

John 5:1-9 (5A)

Themes:

The “raising up” of the blind Man on Sabbath (3rd Sunday after Pascha).

Behr: “The true Sabbath is Christ’s rest in the tomb, celebrated in the feast of Pascha: God ceases from His work, for the project is now completed.”

“The Paralytic who was like an unburied dead man, saw You and cried out: Have mercy on me O lord, for my bed is become my grave. Of what profit is my life? I have no need of the Sheep’s Pool, for there is no one to put me therein when the waters are troubled.” (Great Vespers, Sunday of Paralytic)

At Pascha many received baptism and everyone celebrated their own

Chrysostom: “A baptism was about to be given (after the resurrection of Christ at Pentecost) that possessed much power. It was the greatest of gifts, a baptism purging all sins and making people alive instead of dead. These things are foreshown as in a picture by the pool...water can (now) heal the diseases of the soul.”

Pentecost: some Fathers see the feast being celebrated was the Jewish feast of weeks, *Shavuot*, it was celebrated 7 weeks after Passover and celebrated the harvest and giving of the Torah) - Pentecost.

¹After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Theodore of Mopuestia: “He chose the time when everybody gathered to offer his help to everyone. Therefore, he went to Jerusalem at that time...he healed one only and through him He revealed Himself to many...in order to show His power, he chose one affected with a very serious infirmity and who was hopeless already about his recovery.”

Q. Did Christ ever do a mass healing? i.e. 10 lepers

²Now there is in Jerusalem by the gate a sheep pool, which is surnamed in Hebrew, Bethesda (house of mercy), having five porches.

❖ In this pool the sheep were washed prior to being offered to God

κολυμβήθρα (pool) it is the same word used for a baptismal font today in the Orthodox church.

³In these was lying a great multitude of the infirm, blind, lame, withered, awaiting the moving of the water. ⁴For an angel used to come down from time to time into the pool and trouble the water; then after the troubling of the water, the *one* who first entered became well (*sound, whole, healthy*) of whatsoever disease he was held by.

Theodore of Mopsuestia: “It was not that many people were healed at the same time but that the one who came down first obtained the aid afforded by Grace. This happened in order that the facility of the healing might not diminish the effect of the miracle.”

Chromatius: “Then an angel descended; now it is the Holy Spirit. Then it was the grace of the angel; now it is the mystery of the Trinity.”

Ambrose: “What did the angel declare in this type but the descent of the Holy Spirit, which was to come to pass in our day and should consecrate the waters when invoked by the prayers of the priest? That angel then was a herald of the Holy Spirit...”

⁵And a certain man was there, who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity.

Chrysostom: “Let us be ashamed then, beloved. Let us be ashamed and groan over our excessive laziness. That man had been waiting 38 years without obtaining what he desired, and he still did not withdraw. We...might persist in prayer for something for ten days or so, and if we have not obtained it, we are too lazy afterwards to employ the same energy...For even if we receive nothing from Him, isn't the very fact that we are able to converse with Him continually the cause of ten thousand blessings?”

⁶Jesus saw this one lying *there*, and knew that he had already been much time *in that condition*, and He said to him, “Do you wish to become well (ὕγιης, made whole)?”

Amphilochius: ““Do you want to be made whole?’ See the modesty here. He does not say, ‘Do you desire that I heal you?’ for he did not want to appear as someone great by making an announcement of his miracles...for where there is no love, there is not even one person to offer help...”

Do we desire to be made whole?

Cyril of Alexandria: “The question as to whether he wanted to obtain what he longed for is huge. It has the kind of force and expression that conveys that Jesus has the power to give and is now ready to do so, only waiting for the request of the one who will receive this grace.”

⁷The sick *man* answered Him, “Sir, I have no man (*human being*) in order that whenever the water is troubled he may put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another goes down before me.”

“It was for you that I became man, and you say I have no human being. I am your human being, arise, take up your mat and walk (Hymn).”

⁸Jesus said to him, “Rise (Ἐγείρε) , take up your bed and be walking.” ⁹And straightway the man became well, and took up his bed, and went on walking. And on that day it was a sabbath.

“For even as the Father raises (ἐγείρει) up the dead and makes alive, thus also the Son makes alive whom He will. (Jn. 5:21)