

# John 5:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

## Analysis

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John provides geographical detail: 'Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.' The name Bethesda means 'house of mercy' or 'house of outpouring'—ironically, a place of paralysis waiting for mercy. The five porches held multitudes of disabled people. This setting becomes the stage for Jesus' demonstration of divine mercy that transcends human limitations.

## Historical Context

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Archaeological excavations in Jerusalem's Old City discovered a pool matching John's description—a trapezoid-shaped double pool with five covered colonnades. This confirms John's eyewitness accuracy. The pool was associated with healing rituals, attracting those desperate for cure.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does the name 'Bethesda' (house of mercy) contrast with the reality of those waiting there?
2. What does archaeological confirmation of this site teach about the Gospel's historical reliability?

## Interlinear Text

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ἔστιν	δὲ	ἐν	ἣ	Ἱεροσολύμοις	ἐπὶ	ἣ	προβατικῇ
there is	Now	at	which	Jerusalem	by	which	the sheep
G2076	G1161	G1722	G3588	G2414	G1909	G3588	G4262
κολυμβήθρα	ἣ	ἐπιλεγόμενη	Ἑβραϊστὶ	Βηθεςδά,			
market a pool	which	is called	in the Hebrew tongue	Bethesda			
G2861	G3588	G1951	G1447	G964			
πέντε	στοὰς	ἔχουσα					
five	porches	having					
G4002	G4745	G2192					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Nehemiah 12:39** (Parallel theme): And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.

**Nehemiah 3:1** (Parallel theme): Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

**Nehemiah 3:32** (Parallel theme): And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.