

The Bible has much to say about miracles. Today we want to analyze one of Jesus' miracles that found in John 4 – the healing of the nobleman's son. A miracle is something that man cannot do and it goes against the laws of nature. Let us understand that Jesus did not perform miracles for personal convenience. We might recall the time when Jesus had been in wilderness for some 40 days without food and the devil came tempting him to change some rocks into bread. Jesus had the power to make this happen, but he didn't because Jesus didn't perform miracles for personal convenience.

Neither did Jesus do miracles for some form of commercial. On television, commercials come on to promote a product. Jesus did not use his miracles as a means of self-promotion. Jesus had the ability to walk on water and as far as we know, he only did that just one time and it was under the cover of darkness in the presence of only his twelve disciples. If we could walk on water, we'd probably show it every time we had the opportunity. "Hey watch what I can do!" But Jesus did not use miracles in this way.

Let's consider why Jesus performed miracles before we consider the specific miracle in this lesson. **First, they were a sign of his compassion.** Within the gospels accounts, we have documented over thirty miracles that Jesus did. According to John 20:31-32 Jesus did many other miracles not recorded for us. Notice Mark 1:41. Here we have a leper seeking Jesus to be cleansed of his disease. ***Mark 1:41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.*** In Matt 14:14, we have Jesus being moved by compassion as he fed the 5,000. So there was times when Jesus was moved with compassion to do things outside the scope of nature to demonstrate his care and concern for people.

Jesus performed miracles to convince people that he was the Messiah. ***John 20:30-31 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*** There are seven miracles written in the Gospel of John and they are sufficient to convince people that he is the Christ, the Son of God. Nicodemus came to Jesus by

night. *John 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* Nicodemus knew that Jesus was no ordinary man by the miracles that he performed.

Jesus also performed miracles to confirm his claims. In Mark 2 Jesus would talk to a man that was paralyzed. His friends put the crippled man before Jesus and Jesus would say, "*your sins are forgiven.*" Because of that claim, certain of the scribes sitting there began reasoning in their hearts that he spoke blasphemies because who can forgive sins but God only? Perceiving their thoughts, Jesus said, *Mark 2:9-11 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? (10) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) (11) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.* Jesus performed this miracle to confirm his claim that he could forgive sin. In John 11:26 Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life. Later in that chapter he raises Lazarus from the grave to confirm that claim.

Now let's look at the miracle regarding the nobleman's son. Read John 4:46-54

This miracle is a **distant miracle**. Jesus is in the city of Cana of Galilee and the nobleman comes from Capernaum. There is about twenty miles distance between the two. He approaches Jesus and is pleading with him to return back to Capernaum to heal his son. But Jesus doesn't go with him. *(50) Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.* So from a distance of 15-20 miles away, Jesus still has the power to heal. Cana was where Jesus was and the sick boy was in Capernaum. Capernaum was the place that Jesus spent a lot of his time. It was on the northern part of the Sea of Galilee. The nobleman sought Jesus to come "down" to Capernaum which was geographically northeast of Cana. Cana was in the mountainous region of Galilee and Capernaum was near the sea and thus lower in elevation. Since Cana was higher in elevation it was "down to Capernaum" and not "up." I mention this to note the effort this nobleman put forth to find Jesus. He had to walk some 15-20 miles up hill.

This miracle is a **distinguished miracle**. *(54) This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he came out of Judaea into Galilee.* The first miracle is recorded in John 2 when Jesus was in Cana of Galilee and turned the water into wine. John 2:11 says this was the beginning miracle. After turning the water into wine, Jesus went to Jerusalem and while there, many believed because they saw the miracles that he did. *John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracle(s) which he did.* So when John 4:54 says this was the second miracle that Jesus did it refers to the second miracle done in Cana of Galilee, because other miracles had been done in Jerusalem.

Notice now the situation. This nobleman's son was sick. We don't know the age of the boy nor do we know the type of sickness he had, but we know from v 47 that he was at the point of death and that he had a fever (v52). This sickness affected both the nobleman and his son. The same is true today with us. When a family member is sick, it affects others that are concerned about them and their sickness. So here we see this man of position and apparently wealthy worried about his son. He, like us today, was doing whatever he could to help his son by getting him the care that he needed. The father's soul is aching for his child as the child's body is aching with a fever.

Then in v47 ff, we have four sayings that are given. There are two sayings of the nobleman and then there are two sayings recorded by the Messiah. *(47) When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.* We don't have the exact words recorded but the text says "he besought him." That's a term that means he persistently pled with Jesus – the idea of begging. So with great passion and intensity we have this man pleading for the life of his son.

We have his second statement recorded in v49. *(49) The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.* This statement is similar to the first. This statement follows what seems to be a rebuke from Jesus. *(48) Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.* Here we see the idea again

of having miracles to confirm his divine nature. It seems this man already had great faith so perhaps this statement was for the benefit of others that might be standing around and observing. Regardless, the nobleman came back with another plea for help.

Then we have the two sayings of the master. The first is v48 which we just mentioned. **(48) Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.** This is a statement of chastisement that characterized the area of Galilee where people were not so much interested in Jesus' teachings as they are in the show that he could put on. This is seen by the people in John 6 who wanted some sign like God had given Moses. This man was expecting something great from Jesus as he expected Jesus to travel some twenty miles to his home and to do something spectacular to save the life of his son.

This may remind you of the OT leper named Naaman that expected something great of God's prophet that would heal his deadly disease. But Elisha, the prophet did not even so much as to go out and meet Naaman; instead he sent his servant out and told Naaman to dip seven times in the river Jordan to be cleansed. Perhaps this nobleman was seeking a sign but Jesus had the power to heal w/o any spectacular sign.

Statement 2 is found in v50. **(50) Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.** Here we have a command statement. We have a man that had travelled many miles expecting Jesus to follow him and perform a healing miracle but what he received was a command. Go back home; your son is alive. Now to obey this command is going to demonstrate faith on the part of the nobleman. For him to turn and walk away and not continue pleading with Jesus to come with him took faith. V50b tells us that he believed the word of Jesus and went his way. Here we see a promise connected with a command. You go and your son will live.

The nobleman had a preconceived plan on what needed to be done before coming to Jesus, but the Lord had a better plan. Jesus plan did not delay the healing of his son due to travel time plus he didn't have to stop what he was doing in Cana of Galilee.

In v 51 -52 we have the servant of the miracle. As the nobleman was going down toward Capernaum, his servant met him with the exciting news that his son liveth. (52) *Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.* Here we see a man that had some misunderstanding about Jesus. He thought that Jesus had to be there to heal his son. In addition, he thought that Jesus had to come before his son died. The urgency was “*if my son dies,*” then Jesus want be able to help. In his mind, he was actually placing limitation on Jesus power. So before he gets home, he has confirmation that a miracle had occurred and that what Jesus said was true.

He was reassured by learning the hour this healing took place was exactly the time Jesus said. This was not a gradually process, but it happened immediately at the seventh hour. The nobleman wanted to know when “he began to amend” as to imply when the process began. The servant said it didn’t begin; it left him all at once. So Jesus could heal at a distance and he could heal instantaneously.

Notice now the results of the miracle. (53) *So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.* This miracle **produced gladness** as this man believed. In most instances where Jesus miraculously healed someone, it was followed with gladness. The pain that was being suffered by both father and child were gone.

This miracle also **produces growth.** *V53 ... and himself believed, and his whole house.* This confirms what John said in John 20:31 that miracles were done so that you might believe that Jesus is the son of God. This miracle certainly increased this nobleman’s faith and it was expanded now to his entire family. In John 2:11 after Jesus turned the water into wine; the text says “*his disciples believed on him.*” Didn’t they already believe on him? Yes, but because of the miracle, their faith was increased, strengthened, reinforced. The same is true here with the nobleman’s faith and because this man decided to pursue Jesus, now he and his house were believers.

NOW FOR A FEW QUICK LESSONS FOR US.

No. 1. Do not waste opportunity and privilege. Here was the city of Capernaum that for the most part wasted its opportunity to believe on Jesus. The obvious question is what about us and the privileges and opportunities that we have been given. Do we recognize them and take advantage of them or do we let them pass hoping for another day.

No. 2. Seek Jesus while he can be found. Jesus had been far away in Jerusalem but now that he was in Cana of Galilee and much closer, the nobleman sought him out because he could be found. We should not delay our decision to obey and follow the commands of Jesus while we have opportunity.

No. 3. We should be persistent in prayer. Here we see the nobleman that was persistent in his request to Jesus. *James 5:16b ... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Or notice *Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;* Let us not become faint hearted but continue to pray without ceasing.

No. 4. Our faith can be strengthening. Let us continue to study and learn because it's by the word of God that our faith is derived. (Rom 10:17)

Want you let you faith lead you to trust and obey. Trust in the promises of Jesus when you obey his gospel. Obeying the gospel is a serious decision for you to consider. He promises to eradicate you sins and add you to his church if you would but only obey the gospel.

Invitation.