The Miracles Of Jesus Christ: Healing A Nobleman's Son

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The healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54) is thought to be Jesus' first-recorded miracle of healing. In Jerusalem, He had accomplished some extraordinary miracles, which, though not documented, must have produced significant results, for the apostle writes that "many believed in His name when they saw the signs [or miracles] which He did" (John 2:23). Christ's miraculous ministry no doubt caused a stir among every level of society.

In this miracle, a nobleman from Capernaum asks for Jesus' intervention on behalf of his dying son. This worried father journeys to Cana to seek the help of a proven performer of miracles whose fame was rapidly spreading, and Jesus obliged him, seeing his faith. Only John notes this occasion, indicating how particular he was in what he chose to record of Jesus' life and work. He probably selected his material based on the valuable spiritual lessons they provide for Christian development.


Comment: The nobleman must have had a bud of faith, for his urgent need moved him to seek Christ. At least a glimmer of faith was necessary to believe that, if he could only convince Jesus the Healer to go to his dying child, his son would be healed. This first example of Jesus' healing miracles is important, as it emphasizes the link between miracles and faith. Those who desire to be healed or to have a loved one healed must exhibit faith.

Jesus' miracles of healing are instructive in that they give us kinds and actions of faith. By refusing to go with the nobleman, Jesus emphasizes and illustrates the potency of strong faith. Another time, Jesus teaches that a miracle is not the cause of faith as much as its reward (Matthew 9:22). Belief in Christ as Healer leads people to faith in Him as Savior.

We all desire divine intervention when we are in dire need; "there are no atheists in a foxhole," it is said. Though the nobleman's human faith was limited and weak, it was still real. Jesus helped him to develop it, leading to deeper belief. However, no matter how strong our faith is, if it is in a wrong object, it will do nothing to relieve suffering, but if our faith is properly directed, despite being weak, it will bring deliverance and comfort. Note, however, that faith itself does not relieve affliction, but the power of the One in whom we believe does.

2. Is God limited to how and where He can heal? John 4:51-53.

Comment: The distance between Capernaum and Cana is over twenty miles, yet by the exercise of His will, Jesus healed the dying boy by His word alone. The nobleman may have expected his son to recover gradually and progressively, but the cure was immediate and complete. The Gospels show that Jesus had no set formula for performing His miracles except to glorify the Father by them, yet His miracles were not done haphazardly. He sometimes commanded the sick to be brought to Him, but at other
times, He healed without seeing them. He could heal by either word or touch. Sometimes He asked probing questions, but occasionally, He would act without discussion. In these many different scenarios, we can learn a variety of lessons.

The nobleman's grief contained a bud of faith, but he revealed its limits when he mentally limited the Christ's power to His immediate presence. The desperate father had just enough faith to believe that wherever Jesus was present, disease could be cured. So, fearing the loss of his son, he implored Jesus, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" (verse 49). He did not realize and understand that He could heal just as easily from a distance as on the spot. Jesus' observation, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe" (verse 48), is thus a mild rebuke. The nobleman fell short of truly believing the assurance of Psalm 107:20: "He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

3. What affect may our faith have on others? John 4:53.

**Comment:** Following Jesus' assurance that his son would live, the nobleman never doubted again. The text gives no indication of an emotional reaction or that he pressed Jesus for instructions; he simply started his return trip to Capernaum. He accepted Jesus' word that his son was healed, and apparently, this knowledge comforted him to the point that he felt little need to rush home. The bud of faith that led him to Christ came to full blossom as he left Jesus.

When the nobleman is met by his servants with the wonderful news that his son had been healed at the exact time Jesus had said he was, the miracle is seen to have had a double effect—the sick boy was healed of his deadly fever, and the father was convicted of his belief in Jesus. In order to have faith, we must believe that Jesus' words are true. Too often, we possess a vague faith, a blurred longing for His promises to be true. In reality, we must cling to what Jesus says like a man gripping a cliff face over a deep chasm.

The conviction of the father and the startling result of Jesus' miracle helped to begin the process of conversion of the nobleman's entire household. Convinced that Jesus was the Christ by personally witnessing this healing, they had the opportunity to grow in their belief to full faith if they continued to seek and believe Him (Colossians 1:21-23).