause its acceptance and our coming to Him in appointed fashion.

John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

**Primarily the reference is to those spiritually dead.
They shall hear and the Son will give them eternal life.**

John 5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

The Son is the fountain of life, and living waters.

John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

God has made Him the judge of mankind, and because He took on a human body He is well suited for judgment cf:

Hebrews 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

What marvel is it, that He should give spiritual life to those dead in their sins, when even those in their graves shall come forth at His command cf:

II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Matthew 25:31-36 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: 25:33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

The Judgment of the Son is based on the perfect knowledge of the will of the Father. Jesus own will is merged in the will of the Father.

John 5:31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

The “I” is emphatic and gives emphasis to the word and is equivalent to “I only”. He sites other witnesses the Jews ought to heed.

John 5:32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

The reference is to the Father.

John 5:33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

John had borne positive testimony cf:

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 5:34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

Most of the Jews believed John to be a great prophet of God.

John 5:35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Some shine and some burn but few shine and burn. Some preachers do neither. Zeal without knowledge is continually blundering and knowledge without zeal makes no converts for Christ. By their fruits ye shall know them.

John 5:36 But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Jesus works His life and His deeds were proof that the Jews could not answer cf:

John 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 5:37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

God had bourn witnesses in the prophecies that were so wonderfully fulfilled in Christ. He also bore witness in the power He gave to Christ and He bore witness by His voice at His baptism.

John 5:38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

The proof of it was that they did not believe the one who God had sent, though the word bore continual witness to Him.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Rather “Ye search the scriptures”. Yet those scriptures were full of the testimony of Christ, of Him had all the prophets bore witness. Yet, they refused to come to Him. The word “search” implies pain staking, exhaustive examination and study.

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

They turned away from life that was in their own scriptures

John 5:41 I receive not honour from men.

This seems to connect itself with their thoughts which He detected in their hearts, and He rebuked them from disappointment.

John 5:42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

He read their hearts. The love of God is always manifested in obedience to God's will.

John 5:43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

The rejection of Christ who came in the Father's name was proof they were without the love of God.

John 5:44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only?

They sought human glory and elevation and could not be of the lowly spirit needed for belief.

John 5:45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust.

Moses will be their accuser. They had failed to keep the spirit of the law or to accept his testimony.

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

Genesis 49:10-11`The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. 49:11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:

Deuteronomy 18:18-19 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.18:19 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

John 5:47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Had they believed Moses they ought to have accepted Christ. Notice the reverence that Christ always shows Moses writings. The fault of the Jews is not they held Moses too highly, but that they disregarded his sayings.

There is not the slightest hint that Jesus regarded the books of Moses as anything but genuine compositions of Moses.

Those critics of our times profess a reverence of Christ, but insist the books of Moses are frauds of a latter age should learn from Jesus.

Sources; KJV, e-Sword, B. W. Johnson's Commentary & Clark's Commentary