

## BIBLE CLASS 09.O4.2026. A CONSIDERATION OF JOHN: CHAPTERS

**John 5:1 - 9 ¶** After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, Now there was at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches, in these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. (John 5:3 ) For (It was alleged) 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. (John 5:4 ) And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. (Joh 5:5 &6) When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he said unto him, Would you be made whole? (John 5:-6 “The helpless 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 steps down before me. **John 5:7 John 5:8 Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. (Joh 5:8)** And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and the same day was the Sabbath. (Joh 5:9)

To top it all off, **four of the last five Greek words of what would be John 5:4**  **aren't found anywhere** else in John's writings. This suggests that John 5:4  does not belong in the New Testament, which explains why many modern Bible translations have omitted it.

The Gospel of John recounts two healing miracles Jesus performed in Jerusalem. In one, Jesus cured a man who had been blind from birth. Jesus mixed his saliva with mud, applied the mixture to the blind man's eyes and told him to bathe in the Pool of Siloam. When the man did so, he was healed (John 9:6–7). In the other, Jesus cured a crippled man lying on a mat who had been unable to walk for 38 years. This occurred at another Jerusalem pool, the Pool of Bethesda (or Bethzatha or Bethsaida, according to various manuscripts), where invalids—blind, [...]

The Pool of Bethesda, located in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate, is an ancient, two-basin healing site famous for the biblical account in John 5 where Jesus healed a paralytic. Identified in the 19th century, it was a "house of mercy" comprising five porticoes, with a southern ritual bath ([mikveh](#)) and a northern reservoir, featuring a complex history of Byzantine and Crusader additions.

### (Biblical Archaeology Society)

#### **Biblical and Historical Significance**

- **The Healing Account:** According to the [Gospel of John](#) (John 5:1-15), a multitude of sick people gathered at the pool, believing that when **the waters stirred**, the first to enter would be cured. The name of this pool was "Bethesda" is derived from Hebrew/Aramaic, meaning "House of Mercy".
- Jesus' Miracle however was quite different to this belief, for Jesus met a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years and he healed him instantly on the Sabbath. (Biblical Archaeology Society)

#### **Biblical and Historical Significance**

- **Recent Archaeological Findings**
- **Location:** The site is in the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem, near the Church of St. Anne., There are actually **Two Pools:** Excavations revealed an upper pool that served as a reservoir (*otzer*) and a lower, larger pool that functioned as a ritual bath (*mikveh*).
- **Five Porticoes:** The five covered colonnades (stoa) mentioned in the Bible were confirmed, with four surrounding the pools and a fifth separating the two basins.
- **History:** The site evolved from a 3rd-century BC pool complex into a pagan healing center under Hadrian, then a Byzantine church, a Crusader church, and finally ruins found in the 19th century.

Whether John 5:4 ("...for an angel went down at a certain season into the pool...") is considered inspired scripture is a subject of debate within textual criticism, with most modern scholars concluding it was **not part of the original Gospel of John**.

- **They do not occur in the Oldest Manuscripts :** The verse is absent from the oldest, most reliable Greek manuscripts, such as P66 and

P75 (c. A.D. 200), Codex Sinaiticus, and Codex Vaticanus (4th century).

Whether John 5:4 ("...for an angel went down at a certain season into the pool...") is considered inspired scripture is a subject of debate within textual criticism, with most modern scholars concluding it was not part of the original Gospel of John.

- **The Oldest Manuscripts Lack It:** The verse is absent from the oldest, most reliable Greek manuscripts, such as P66 and P75 (c. A.D. 200), Codex Sinaiticus, and Codex Vaticanus (4th century).
- **Scribal Explanation:** Textual scholars believe the verse was added by a later scribe to explain the context of John 5:7, where the man says, "I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up". It is likely that a popular local belief about the angel was inserted into the margin as a note and later incorporated into the main text.
- **Vocabulary Discrepancies:** The phrase includes words and constructions that are **not typical of John's writing style**.
- **Majority Text (Byzantine):** The verse is present in over 95% of later Greek manuscripts (the Majority Text), which formed the basis for the *Textus Receptus* and subsequently the King James Version (KJV).
- **Early Citations:** The verse was known and quoted by some early church fathers, including Tertullian (c. 200 A.D.), indicating it was present in **some early Latin copies (Old Latin/Vulgate)**.
- **Contextual Flow:** As noted, without this verse, the man's answer in verse 7 seems to assume knowledge that has not been given to the reader.
- **Conclusion: Modern Translations (NIV, ESV, NLT, NASB):** Usually omit the verse or put it in brackets with a footnote explaining its absence from the earliest manuscripts.
- **Traditional Translations (KJV, NKJV):** Include the verse.

While some scholars argue that the verse reflects a true tradition, a clear majority of textual experts consider it a non-inspired addition to the original text.

- John 5:3b-4 and the Abduction of a Verse | Belonging to God  
3 Mar 2010 — The evidence is stacked against 5:3b-4 as being part of the original autograph of John, as shown in its limited early appearances...  
[WordPress.com](#)
- Arguments in favor of why John 5:4 should be in the bible/called ...  
20 Sept 2022 — Arguments in favour of why John 5:4 should be in the bible/called inspired? ... This verse has been speculated as to being an addition.



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1. The writers wrote their gospels and epistles and sent them to their churches.

2. These documents were copied so they could be shared. In the process of copying, changes were introduced. (By the way, this is not academic conjecture; we have these different manuscripts and can see the differences for themselves.)

Some changes were accidental but others appeared to be intentional, but not always for nefarious reasons. It is often to add an explanation, or substitute an easier word to understand, or to harmonize the gospels, etc.

In John 5:4, most believe that a scribe (the person doing the copying) thought it was puzzling why the man would lie there for 38 years. Perhaps he knew a tradition that said the angel periodically came down to stir up the waters and the first person in was healed, and so he added in the verse. (Others would argue that for some reason the verse was dropped off.)

3. As time progressed (and as we can tell from archaeology), biblical manuscripts were collected in five different geographical areas. Since the center of the church was in Rome, this area had the greatest number of copies.

4. Erasmus (1500s) created a Greek text based on two manuscripts from the 12th century (Matthew through Jude) and another 12th century manuscript for all but the last 6 verses of Revelation. He went from the Latin back into Greek to get those last 6. His work became the basis of the King James translation.

After 1900, translators used new manuscript discoveries from the 1800s, which revealed that the verse was likely not original. This is why verse 4 is listed in the pre-1900 KJV “as is” without brackets (the NKJV followed the KJV in this regard). More recent Bible translations (omitting or retaining the verse with brackets) give us a clearer picture of what the original product of inspiration looked like.