

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

John 5: 1-9

1. After this [1] there was a feast of the Jews [2]; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market and around the corner from the Ephod Emporium a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having many sluices to wash away the deposits from the sheep, and five porches – the architectural significance of which is lost to the passing of time.
3. In these – the porches, not the sluices - lay a great multitude of impotent folk who despite medicines, salves, oils, and prophylactics saw no stiffening of their limbs, of blind who did feel their way around and fumble many sheep, halt, and withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And the bathing attendants did cast many oils and salts into the waters to cleanse them. And sometimes many sheep were washed there.
4. For an angel went down at a certain season [3] into the pool, and troubled the water, stirring it with his toes and the wind from his wings, and splashing it about with his sundry parts: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And there was much pushing and shoving and elbowing and tripping at this time, and many arguments ensued. Florid words also. And the cleansed person was subjected to approbation from those who missed the opportunity. Albeit with grimaces and muttering.
5. And a certain man [4] was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. And he had consulted many physicians who did suggest various remedies such as creams and unguents and enemas, but they were of none effect except that his hair and beard were long and glossy.
6. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case for his pallet was soiled and his coverings unwashed, and even the sheep gave him a wide berth, he saith unto him, Heavens above! There is much whiff. Wilt thou be made whole?
7. The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man or woman, for I'm not fussy, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, I am roughly pushed aside and another steppeth down before me. These days I am too weak to jostle.
8. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And forget not thy blankets for they give offense to all here.
9. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, bundled up his linens and, holding them at arm's length, walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.[5] Which meant that the laundry was closed.

Notes

[1] The healing at a distance of the nobleman's son in Capernaum whilst in Cana, a feat glossed over by many commentators.

[2] John does not tell his readers what this Feast was.

[3] Neither does he give any clarification as to this un-named season.

[4] John gives this man no name. In fact, he is rather light on many details regarding this event.

[5] By identifying the day John is telling his readers that, in addition to the lack of laundry facilities, there will be consequences to this action