

JESUS, THE GIVER OF LIFE

BIBLE TEXT: John 5:1-47; Luke 7:11-16

LESSON 41 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

John 5:1-47

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

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

³ In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, 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.

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?

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.

NOTES:

The Healer Divine

Jesus did not live in Jerusalem, but always went there to the Temple on the religious feast days. The Law said that all the men had to go to the Temple three times a year and present themselves to the priests and Jesus was careful to obey the Law.

But it was not a vacation for Jesus when He went to Jerusalem. He was always watching to see if there was someone He could help. When He came to the Pool of Bethesda, He saw a poor man lying there who had no one to care for him. He had been sick for 38 years. Jesus could see that he had been ill for a long time, and He had compassion on the poor old beggar. There is no one beneath the notice of our Saviour, none whom He will not help when He hears a cry for mercy.

Jesus asked the impotent man if he did not want to be well. Of course he did, but he did not know it was the miracle-working Jesus Who was talking to him, and he thought the Lord was referring to the miracle of the pool which at a certain season was touched by an angel, after which the first person to enter into the water would be healed. He had tried for many years to be the first to go in after the waters were troubled, but because of his afflictions he could not walk very fast, and someone always got ahead of him. Then he would have to wait, always hoping that the next time it would be his turn.

But Jesus was not talking about the water that could only heal one person at a time. Jesus healed all who believed on Him, anytime, anywhere. We wonder that not more people at the Pool of Bethesda were healed that day, because there were many who were sick, blind, lame, and withered. However, Jesus could see their hearts, and probably knew that no one else would believe on Him. Jesus cannot work when people do not believe Him. Speaking of Nazareth, His hometown, the Scripture says: "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13: 58).

One would think that a person would be only too glad to believe on Jesus in order to receive healing for his body, but it is the sin in his heart that he does not want to be rid of that causes the unbelief. We shall learn a little in this lesson about what it means to believe in Jesus.

The man at the Pool of Bethesda had an honest heart, and how happy he must have been when Jesus offered to heal his body! Think of the years he had not been able to earn his own living, and had had to live on what people gave him. Now he could be independent again, and go where he pleased. Jesus offers much and asks little, but the majority of people still refuse to give that little. If they could only realise the blessings they are missing in this life by turning from the Saviour, to say nothing about the eternal damnation that awaits them when this life is past!

The Faultfinders

Instead of people appreciating what Jesus does for others, many will try to find fault. Jesus had told the man to take up his bed and walk. The man was so happy to be able to walk, and even to carry a load, that he was quick to obey Jesus' command.

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

But there stood those Pharisees who had no mercy. Instead of being happy that the afflicted man could walk again and would not have to beg any more, they reprov'd him for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. The man still did not know who it was that had healed him; he did not know that Jesus is also the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus had disappeared after His miraculous act of kindness, not waiting to receive thanks.

Gratitude Shown

The impotent man, however, justified Jesus' faith in him, because the next time we hear of him he was in the Temple, where he must have gone to thank God for his deliverance. There was a provision in the Levitical Law that when people were healed of certain disease, they must go to the priest to be purified. That was why Jesus later told the ten lepers He had cleansed to go show themselves to the priest (**Luke 17:14** ¹⁴ And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.).

When Jesus saw the man He had healed, in the Temple, He said, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Then the healed man knew it was Jesus, because no one else could forgive sin.

The Jews were angry because Jesus had healed the impotent man on the Sabbath, but Jesus never hesitated to tell them that they were sinners. They claimed to be strict followers of God, but Jesus told them: "Ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." We see again that being a Christian means more than believing in God. We must have the Word (which is Jesus) abiding in us. The Jews whom Jesus was talking to at this time thought they were ready for Heaven -- they even thought that they were living according to the Scriptures. But Jesus told them to look a little more carefully -- they had missed something. "Search the scriptures; for in them Ye think ye have eternal life."

Believe and Live

We have been studying the writings of Moses in which God made the promise of the Messiah to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses wrote: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." Moses was talking about Jesus; and if the people had believed the writings of Moses, as they claimed to do, they would have believed on Jesus. How careful we should be to know that we have the Word of God abiding in us, and not just think we have eternal life: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him!" (John 3:36).

Jesus said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." He already has that life here, as well as after he dies. That shows us that what Jesus calls "life" is more than just breathing, eating, sleeping, and walking about. If we do not have Christ in us, we are dead. "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Timothy 5:6). However, those who hear the voice of Jesus and obey Him, are made spiritually alive.

Jesus alone can give that eternal life. He told the Jews they could not have eternal life because they did not come to Him to get it. Jesus is calling everyone to come and receive life: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

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.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Resurrection Power

Jesus said He had power over life and death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. ... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17,18). In this instance He was speaking of His physical life, and although He does not consider our natural life here important, He knows that it is very important to us and He helps His children. We have seen in this lesson how Jesus gave new life to the helpless man at the Pool of Bethesda. He also made the widow of Nain very happy when He raised up her son who was dead. He also raised up Lazarus because Mary and Martha needed him, and also that the people could see that He had power to do it. Jesus answers our prayers and does many great works for our good -- and for His glory.

When Jesus comes again all the overcoming Christians will go up in the Rapture. Those who have died will come back to life when Jesus calls them. Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). "And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17). Even Daniel, in the Old Testament, of that time: "And many of them that slept in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).

The Bible is the Word of God, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" -- which was Jesus. "For as the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." So if Jesus has life in Himself, and the Word is Jesus, then there is life in the Word. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). We should be very careful to obey the Bible because it is not a dead book, but it is the living Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit to godly men.

A little Portuguese girl was brought up in a religion that did not permit her ever to read the Bible. One day she was reading a book of poetry, which had some verses from the Bible in it. She noticed the difference right away. She could feel the life in the words from the Holy Scriptures. She longed to have a Bible for her own, and one day a Christian worker gave her one. She was so hungry for the Bread of Life she started to read in the beginning, and read chapter after chapter. She wanted to know the will of God. When she came to the Ten Commandments, and read, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image ... thou shalt not bow down thyself to them," she forsook her own religion and called upon God for mercy and forgiveness for her sins. Jesus saved her, and gave her eternal life.

QUESTIONS

1. Did the impotent man know who had healed him?
2. What does it mean to "quicken"?
3. What does Jesus say about our seeking honour?
4. How many examples can you find in the New Testament of Christ's raising the dead?
5. Did Jesus ever refuse to heal or help those who came to him?

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.

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

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

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

⁴¹ I receive not honour from men.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

Luke 7:11-16

¹¹ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

¹² Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

¹⁴ And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

¹⁵ And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

¹⁶ And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.