

Lesson 1: *The Second Sign in Galilee*

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All through His earthly ministry, Jesus performed miracles that helped people believe in Him. John recorded these miracles so that others would believe in Jesus, as well.

Read John 4:46–54. Why does the evangelist make a connection back to the miracle at the wedding feast?

⁴⁶ So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

⁴⁹ The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!”

⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. ⁵¹ And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!”

⁵² Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” ⁵³ So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.

⁵⁴ This again *is* the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.—**John 4:46-54**

In giving an account of the second sign that Jesus did in Galilee, John points back to the first sign, at the wedding in Cana. John seems to be saying, *The signs that Jesus did will help you see who Jesus is*. Then, John adds, “This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee” (*John 4:54, NKJV*).

At first, Jesus’ response to the nobleman’s plea may seem harsh. Yet, this official had made the healing of his son the criterion for believing in Jesus. Jesus read his heart and pinpointed the spiritual sickness that was more profound than his son’s life-threatening illness. Like a lightning bolt from a blue sky, the man suddenly recognized that his spiritual poverty could cost the life of his son.

It is important to recognize that miracles, in and of themselves, did not prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Others have performed miracles. Some were true prophets, others false. Miracles reveal only the existence of the supernatural; they don’t, by themselves, mean that God must be the One doing them. (Satan can perform “miracles,” if by the word “miracles” we mean supernatural acts.)

The nobleman in anguish cast himself on Jesus’ mercy, pleading with Him to heal his son. Jesus’ response was reassuring. He said, “ ‘Go; your son will live’ ” (*John 4:50, ESV*). The verb “will live” is actually in the present tense in the Greek. This usage is called a “futuristic present,” where a future event is spoken of with such certainty as if it were already happening. The man did not rush home but, believing Jesus, got home the next day—finding that, exactly when Jesus had said those words, the fever left his son.

What a powerful reason to believe in Jesus!

Even if we were to see a miracle, what other criteria must we look at before automatically assuming it is from God?

²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.—***Matthew 24:24***

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons—***1 Timothy 4:1***

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the

kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.—**Revelation 16:13, 14**

⁹The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders—**2 Thessalonians 2:9**

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.—**1 John 4:1**

³³“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. ³⁴Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. —**Matthew 12:33-35**

²⁰Therefore by their fruits you will know them.—**Matthew 7:20**

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.—**Galatians 5:22-24**