1—3. ST. JOHN. 503   
   
 Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is at Jerusalem   
 by the \*sheep [fmarket] a pool, which is called in the \*X,ji1:   
 Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these   
 lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt,   
   
   
 f better, [gate]. Not expressed in the original.   
   
 thing in this chapter to determine the gate,—mentioned by Nehemiah, see reff.   
 nature of this feast, I cannot attach any The situation of this gate is unknown ;—   
 weight to most of the elaborate chronolo- it is traditionally to be the same   
 gical arguments which have been raised on with that now called St. Stephen’s gate ;   
 the subject. It can hardly have been a but inaccurately, for no wall existed in   
 Passover, both because it is called a feast, quarter till the time of Agrippa. Euse-   
 not the feast, as in ch. 4, and because if bius, Jerome, and the Jerusalem Itinerar,   
 so, we should have an interval of a whole speak of a sheep-pool, as indeed the Vai.   
 year between this chapter and the next, gate renders here. Bethesda,—in   
 which is not probable. Nor can it have Syriac, the house (place) of mercy, or of   
 been the Dedication, in the winter ; then grace. Its present situation is very un-   
 the multitude of sick would have hardly certain. Robinson established by personal   
 been waiting in the porches of Bethesda. inspection the fact of the subterranean   
 The feast of Purim would nearest agree connexion of the pool of Siloam (sce ch.   
 with the subseqnent events ; and it as ix. 7 note) and that called the Fountain of   
 if our Lord did not go up to Jerusalem at. the Virgin ; and has made it probable that.   
 the Passover next following (ch. vi. 4; vii. the Fountain under the grand Mosk is also   
 1), so that no difficulty would be created connected with them; in fact that all   
 by the proximity of the two feasts, unless, these are but one and the same spring.   
 with De Wette, we believe that the in- Now this spring, as he himself witnessed,   
 terval was too little for is related ch. is an intermittent one, as indeed had been   
 vi. 1—3 to have happened. But it may reported before by Jerome, Prudentius,   
 be doubted, (1) whether it was a general William of Tyre, and others. There might   
 practice to go up to Jerusalem at the Pu- have been then, it is obvious, some arti-   
 rim : (2) whether our Lord would be likely ficially constructed basin in connexion   
 to observe it, even if it No rea- with this spring, the site and memory of   
 son need be given why St. John does not. which have perished, which would present.   
 name the feast; it is quite in accordance the phenomenon here described.   
 with his practice of mentioning nothing I have received an interesting communica-   
 that does not concern his subject-matter. tion from a traveller who believes that he   
 Thus the Passover is mentioned ch. ii. has identified Bethesda in the present pool   
 because of the buying and selling in the of Siloam. It appears from his account:   
 temple ; again, ch. vi. 4, to account for that there are still visible four bases of   
 the great muititude, and as eminently pillars in the middle of the water, and four   
 suiting (see notes) the subject of His dis- corresponding ones in the wall, shewing   
 course there; the feast of Tabernacles, ch. that at one time the pool has been arched   
 vii. 2, because of the practice alluded to over by five equal porches. This pool is,   
 by our Lord in ver. 37; that of the Dedi- as above noticed, intermittent, and is even   
 cation, ch. x. 22, to aceount for His being now believed to possess a certain medicinal   
 in Solomon’s porch, because it was winter ; power. See the account of my informant.   
 but in this chapter, there is nothing at length at the end of vol.i., edn. 5, of   
 alluding to the time or nature of the feast, my Greek Testament. The spot now   
 it is not specified. Jesus] and probably traditionally known as Bethesda is a part   
 His disciples: for the same expression is of the fosse round the fort or tower An-   
 used ch. ii. 13, we find, ch. iii. tonia, an immense reservoir or trench,   
 that His disciples with Him; compare seventy-five feet deep. But, as Robinson   
 also ch. vii. 10 and ch. ix. 2.] The observes, there is not the slightest   
 expression there is has thought to im- that can identify it with the Bethesda of   
 port that St. John wrote his Gospel before the N. T. This pool is not mentioned   
 the destruction of Jerusalem. But this by Josephus. having five porches]   
 must not be pressed. He might have spoken Probably these were for the shelter of the   
 in the present without meaning to be lite- sick persons, and were arches or porticos,   
 rally accurate with regard to the moment opening uponand surrounding the reservoir:   
 when he was writing. The locality seeabove. 3. withered ] Those who were   
 given means, probably, near the sheep- afflicted with the loss vital power in any