

God Has A Plan

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John 5 : 1 - 9 (KJV)



People who go through painful life changing situations like a terminal illness, baroness or divorce, a loss of a job or death of a loved one often find themselves questioning God and the purpose for their troubles. Some remain stuck in the turmoil of dealing with these difficult situations for years on end. Year after year they continue to torment themselves with questions of 'why'. 'Why Me?' 'Why am I going through this?' 'Why is this situation not being resolved?' 'Why is God doing this to me and why is He not answering my prayers and punishing me?' And sometimes in asking these questions and receiving no answers they become bitter and angry with God. Unfortunately these kind of angry thoughts and reactions often keep them in the captivity that circumstances like these bring. But the main reason why people remain stuck in the cycle of suffering for years on end is that they do not fully understand the purpose that God has for them through that difficult situation

and brokenness. If you happen to find yourself in a dry and empty wilderness and a cure and answer almost seem like an illusion, you need to know that you are not alone in your battle and that God is holding your hand through the entire painful journey. Even if you feel otherwise, even if you feel alone and hopeless. God is with you. God sees your pain and hurts, God sees and feels what you are going through. He sees every tear and He hears your every cry. In moments where you find yourself alone and there is no one around you to offer a shoulder to cry on, God avails Himself to you; the broken hearted and to you; the ones who are crushed in spirit. The Bible says that God has a plan for you that He has a hope and future for you. *Jeremiah 29: 11* "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."(NIV) As difficult as it is for you to see this promise of God in times of need, you will always have a hope of this promise. If you find yourself in this kind of painful situation or if you know someone in a similar situation, you'll will be encouraged by the following passage of scripture and word which describes a man in a painful, broken and long-suffering situation where Jesus became his healer, Jesus became his deliverer and in this man's brokenness Jesus had a plan and purpose for him.

John 5: 1 - 9(KJV)
The Healing at the Pool

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

Now there is 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. 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. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. 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? 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. Jesus saith unto him, rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."

The Bible tells us that the Pool of Bethesda was a place of healing in Jerusalem where Bethesda translated means a house of mercy. So this pool was a place of mercy where the sick would come freely and receive their healing. This pool had amazing healing virtues or properties were an Angel of the Lord would descend into the water and the Angel would trouble or stir the waters within the pool. Once these waters were stirred, the first person who was inflicted with an illness or infirmity who could get into the waters would instantly be healed. These stirring of the waters happened occasionally and only one person could receive their healing at a time. Those who were seeking healing would have to wait around the pool till their opportunity to get into the waters came. Five covered columns or porches surrounded the pool so that the sick could lie

down and wait for the stirring of the waters. So as you can imagine this 'house of Mercy' was a place where those who were sick and unwell came together and waited to get better, it was almost like a hospital with the immersing of the sick into the water within the pool as their medicine. This portion of scripture tells us that Jesus came into Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover and on this occasion one of the first places he visits was the Pool of Bethesda. The first place that Jesus goes to was a hospital, a place where He could find those who were sick, hurt and in deep pain and Jesus went directly to those who would have needed Him the most.

While at the pool Jesus comes across a man who had been afflicted by a disease for 38 years. This disease had caused a disability of half this man's body and this man now found himself in a physical condition that did not allow him to move around freely, so his most basic of needs would have been physically painful and mentally upsetting as he would have had to rely on others to help him do activities that in his normal state would have been easy and effortless to complete. A basic need like eating or getting around suddenly became painful and difficult for him and a burden to others. The sad part of this man's condition was that he had been afflicted with this disability for 38 years. For 38 years this man found himself waiting beside the pool for his turn to enter into the healing waters. The joy and anticipation that he was going to be the next hopeful one to receive the healing of the stirred waters were year after year met with disappointment and frustration of losing the chance of receiving his deliverance by another hopeful, who would push their way past him. Every time this man would see the waters stirred, his heart would leap for joy that he was finally going to be set free of this disability. But as another person afflicted with disease and illness would push past him, his heart would sink to a new low. This man found himself alone at the pool, with no one willing to help him into the waters. And so he remained for 38 years. What a painful and hurtful place to be in. What a hopeless and empty situation. A situation that was so bleak with no hope of a proper and full life.

Jesus notices this man and goes to him and Jesus then asks the man, *"Do you want to get well?"* (NIV) What a strange question for Jesus to have asked this man. The fact that he was at the side of the pool surely meant that he wanted to be healed. But what Jesus was doing was stirring this man's faith and was giving him an anticipation and hope that he could receive his healing from a source other than the waters. But this man misunderstood what Jesus was saying to him. He didn't see nor did he understand that Jesus was the actual source of the healing he was looking for through the waters. He assumed that Jesus was willing to help him into the pool when the Angel stirred the waters again. So instead the man pleads his case and enforces the troubles he was facing with the situation. The impression that the man gives us is that even though someone else always beat him to the pool, he was not resentful and bitter towards them. All he wanted was for someone to help him into the pool. His focus was the pool; his focus was the healing within the water. He had enough faith to know that if he got into the water he will be healed. But he totally missed the greatest physician standing right before him.

Jesus then gives this man a command. He tells him to get up and pick up his bed and walk. When Jesus commanded the man to get up and walk, Jesus presented him with a choice. By doing this Jesus was testing this man to see if he had the faith to stand and actually be willing to walk and Jesus was testing to see how desperate this man was to get his healing. Sometimes when people experience problems that affect their bodies or financial situations or when people go through a time of bereavement they remain in the feeling of hopelessness and despair and refuse to pull themselves together because they actually prefer to remain in that situation. They become content, idle and actually prefer the state of comfort that they find themselves in, where others are always helping and supporting them. Their reliance and dependence are on those around them rather than on God and on themselves. When Jesus spoke to the man at the pool of Bethesda, Jesus was testing him to see if he had the same thoughts of being comfortable in his situation. But after 38 years of suffering with this condition the man chose to listen to the word that Jesus gave him and he got up. And when he stood up the word that Jesus spoke over this man became life. The words that Jesus spoke over this man broke every curse over him. The words that Jesus spoke broke bondages over this man's body. The words that Jesus spoke set this man totally free of the captivity that he was found in for 38 years. Hallelujah! The man picked up his bed and walked. The man was set free to go to his family; he was set free to live a normal life again. He was set free so that he could now rely on one other than God and himself.

Something marvelous was revealed at the moment of this man's deliverance. The moment and instant that this man took that step of faith and walked, as soon as the curse over his life was broken. At that very moment God turned his mourning into dancing, at that instant God had turned his sorrow into joy. The moment that had happened, God sent this man into a

new season. God had a destiny and plan for this man's life; God had a purpose for him and a purpose for the circumstance that this man had faced for 38 years. God had given this man a testimony that would bring praise to His name, a testimony that would bring Glory to the name of the Lord. Can you imagine the number of people that would have passed through those colonnades and porches that surrounded the Pool of Bethesda daily? Family and friends of those inflicted with disease and illnesses would have been walking right past this man day after day, month after month and year after year, wondering when was this man going to get his chance into the pool. People must have been wondering whether this man was ever going to get his healing. This man must have been stigmatized and labeled. But now, this man was set free, he was healed, he could now walk. He could now walk around the streets of Jerusalem as a testimony of what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for him. He now walked past those who would have seen him at the Pool of Bethesda. He now would have walked past those who saw and remembered him from the pool, and they would have now seen him and stopped in amazement and whispered to each other, 'Was that not the man at the pool who suffered for 38 years, he now walks!' People would have been amazed to hear the circumstances of his healing, they would have been amazed to hear that this man waited for 38 years at the side of the Pool of Bethesda in vain, only for the Son of God to come directly to him and set him free. By the word of his testimony of what Jesus had done for him, so many would have now believed that Jesus was the Son of God. By the word of his testimony so many people would have now been saved. What an awesome destiny, what an incredible privilege to be a part of the Kingdom of God by helping to usher souls to the Lord. Ultimately that is what God wants for our lives. God wants us to be a testimony to what Jesus has done in our lives and through that testimony others will be encouraged and eventually your testimony will lead the way for their salvation.

How rightly was the Pool of Bethesda named, a house of mercy? A house and place for God to meet with you at a time of your need and bring forth an act of mercy that would change your life forever. No matter what your circumstance or how bad the suffering, the Lord Jesus Christ can turn your situation around. No matter how long you are waiting for your treatment or no matter how long you have been in mourning or how long you have been waiting for a child or job. God can turn your days into a celebration. With God *"we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Romans 8 : 28 (KJV) God has a plan for you, God has a plan for your testimony. Through your situation God will send you into a new season. But to get there we need to draw lessons from the man from the Pool of Bethesda. You just have to trust that God is going to meet with you in a house of mercy; you need to be found in his presence, you need to be in His house of worship, and you need to be found in His glory. You also need to be focused on your healing and deliverance you have to be desperate enough. Don't let others side track you. Even when you see those around you get their deliverance, even when those around you receive their promotions and have their children. Focus on what God can and will do for you. Jealousy, bitterness and resentment will only side track you from what God has for you. God will set free only those who are willing and longing for their freedom. And above all you cannot hold anger and resentment towards the situation you find yourself in. Because that very situation you find yourself in is the very thing that will bring you face to face with God. That very situation is going to give you a testimony.

Once Jesus says the time is now for your season when Jesus starts to speak words of life over you, like the man at the Pool of Bethesda who took up his bed and walked, you too will carry the very thing that carried you for years. Your testimony of what you went through in your difficult time and your testimony of what Jesus did for you and your testimony of how Jesus set you free and brought you out of your situation will send you into a new season, into a new season of praise and glory for what God has done. Your testimony of what pain and hurt you went through will carry others to the merciful salvation of Jesus. Your brokenness will encourage and help others in the same situation to be healed. It's time for you to take up your bed and walk, because God has a plan and purpose for you.

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