

St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology

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Home of the Orthodox Study Bible: Septuagint Old Testament and New Testament

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Dear Friend of St. Athanasius Academy:

As promised, we now have available **CHAPTER 5 OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN – PART I.** Chapter 5 begins with Jesus going up to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost. While there, we read and gain spiritual insight about the healing of the sick man at the Pool of Bethesda – the House of Grace. For Orthodox, this is a foreshadowing of Baptism in which God's grace in the goodness of salvation is poured out abundantly on the baptized. It reveals its power to cleanse sins, restore the relationship between God and man, and make people alive.

CHAPTER 5: VERSE 1-47

Jesus Goes To Jerusalem To Heal A Sick Man (5:1-4)

1 AFTER THIS, THERE WAS A FEAST OF THE JEWS, AND JESUS WENT UP TO JERUSALEM.

1. This seems to be the Feast of Pentecost. Great crowds were always present at the Jewish feasts, and Jesus was continually present at these gatherings. Although He feasted with them, He mainly wanted to attract to Himself those people free from deceit. For at the feasts, more than at other times, such people would run to meet Him.

2. The Jewish Feast of Pentecost foreshadowed the Day of Pentecost, when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to form the Jewish believers into one body in Christ, known as the Church. At a later time, Gentile believers were also brought into the Church, as fellow-members of the one body.

2 NOW IN JERUSALEM THERE WAS A POOL NEAR THE SHEEP GATE. IN HEBREW THIS POOL WAS CALLED BETHESDA. IT HAD FIVE PORCHES.

1. The Sheep Gate was an entrance into Jerusalem where sheep were housed by shepherds. The shepherds typify Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and the sheep speak of His people, whom He leads to the waters of salvation.

2. The sheep were led to the Pool of Bethesda, a pool fed by springs of water. The name Bethesda means House of Grace. This pool foreshadowed Baptism, in which God's grace in salvation is poured out abundantly on the baptized. It foreshadows a Baptism which has the power to cleanse away all sins and make people alive instead of dead.

3 IN THESE THERE LAY A MULTITUDE OF SICK PEOPLE: BLIND, LAME AND PARALYZED, WAITING FOR THE MOVING OF THE WATER. 4 FOR AN ANGEL OF THE LORD WENT DOWN AT A CERTAIN TIME INTO THE POOL AND STIRRED THE WATER. THEN WHOEVER STEPPED INTO THE WATER FIRST, AFTER IT WAS STIRRED, WAS MADE WELL OF WHATEVER SICKNESS HE HAD.

1. The sick people around the pool, showed the effects of man's fall away from Paradise. This fall is characterized by disease and the ultimate death of the body.

2. God did not create death and decay of the body, through disease and ultimately in the grave. Death and decay of the body, came into the world through one man, Adam. Adam was expelled from Paradise, thus we are born outside Paradise into a fallen world of bodily diseases and death.

3. An angel would come down at a certain time to the pool to stir the water. This showed two things involved in the healing: the water and the operation of the angel. The water did not heal without the operation of the angel, and the angel did not heal without the water. Both things were essential to the healing.

4. The operation of the angel and the water could only heal the body, which foreshadowed the healing of our bodies in Baptism. For Baptism teaches that our bodies will be totally healed when they are raised from the dead at Christ's coming.

5. However, the operation of the angel and the water only had the power to heal one individual body at a time, but this healing was only temporary. For no angel could overcome death on man's behalf. Furthermore, this operation could not heal the soul, for no angel has the power to heal man's soul.

6. Why? Because God only granted this angel the power to heal temporarily, so to foreshadow Baptism, which would soon take place, through Jesus and in the Holy Spirit.

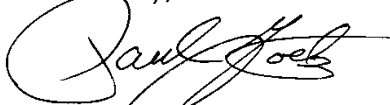
LATER WE WILL READ AND STUDY:

[JESUS SPEAKS OF ETERNAL LIFE AND ETERNAL DEATH \(5:24\)](#)

24 "Truly, truly I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has eternal life, and he shall not come into judgment, but passes from death into life."

In His Hope and Peace.

Sincerely,



Paul Goetz for St. Athanasius Academy

The Orthodox faith – its philosophy and theological teachings – as handed down by the Apostles, confirmed by Holy Scripture, the Seven Ecumenical Councils, and lived by His Church. This faith is the guidepost to the:

[OSB: OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT](#)

Our work goes on, as we continue to need your financial help. For this we are ever thankful. May God bless each of you.