

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

NOTHING RECORDED	NOTHING RECORDED	NOTHING RECORDED	CHAPTER 4, VERSES 46-54
			<p>4:46 - So Jesus came again¹ into Cana of Galilee², where he made the water³ wine⁴. And there was a certain⁵ nobleman⁶, whose son⁷ was sick⁸ at Capernaum⁹.</p> <p>4:47 - When he heard¹⁰ that Jesus was come out of¹¹ Judæa¹² into Galilee¹³, he went unto him¹⁴, and besought¹⁵ him that he would come down¹⁶, and heal¹⁷ his son⁷: for he was at the point of¹⁸ death¹⁹.</p> <p>4:48 - Then said Jesus unto him, Except²⁰ ye see signs²¹ and wonders²², ye will not believe²³.</p> <p>4:49 - The nobleman⁶ saith unto him, Sir²⁴, come down¹⁶ ere²⁵ my child die²⁶.</p> <p>4:50 - Jesus saith unto him²⁷, Go²⁸ thy way²⁹; thy son liveth³⁰. And the man believed³¹ the word³² that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way²⁹.</p> <p>4:51 - And as he was now going down¹⁶, his servants³³ met³⁴ him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth³⁰.</p> <p>4:52 - Then inquired³⁵ he of them the hour³⁶ when he began³⁷ to amend³⁸. And they said unto him, Yesterday³⁹ at the seventh hour⁴⁰ the fever⁴¹ left him⁴².</p> <p>4:53 - So the father⁴³ knew⁴⁴ that it was at the same hour⁴⁵, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth³⁰: and himself believed³¹, and his whole house⁴⁶.</p> <p>4:54 - This is again the second⁴⁷ miracle⁴⁸ that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judæa¹² into Galilee¹³.</p>

CHRONOLOGY: December 27CE

LOCATION: Cana of Galilee and Capernaum

COMMENTARY: Jesus has returned from nearly nine months of ministering to the southern portion of Judæa. While there He performed miracles and taught the principles of heaven. He returned shortly after hearing of the imprisonment of John the Baptist. Shortly after His return, either before or after being rejected in Nazareth, He returned to the village of Cana. While in Cana, a court official of Herod Antipas made a hasty journey of about 20 miles from Capernaum to Cana. The court official, or nobleman, had a son that was dying. We suspect that he had malaria, and they knew from his fever and symptoms that he was short for this world. The nobleman, who many suspect to be Chuza, Herod's steward, had heard about Jesus and His mighty works. Jesus' actions at the Passover that started on 07 April 27CE were making Him renown. The nobleman learned where Jesus was and went to plead for help. He found Him in Cana of Galilee at 1:00 in the afternoon. The Savior tested the nobleman by questioning his motives. Was he just seeking a miracle, or was there faith in this nobleman's heart. The nobleman proved himself to the Savior. The Savior rejected the idea of traveling to Capernaum to perform the miracle, and simple commanded the nobleman to return home, as Jesus had already healed the son. The nobleman acted in faith. He went home in confidence. As he approached his home the next day, the servants went forth to met him on the path. He asked what time of day his son was healed. The time matched perfectly with the time that Jesus declared that his son liveth. His entire household was converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus' healing powers have no barriers to those that believe. Distance is no hindrance. He is the MASTER.

FOOTNOTES:

1- **came again** – The word "came" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρχομαι" or "erchomai". It means to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving and of those returning. The Codex Sinaiticus replaced the phrase "So Jesus came again" with "He came then again". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 46, page 171).

Jesus attended the Passover in Jerusalem on April 7, 27CE. Given the travel time from Capernaum to Jerusalem, and the fact that most travelers left early enough to find a place to lodge and secure supplies, Jesus would have left Galilee no later than March 30, 27CE. Chronologically, this chapter should take place sometime in December of 27CE. That means that Jesus has been away from Galilee for nearly 9 months.

As with much of the Gospels, chronology is a challenge. Those great men were not writing history books, and therefore dates and sequences were not as important to them as was the real reason for their writing. They were bearing testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ. They were serving as witnesses of the truthfulness of the gospel. Consequently, the order of things are inconsequential. Farrar wrote, **"At this point we are again met by difficulties in the chronology, which are not only serious, but to the certain solution of which there appears to be no clue. If we follow exclusively the order given by one Evangelist, we appear to run counter to the scattered indications which may be found in another. That it should be so will cause no difficulty to the candid mind. The Evangelists do not profess to be scrupulously guided by chronological sequence. The pictures which they give of the main events in the life of Christ are simple and harmonious, and that they should be presented in an informal, and what, with reference to mere literary considerations, would be called inartistic manner, is not only in accordance with the position of the writers, but is an additional confirmation of our conviction that we are reading the records of a life which, in its majesty and beauty, infinitely transcended the capacities of invention or imagination in the simple and faithful annals by whom it was recorded.."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 162).



One of the many problems with the chronology of the Gospels is where and when Jesus returned to Galilee after His stay in Judæa in 27CE. If one follows John's record, and considers it chronologically correct, Jesus returned first to Cana, followed by preaching in Galilee and finally to Nazareth before leaving to Capernaum. This sequence of events has a couple of problems. John quotes Jesus as saying **"a prophet hath no honour in his own country."** (John 4:44). Oddly, John places this event prior to His visit to Nazareth where Jesus was rejected by His countrymen. He also places it in the context of Jesus returning to Galilee as **"the Galilæans received him"** (John 4:45) or welcomed Him. There is no indication of rejection at this point. Farrar believes that the order of events is off. He writes that Jesus naturally visited Nazareth first, which would have been the logical stop since you must pass by it to reach Cana. He believes that Jesus was rejected in Nazareth before Cana, making the **"prophet hath no honour"** comment a fitting one. Farrar wrote, **"Rejected at Nazareth, our Lord naturally turned to the neighboring Cana where His first miracle had been wrought to gladden friends."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 161). Naturally, the Galilæans of Cana would have received Him well. They would have remembered His miracle of the water to wine, and as John stated, they saw His miracles at Passover.

Others believe that the contents of this Chapter didn't take place in Cana at all. They believe that the insertion of the village of Cana was a scribal liberty. Brown records that the verses of this chapter are thought to have originally started as, **"Now at Capernaum." Boismard thinks that this was the original opening of the story, as in iii 1; he regards the first sentence of vs. 46 as the work of a redactor, a view shared by many other scholars.** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 190). Of course, this line of thinking is highly speculative, and has no firm supporting evidence.

Edersheim appears to agree with John's chronology, at least where this chapter is concerned. He justifies Jesus' statement that **"a prophet hath no honour in his own country."** (John 4:44), as referring to the Galilee Jesus left nearly 9 months prior. He wrote, **"When Jesus returned to Galilee, it was in circumstances entirely different from those under which He had left it. As He Himself said, there had, perhaps naturally, been prejudices connected with the humbleness of His upbringing, and the familiarity engendered by knowledge of His home-surroundings."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 423).

Whatever the actual chronology, Jesus did return to Galilee after ministering in Judæa. He was coming home, and for the context of this chapter He was in Cana.

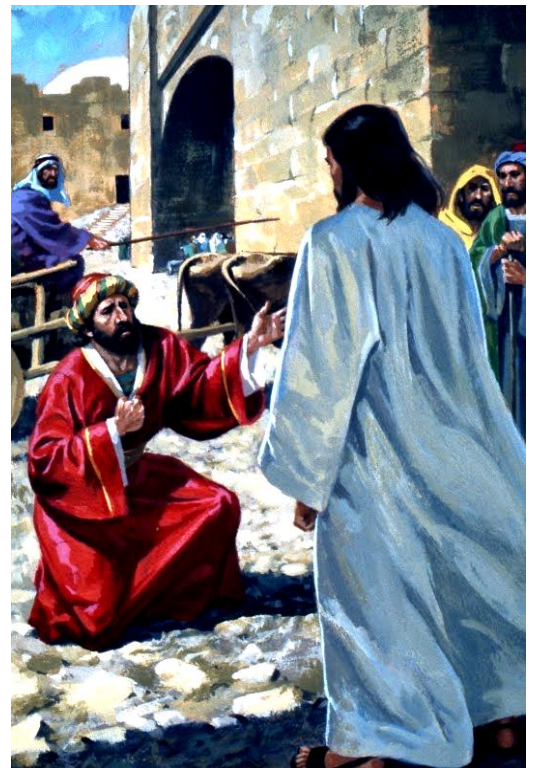
- 2- **Cana of Galilee** – The word "Cana" is translated from the Greek word "Κανά" or "Kana". Translated literally, the word means "place of reeds". The Greek word is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "קנרת" or "Qanah". The Hebrew word, translated literally, means "reed".

Cana was a logical place for Jesus to visit. It is probable that Jesus and His family lived in Cana prior to the "Marriage in Cana". It appears that Jesus and His family, Mary and His half-siblings, moved to Capernaum after the wedding. If this is true, Jesus would have naturally had close relationships with the people of Cana. He might have even had relatives that still resided there. It is possible that there were cousins or other relatives that lived in Cana. **"Besides, this was the home of Nathanael, who had probably followed Him to Jerusalem, and in whose house a gladsome homage of welcome would now await Him."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 423).

Many speculate that Jesus resided with Nathanael while in Cana. Even so, the scriptural record does not say one way or the other where Jesus stayed. Biblical scholars seem to concur that Jesus stayed with Nathanael. Elder McConkie supports this view as he wrote, **"While Jesus was in Cana, perhaps staying at the home of Nathanael..."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 7).

"Cana of Galilee is mentioned four times in the Gospel of John (2:1-11; 4:36-54; 21:2) and nowhere else in Scripture. It was in the highlands of Galilee, as one had to go down from there to Capernaum; but opinions differ as to its exact location. It may have been at 'Kefr Kenna' about 5 miles NE of Nazareth, or at 'Kana-el-Jeilil' a little further North." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 143). Since archeologist struggle to positively identify the location of Cana, it is even more difficult to determine its size. We are left to speculate the population. We are not told if it had a synagogue or not. A synagogue required at least 10 adult males to be established; which would at least establish that there were 10 households in Cana. Unfortunately, we do not even know that. Because of the fact that Cana is not mentioned elsewhere; most scholars assume that it was a small, relatively insignificant (based on secular history) village, probably housing less than 10 families.

Despite its lack of fame, Cana was a significant site for Jesus' ministry. **"It was here that the second recorded miracle of His Galilean ministry was wrought, with what effect upon the whole district, may be judged from the expectations which the fame of it excited even in Nazareth, the city of His early upbringing."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, pages 423-424).



- 3- **water** – The word "water" is translated from the Greek word "ὕδωρ" or "hydōr". The Greek word is a general word for water, and can refer to water in many states. It can mean water in rivers, fountains or ponds. It can be water found inside the earth, or in the oceans and seas. Water symbolizes life. It symbolized **"the source of all potentialities in existence."** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 188). Water always dissolves, abolishes, purifies, washes away, and regenerates. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 188). The ancient Hebrews equated water as a symbol for the Torah. It represented the Law and the word of God. **"In most religions, from ancient times to the present, water is used symbolically for rites of passage, spiritual purification rituals, and sacred ceremonies. Water is also an agent of change, causing dissolution of matter, and by extension, spirit."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 186).



Water was seen as the instrument of purification for the Jews of Jesus' day. They saw such purifications as the path to God. Though such rites are part of the overall plan of God for His children, they are by no means the fullness of God's dealings with His children. Jesus symbolically changed the water to wine; meaning that the water purifications, though important, were surpassed by the need for wine. Wine, of course, symbolized the blood of Jesus and His atonement. A man could be baptized a million times, and without the atonement of Jesus Christ is of little value. It is unclear if the Jews understood the symbolic significance of the changing of water to wine. See Chapter 10 of Book 2 for further explanation of the miracle at the marriage at Cana.

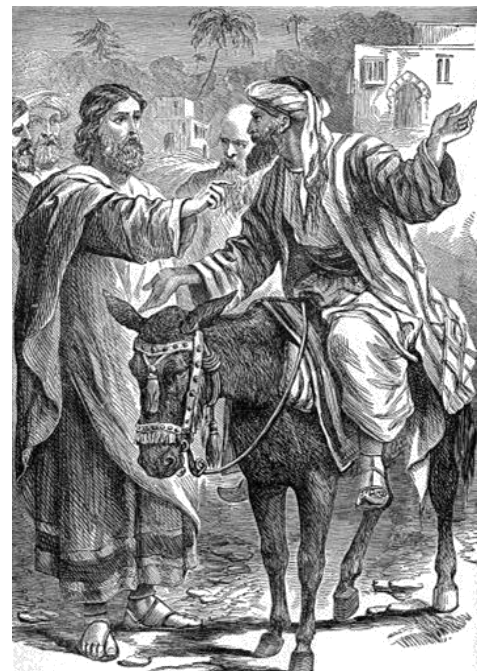
- 4- **wine** – The word "wine" is translated from the Greek word "οἶνος" or "oinos". The Greek word means "wine". Wine symbolizes life, blood, revelation, and sacrifice. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, pages 192-193). Wine symbolizes the blood of Jesus Christ, and His infinite atonement. It symbolizes His redemptive powers. It represents mercy and eternal increase.
- 5- **a certain** – The word "certain" is translated from the Greek word "τις" or "tis". It means a certain, a certain one, some, some time or a while. When used in parable, the term "certain man" most often refers to mankind in general. Given that the healing of the "certain" nobleman's son is considered a "real" story, we must conclude that the term "certain" means a "specific" nobleman.

The office or title of nobleman is discussed in footnote #6 of this chapter; therefore, we will not discuss it at this point. What we will look at is how the term "certain nobleman" is being used by John in his accounting of the story. We will start by saying that the record gives no name, and therefore we do not know who the man was referred to by John as a certain nobleman.

There is a tradition that identifies the nobleman. It is based on a huge assumption. In the Gospel according to Luke, we read of an accounting that identifies the name of Herod's steward. It records, **"And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance."** (Luke 8:3). Since the steward was considered a nobleman, readers and scholars alike have linked the nobleman in John with the steward in Luke. Consequently, Chuza is the name often given for the nobleman in John 4. Though it is possible that the assumption is correct, Herod had many high ranking officers in his employ that would have qualified as a nobleman. On the other hand, it would have been highly unlikely for the wife of one of Herod's nobleman to follow Jesus, unless there was some history to change the natural allegiance of the nobleman himself. Noblemen would be prone to follow their master, and Herod Antipas had imprisoned John the Baptist. He surely would not be a support of Jesus' teachings. It would make sense that Joanna was a follower of Jesus, if the nobleman in John 4 was none other than her husband Chuza. We learn at the end of the story that the nobleman's entire household was converted. This would have included his wife. The wife was such a true follower of Jesus that she was among the women who came to the tomb of Jesus to anoint His body with spices on the morning of His resurrection (Luke 24:10).

The name Chuza or Chuzas [ku' za(s)] is an interesting name. The Greek form of the name is "Χουζᾶς" or "Chouzas". Translated literally, the Greek name means "seer". Strong's records the Greek name as one of unknown origin; however, many scholars believe that the name is Aramaic. The Aramaic form of the name is "ܚܘܙܐ" or "Khawza", translated literally as "little jug". Chuza is said to have been a steward of Herod Antipas. If taken literally, this would mean that he was the manager of Herod's property; if taken fig., he was a political appointee of Herod. Oddly enough, most recorded instances of the Greek name "Chuzas" have been associated with a female name, though not always.

The fact that Strong's Dictionary does not list any origin for the Greek name "Chuzas" is probably because there is not a clear usage of the name in other languages. Additionally, it is possible that the name has changed over centuries of translations and scribal copies. Burkitt wrote, **"The name, of course an Aramaic one, does not occur anywhere else. Now, if we scrutinize our Latin witnesses very carefully, we find in Latin (an old Latin version of the seventh century, existing in Breslau and published by Prof. Haase) instead of Chuzæ, Cydiæ. This is a very ancient Greek name; there was one Cydias a lyric poet, and another an Attic orator, mentioned by Aristotle, and another a painter from the island of Cythnus and so on."** (Glossary of Aramaic Inscriptions, F.C. Burkitt, pages 118-119). He goes on to record, **"Luke must have originally have written: 'Of Chuza, who was also called Cydias'; but, when copying first for readers in Syria and Palestine, he left out the Greek name, and, when copying again for Roman readers, he left out the Aramaic one. There cannot be a more simple solution of a puzzling problem, which, if you attempt in any other way, you will find insoluble."** (Glossary of Aramaic Inscriptions, F.C. Burkitt, page 199).



Another possibility is that the origin of the name "Chuzā" is not the assumed Hebrew or Aramaic. Scholars have looked in those languages and do not find such a name. Burkitt, however, did find the name in an interesting place. He wrote, "The answer is, that Chuzā was the father of a man called Hayyān, whose descendants erected the largest and finest of the great rock-cut tombs at El-Hegr in Arabia. These people, though they were in a circle sufficiently 'cultivated and elevated' to possess a magnificent family mausoleum in the Grecian style, as fine as the well-known rock tombs of Petra, were not ashamed of their grandfather's name, and their inscription runs -

לדון בר כוזא אחרה

"To Hayyān, son of Kūzā, his posterity (have erected this tomb)."
 (Glossary of Aramaic Inscriptions, F.C. Burkitt, page 121).

"Chuzā is a real name, but it is not found again in Greek, because it is not a Jew's name but a Nabatean's. There is no evidence that Chuzā was a Jew, whatever his wife may have been, and a 'steward' to the Herodian family may very well have been of foreign origin, like the Herods themselves. If Chuzā was of a Nabatean family, that would explain his having a Nabatean name, which we should no more expect to find again in Greek literature than 'Auida, or Ma'na, or Gusham.'" (Glossary of Aramaic Inscriptions, F.C. Burkitt, page 122). The Nabateans spoke Aramaic and adopted an Aramaic culture. Their native land was in the Arabian deserts from the Dead Sea to the Arabian Peninsula. They were primarily traders, and had a network of trade routes across the inhospitable deserts. Their origins are not clear. They worshiped false gods, but could have been descendants of father Abraham.



Chuzā's wife was listed by Luke as a woman named Joanna. Apparently she too was healed by the master, and consequently supported Him and His disciples in their travels. Her name means "Yahweh has been gracious." It is a variation of the name "Anna", which means grace or favor. In the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, she is a saint. "In Luke 24:10 Joanna is identified among the group of women, along with Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James who took spices to the tomb and found the stone rolled away. Although the apostles discounted the women's testimony, Peter and another disciple decided to look for themselves. Joanna is considered among the witnesses to the Resurrection. In Orthodox tradition she is honored as Saint Joanna the Myrrhbearer (Greek *Αγία Ιωάννα η Μυροφόρος*) and is commemorated among the eight women who carried myrrh on the "Sunday of the Myrrhbearers", two Sundays after Pascha (Orthodox Easter). From this commemoration, in the revised Calendar of Saints of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod she is commemorated as one of Myrrhbearers on August 3 together with Mary, the Mother of James the less and Jude and Salome. Although not mentioned by name, Joanna is most likely counted as one of the women who joined the disciples and Mary, the mother of the Lord, in the upper room in prayer. She was among the group of 120 who chose St. Matthias to fill the vacancy that was left by Judas, as well as being present on the Day of Pentecost." (Wikipedia.com). Such traditions about Joanna are full of questionable fact as a result of the great and global apostasy, and are provided to help connect the dots when considering Chuzā as the nobleman of John 4. There are great arguments to support the claim, but we must be cautious in our conclusions.



Edersheim was cautious in his conclusion. He wrote, "Whether this 'royal officer' was Chuzā, Herod's steward, whose wife, under the abiding impression of this miracle to her child, afterwards humbly, gratefully ministered to Jesus, must remain undetermined on this side time. Suffice it, to mark the progress in the 'royal officer' from belief in the power of Jesus to faith in His word, and thence to absolute faith in Him, with its blessed expansive effect on that whole household. And so are we ever led faithfully and effectually, yet gently, by His benefits, upwards from the lower stage of belief by what we see Him do, to that higher faith which is absolute and unseeing trust, springing from experimental knowledge of what He is." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 429). Farrar address the topic with the same caution. He wrote, "We know that Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod, was in after days a Christian, and we know that among the women who ministered to Christ of their substance was Johanna, the wife of Chuzā, Herod's steward. As this courtier believed in Christ with his whole house, in consequence of the miracle now wrought, it has been conjectured with some probability that it was none other than Chuzā himself." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 162).

Talmage ties the whole topic up nicely. He wrote, "The name of the nobleman whose son was healed by the word of Jesus is not given. Attempts to identify him with Chuzā, the steward of Herod Antipas, are based on unreliable tradition. The family of the nobleman accepted the teachings of Christ. "Joanna the wife of Chuzā Herod's steward" (Luke 8:3) was among the grateful and honorable women who had been recipients of our Lord's healing ministry, and who contributed of their substance for the furtherance of His work. Unconfirmed tradition should not be confounded with authentic history." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 150).

6- **nobleman** – The word "nobleman" is translated from the Greek word "βασιλικός" or "basilikos". The word means of a king or to belong to a king. It can mean kingly, royal, or regal. It can be used of a man who is an officer or minister of a prince or king. "The word *basilikos* may designate a person of royal blood (Codex Bezae and the Latin tradition take him to be a petty king) or a servant to the king. The latter is meant here; the king whom he serves is Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee whom the NT regularly calls a king (Mark vi 14,22; Matt xiv 9). It is not impossible that he was soldier (the Synoptic speak of a [Roman] centurion), for Josephus uses *basilikos* in reference to Herodian troops (Life 72;#400). However, Capernaum was a border town, and there were probably many types of Royal administrative officials there." (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 190). Brown's explanation would lead us to believe that the word "nobleman" could be applied to any government worker, civil or militarily. This paints a different picture than one might have otherwise imagined. Brown's opinion seems to be shared by other reputable scholars. Edersheim wrote, "It appears that the son of one of Herod Antipas' officers, either civil or military, was sick, and at the point of death." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 424).



Ever McConkie weighed in on the subject. He wrote, "That this nobleman was an officer, either civil or military, in the court of Herod Antipas is reasonably certain; at least the word used by John to describe him is the same one Josephus and others used repetitiously to refer to officers in the service of that evil tyrant." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 6).

Zondervan simply defines a nobleman as "one belonging to a king." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 590). Such a public official coming to Cana, of all places, to see Jesus would have surely been an event to be talked about. You can almost envision the people talking in their circles about the honored guest that had come to their village, and of course why. (Note: another name for nobleman is courtier.) Farrar explains, "The position of the courtier caused it to be widely known, and it contributed, no doubt, to that joyous and enthusiastic welcome which our Lord received during that bright early period of His ministry, which has been beautifully called the 'Galilæan spring'." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 162). Despite his prominent position, the nobleman was a father. There is nothing more humbling than to have a sick child, and be helpless to provide relief. A good father would do anything to rescue a sick or troubled child. The nobleman was no different. He left his home, undoubtedly one of prosperity. He left his duties and servants. He ventured to a small insignificant village to humbly ask the Master of heaven and earth for help.

It should be noted that a well known character from the Old Testament, named Naaman, served as a Captain in the Syrian Army. Josephus refers to Naaman as a nobleman. He wrote, "...there was a young nobleman belonging to king Benhadad, whose name was Naaman..." (Antiquities of the Jews, Book VIII, Flavius Josephus, Chapter 15, Verse 5, Page 633). When considering the title of nobleman, we should remember that it could be a litany of different positions within Herod's court; anything from steward to soldier.

7- **son** – The word "son" is translated from the Greek word "υιός" or "huios". The Greek word means "a son". It is rarely used of animals, and is generally used in reference to the offspring of man. In this story, two forms of the word "son" are used. In verse 51, the word "son", which translated from a different Greek word; "παῖς" or "pais". The Greek word means "a child" and is not gender specific. It can also be used in reference to servant or slave. Brown confirms, "Paidion, a diminutive of pais (see vs. 51); elsewhere John uses huios, 'son'." (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191). "This is the only occurrence of *pais* in John, and even here some important texts read *huios*. Kilpatrick accepts *huios* on the grounds that *pais* is a scribal harmonization with the Synoptics. However, the insertion of *huios* in place of *pais* may be explained as a scribal attempt to make the usage in the story uniform." (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191). It would appear that scholars favor the word "son" rather than "child" in this story. The bottom line is, we do not know how old the son of the nobleman was. If we could rely on the Greek word "pais", we could deduct that he was a young child, possibly less than 5 years old. However, given the fact that Biblical scholars feel that "pais" was inserted after the fact by scribes, we have no idea how old the son was.

8- **sick** – The word "sick" is translated from the Greek word "ἀσθενέω" or "astheneō". The Greek word means to be weak, feeble, to be without strength, or sick. "He had not long arrived when an officer from the neighboring court of Herod Antipas, hearing of His arrival, came and urgently entreated that He would descend to Capernaum and heal his dying son." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 161). The son was obviously deathly ill. This was not a common cold, but rather something that the ancient Galilæans recognized as an illness that would result in death. The question is; what was the son's illness? We are told that the son had a fever; which is at least a clue to his illness. Without more information it would be impossible to make such a diagnosis; however, we can present common diseases of the time that caused fever and resulted in death. Here are a few of the leading candidates for the son's illness;

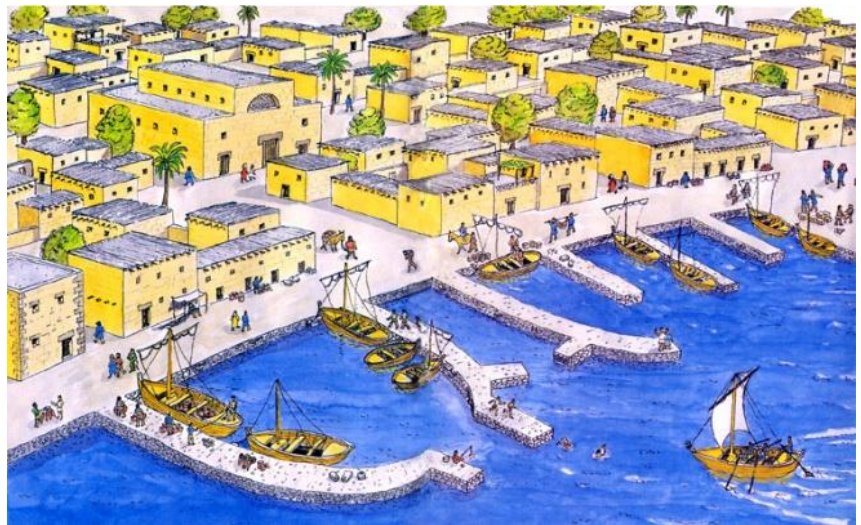
- **"Tuberculosis** occurs in acute or chronic form, more commonly the latter. Under the living conditions of Old Testament days, it probably not only attacked the lungs, but also the bones and joints...Tuberculosis anywhere in the body may produce fever, defective nutrition with underweight, or discharge of infectious pus (referred to as an 'issue' in Leviticus). The disease may produce chronic invalidism or death if the disease process is not arrested." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 219).
- **"Typhoid Fever and Typhus Fever** both give rise to similar symptoms of steady fever and delirium lasting for a matter of weeks, frequently being fatal. Typhoid fever is transmitted through contaminated water, and flies carrying contamination to food and drink. Typhus fever is transmitted to humans by lice which have fed on infected human beings." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 219).

- **"Malaria is believed to be the great fever with which Peter's mother-in-law was stricken. The burning ague of Leviticus 26:16 and the extreme burning of Deuteronomy 28:22 were probably malaria. Transmitted by certain species of mosquito, malaria is responsible for much chronic illness. A chill followed by fever often subsides in a few hours only to recur more severely some hours later, continuing intermittently thereafter. Death may ensue if untreated."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 219).
- **"Diarrhea, Dysentery and Cholera, caused by microorganisms taken into the body in contaminated food or drink, were doubtless prevalent in Old Testament times. They are characterized by frequent watery bowel movements, often by vomiting and fever, and, if protracted, by weakness and prostration. Publius' fever and 'bloody flux' (Acts 28:8) was probably dysentery, a diarrhea associated with painful spasms of the bowel, ulceration, and infection, either amoebic or bacillary, giving rise to blood and pus in the excreta. As to cholera, it is fatal in half of the cases when modern treatment is not utilized."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 219).

The fact that Peter's Mother-in-law is thought to have had malaria in Capernaum, during the same relative time period, might give us cause to suspect that the nobleman's son was infected with malaria as well.

- 9- **Capernaum** – The word "Capernaum" is translated from the Greek word "Καφαρναούμ" or "Kapharnaoum". The word, translated literally, means "village of comfort". It is a transliteration of two Hebrew words "כפרנח" or "kaphar" meaning village and "נחום" or "Nachuwim" meaning comfort. The prophet Nahum's name in Hebrew is "נחום" or "Nachuwim".

Capernaum was a fishing village located **"on the North West shore of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus made His headquarters during His ministry in Galilee."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 146). Though we cannot definitely say how large Capernaum was, it is believed to be **"a town of considerable size in the days of Christ"** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 146). Zondervan makes this statement based on several facts; **"a tax-collector had his office there (Mark 2:14); a high officer of the king (Herod Antipas) had his residence there and built a synagogue for the people there (Matt. 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10),"** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 146). It should also be noted that Jesus will feed a multitude of 5,000 in the vicinity of Capernaum.



ARTISTIC RENDERING OF ANCIENT CAPERNAUM

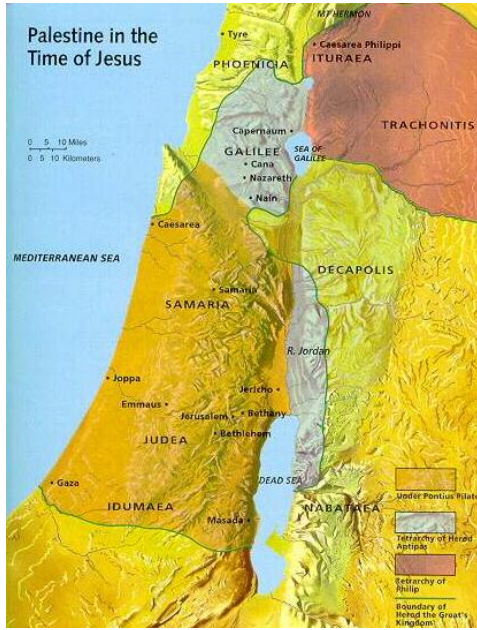
As great as Capernaum was in relation to the work that Jesus performed there, its fate seems to be something quite the contrary. Talmage wrote, **"The name Capernaum signifies, according to some authorities, 'the Village of Nahum,' according to others, 'the Village of Consolation.' As we follow the history of Jesus we shall discover that many of His mighty works were wrought, and many of His most impressive words were spoken in Capernaum. The infidelity of the inhabitants, after all the discourses and wonderful works which He had done among them, brought out the saying of Jesus, 'And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be cast down to hell.' (Matt. 11:23.) So thoroughly has this prediction been fulfilled that no trace of the city remains, and the very site which it occupied is now a matter of conjecture, there being even no ecclesiastical tradition of the locality. At the present day two spots have claims which are urged, each with such arguments of probability as to make the whole question the most difficult in sacred topography.... We shall probably never be able to know the exact fact. Jesus damned it to oblivion, and there it lies. We shall content ourselves with the New Testament notices as bearing on the work of Jesus."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 150).

- 10- **When he heard** – The word "heard" is translated from the Greek word "ἀκούω" or "akouō". It means to be endowed with the faculty of hearing. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the word "When" in the phrase "When he heard". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 47, page 171). **"Accordingly, we do not assume that this 'court-officer' was actuated by spiritual belief in the Son of God, when applying to Him for help. Rather would we go to almost the opposite extreme, and regard him as simply actuated by what, in the circumstances, might be the views of a devout Jew. Instances are recorded in the Talmud, which may here serve as our guide. Various cases are related in which those seriously ill, and even at the point of death, were restored by the prayers of celebrated Rabbis. One instance is specially illustrative. We read that, when the son of Rabban Gamaliel was dangerously ill, he sent two of his disciples to one Chanina ben Dosa to entreat his prayers for the restoration of his son. On this, Chanina is said to have gone up to the Aliyah (upper chamber) to pray. On his return, he assured the messengers that the young man was restored, grounding his confidence, not on the possession of any prophetic gift, but on the circumstance that he knew his request was answered from the freedom he had in prayer. The messengers noted down the hour, and on their arrival at the house of Gamaliel found, that at that very hour 'the fever left him, and he asked for water'. Thus far the Rabbinic story. Even supposing that it was either invented or coloured in imitation of the New Testament, it shows, at least, what a devout Jew might deem lawful to expect from a celebrated Rabbi, who was regarded as having power in prayer."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 424). Edersheim's comparison between the prayers of the Rabbis and the miracle wrought by Jesus with the nobleman's son should not be misinterpreted as equating the power of the Jesus with that of the Rabbis. Rather, it equated the faith of those whose prayers were answered with the faith of the nobleman. It explains that there were men and women of faith at the time of Jesus, looking for God and His blessings. The nobleman was no different. He heard that there was one who had the power to bring down the powers of heaven, and his faith prompted him to act.

- 11- **come out of** – The word "come" is translated from the Greek word "ἵκω" or "hēkō". It means to have come, have arrived or be present. Jesus had made the long journey from the province of Judæa to Galilee. He traveled the dirt road and paths through Samaria to arrive back home. He traveled over 115 miles by foot to arrive in Galilee.



12 - **Judæa** – The word "Judæa" is translated from the Greek word "Ιουδαία" or "Ioudaia". Translated literally, it means "he shall be praised". Judæa was a province of Rome ruled by a Roman Governor by the name of Pontius Pilate. Galilee, on the other hand, was ruled by a vassal king name Herod Antipas. Jesus took the direct route to Galilee through Samaria. We assume that Jesus was in the hill country of Judæa, and traveled to His childhood home of Nazareth. The journey would have represented 111 miles if there were no diversions. Additionally, the distance from Nazareth to Cana would add another 5 miles.



MAP OF JUDÆAN & GALILÆAN PROVINCES



DISTANCE FROM JUDÆA TO GALILEE

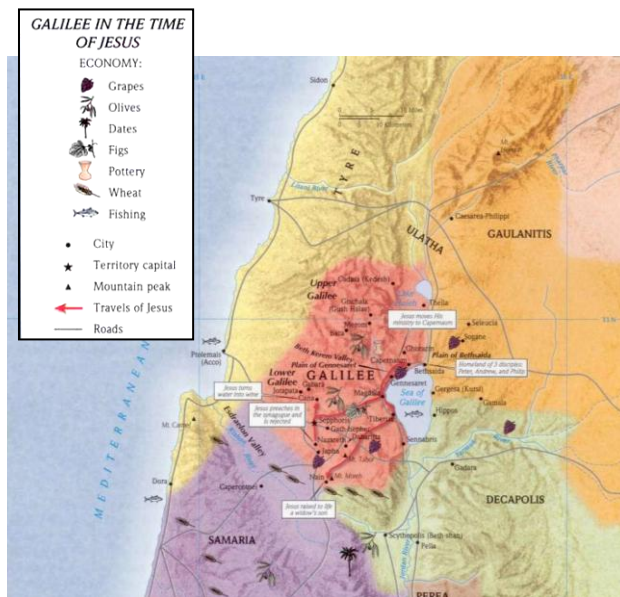


DISTANCE FROM NAZARETH & CANA

13 - **Galilee** – The word "Galilee" is translated from the Greek word "Γαλιλαία" or "Galilaia". Translated literally, the word means "circuit". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "גליל" or "Galiyl", which means "circuit" or "district". Galilee is the name of a region of northern Palestine, bounded on the north by Syria, on the west by Sidon, Tyre, Ptolemais and their territories and the promontory of Carmel, on the south by Samaria and on the east by the Jordan. It was divided into Upper Galilee and Lower Galilee.

Galilee was far more than a different province in Palestine. The people and the land had significant differences from those of their fellow Jews in Judæa. We have broken them down into seven major categories;

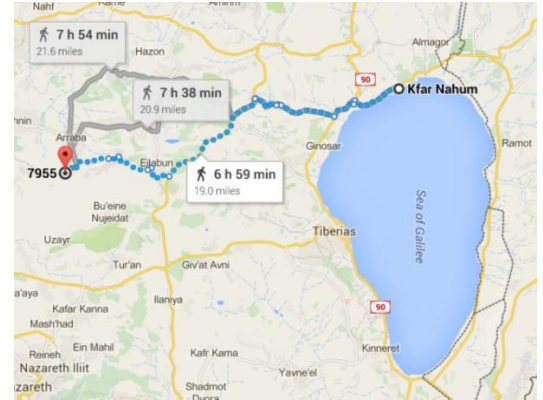
- **Geographically** - Galilee was the bread basket of Palestine. While Judæa was a rock desert with fertile soil few and far between, Galilee was rich in farmable soil. Judæa had the lifeless Dead Sea, while Galilee had the Sea of Galilee sprawling with fish and life. Galilee was separated from Judea by the non-Jewish territory of Samaria, and from Perea in the southeast by the Hellenistic settlements of Decapolis.
- **Racially** - Judæa prided itself on the fact that, for the most part, they descended from pure genealogical lines of the House of Israel. Galilee however, occupied the area of the former Northern Kingdom of Israel. Though most of the Galilæans were transplants from Judæa, ever since the Assyrian conquest in the eighth century BCE, a more mixed population occupied the area. There was more cross breeding between races. Within Galilee one could expect to find areas of more conservative Jews (like Nazareth and Capernaum), and at the same time, in close proximity, largely pagan cities (like the Hellenistic centers of Tiberias and Sepphoris).
- **Culturally** - Judæans despised their northern neighbors. The Galilæans lacked Jewish sophistication, and yet they were generally more conservative in the keeping of the Law. They were more old school, and yet you could find pockets of liberal thinking that were open to the new ideas of Hellenism.
- **Politically** - Galilee had been under separate administration from Judæa during almost all its history since the tenth century BCE (apart from a period of "reunification" under the Maccabees), and in the time of Jesus it was under a (supposedly) native Herodian prince, while Judæa and Samaria had since 6CE been under the direct rule of a Roman prefect.
- **Economically** - The greatest wealth in Palestine was found in the Hierarchy of the Temple. The collection of Temple taxes dwarfed any other industry. Aside from that, Galilee offered better agricultural and fishing resources than the more mountainous territory of Judea, making the wealth of some Galileans the envy of their southern neighbors. The common people were more prosperous in Galilee.
- **Linguistically** - Galilæans spoke a distinctive form of Aramaic whose slovenly consonants (they dropped their aitches!) were the butt of Judean humor. They were the country bumpkins of Palestine.



- **Religiously** - The Galilæans were more conservative in keeping the law, while at the same time they were more lax in their observance of the proper rituals. The Judæans, who had the Temple in their territory, place more emphasis on the Temple, while the Galilæans who didn't have the Temple place greater emphasis on the Law.

14- **went unto him** – The word "went" is translated from the Greek word "ἀπερχομαι" or "aperchomai". The Greek word means to go away or depart. It can also mean to go away with the intent of following someone, going after someone, or to follow after someone as a leader.

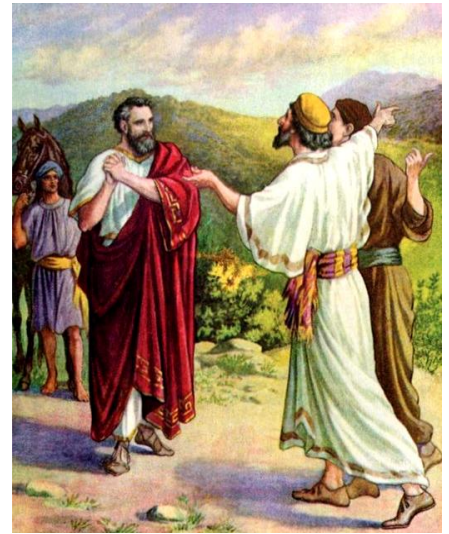
The nobleman left Capernaum and journeyed to Cana. There are several possible sites that could be the ancient village of Cana. Kafar Kenna is located 23 miles from Capernaum. Kana El-Jeilil is located approximately 19 miles from Capernaum.



This is a good spot to discuss a common question posed by students of the Bible. There are many who feel that the story of Jesus healing the Centurion's servant (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10) is the same story as the story of Jesus healing the Nobleman's son as contained in this chapter. Edersheim wrote, "**Indeed, so far as its mortal import is concerned, the whole history turns upon this point. It also marks the fundamental difference between this and the somewhat similar history of the healing of the Centurion's servant in Capernaum. Critics have noticed marked divergences in almost every detail of the two narratives, which some - both orthodox and negative interpreters - have so strangely represented as only different presentations of one and the same event. But, besides these marked differences of detail, there is also fundamental differences in the substance of the narratives, and in the spirit of the two applicants, which made the Saviour in the one instance reprove as the requirement of sight, which by itself could only produce a transitory faith, that which in the other He marveled at as greatness of faith, for which He had in vane looked at Israel.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 426). We will evaluate the two stories in the chart below;

"Jesus Heals the Centurion's Servant" Matthew 8:5-13	"Jesus Heals the Centurion's Servant" Luke 7:1-10	"Jesus Heals the Nobleman's son" John 4:46-54	Issues
5 ¶And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,	1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.	46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.	<i>Different settings: Cana / Capernaum</i>
6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.	2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.	47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa 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.	
7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.	3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.	48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.	<i>Servants sent to Jesus vs. the Nobleman himself</i>
8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.	4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:	49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.	<i>Jesus offered to go to the son vs. Jesus not going to Capernaum</i>
9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.	5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.	50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.	
10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.	6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof:	51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.	<i>Centurion declares through friends that he is not worth vs. no such account</i>
11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.	7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.	52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.	
12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.	8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.	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.	<i>A day later the nobleman found his son healed vs. the centurion returned to his house to find the same</i>
13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.	9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.	54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judæa into Galilee.	
	10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.		

- 15 - **besought** – The word "besought" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρωτάω" or "erōtaō". It means to question, to request, entreat, beg or beseech. **"There could be no more improbable scene in the world than an important court official hastening twenty miles to beg a favour from a village carpenter. First and foremost, this courtier swallowed his pride. He was in need, and neither convention nor custom stopped him bringing his need to Christ. His action would cause a sensation but he did not care what people said so long as he obtained the help he so much wanted. If we want the help which Christ can give we must be humble enough to swallow our pride and not care what any man may say."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, pages 174-175). This was the action of the nobleman from Capernaum. He acted as a father that day, and not as a court official.



Unfortunately, begging for a blessing is not a guarantee that it will be granted. The Apostle James taught, **"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."** (James 4:3). It is not that Jesus is not willing to grant the desires of our heart, but He grants those that are to our benefit. **"Jesus did not respond to every casual request for a healing. Special blessings of this sort were for the benefit of believers whose faith deserved to be rewarded. He was especially determined not to heal people just to satisfy the curiosity of sign-seekers."** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 179).

The request of the nobleman was big. He was not asking for simple favor. He was asking for something that no mortal of the time could do; heal his son. **"Besides, the cure, which was the object of the application, could not have been performed without a miracle."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 425).

- 16 - **come down** – The phrase "come down" is translated from the Greek word "καταβαίνω" or "katabainō". It means to go down, come down, or descend. **"The adverbs up and down may not register any particular importance to Westerners accustomed to driving vehicles in the modern world, but travel in the ancient world was arduous and fraught with danger. Elevation differences in the Holy Land were remembered with every footstep, and biblical writers referred constantly, even automatically, to those differences."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 139).



The Gospel writer obviously knew that the journey from Cana to Capernaum would be a downhill trek. **"This description agrees implicitly with vs. 46a. In going to Capernaum from Cana one must go east across the Galilean hills and then descend to the Sea of Galilee. The twenty-mile journey was not accomplished in one day, so it is the next day when the servants meet the official who had already begun the descent. There indications suggest that the author knew Palestine well."** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191).

"Cana lies a few miles north of Nazareth at an elevation of about seven hundred feet above sea level; Capernaum is situated along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, at nearly seven hundred feet below sea level." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 139). The journey between Cana and Capernaum has an overall change in elevation of about 1,400 feet.

- 17 - **heal** – The word "heal" is translated from the Greek word "ἰάομαι" or "iaomai". It means to cure, heal, or make whole. The Codex Sinaiticus replaced the phrase "heal his son" with "restore his son to health". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 47, page 171). **"Healings are of two kinds: (1) Those which confer physical and mental health to suffering mortals; and (2) Spiritual healings which cure those who are suffering from spiritual maladies and which awaken to spiritual life those who are dead to righteousness. Healing of the sick by the Master's touch is but symbolical of the greater and more important rejuvenation that must take place for all accountable persons if they are to be healed spiritually and thus becomes heirs of salvation."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 159). On the surface, the miracle of the healing of the nobleman's son is one of physical healing. Upon deeper review, one finds that the nobleman and his entire house were converted to the gospel. A spiritual miracle was performed by Jesus as well.

- 18 - **at the point of** – The phrase "at the point of" is translated from the Greek word "μέλλω" or "mellō". It means to be about, to intend, to have a mind to, or think of. It can also mean to be on the point of doing something. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the phrase "at the point of death" with "about to die". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 47, page 171). It is probable that the son had Malaria. Whatever illness he had, it was apparent to his father that mortal help would not stop the inevitable. It was obvious that death was near.

- 19 - **death** – The word "death" is translated from the Greek word "ἀποθνήσκω" or "apothnēskō". The word means to die, either physically or spiritually.

- 20 - **except** – The word "except" is translated from the Greek word "ἐάν μή" or "ean mē". It means if not, unless, or whoever. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the word "except" as "unless". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 48, page 171).

Jesus understands us far more than we probably give Him credit. He knows our tendency for selfish fulfillment, and gratification. Many came to Jesus for these reasons. They had no intention of changing their lives, and giving up the ways of this world. They only wanted what Jesus could give them. They were not willing to give anything in return. **"Jesus apparently tested the sick son's father by stating, as regards the natural tendency of humans, 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.' But this was a noble man, and his faith would not be deterred. The man's faith, combined with Jesus' power, would make his son whole."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 139).



The Savior required an offering of faith from the father. **"What the Saviour reproved was not the request for a miracle, which was necessary, but the urgent plea that He should come down to Capernaum for that purpose, which the father afterwards so**

earnestly repeated. That request argued ignorance of the real character of the Christ, as if He were either merely a Rabbi endowed with special power, or else a miracle-monger." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 425). The nobleman needed to have faith in Jesus' ability to heal without going to Capernaum. He had to accept the miracle on Jesus' terms.



21 - **ye see signs** – The word "signs" is translated from the Greek word "σημεῖον" or "sêmeion". It means a sign, mark or token. It is that by which a person or a thing is distinguished from others and is known. **"Ye" is sometimes translated as "you people". "The official is looked upon as representing the Galileans of vs.44-45. In the Synoptic account (Mark vii 27) of the healing of the Syrophenician's daughter, a story in many ways parallel to John's narrative here, Jesus, in rebuffing the woman, treats her as a representative of a national group."** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191).

22 - **wonders** – The word "wonders" is translated from the Greek word "τέρας" or "teras". It means a prodigy, or portent. It can also mean a miracle.

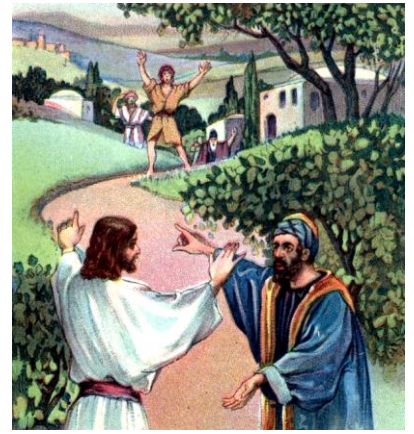
23 - **believe** – The word "believe" is translated from the Greek word "πιστεύω" or "pisteuō". It means to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, or place confidence in. **"It is of the very essence of faith that we should believe that what Jesus says is true. So often we have a kind of vague, wistful longing that the promises of Jesus should be true. The only way really to enter into them is to believe in them with the clutching intensity of a drowning man. If Jesus says a thing, it is not a case of 'It may be true'; it is a case of 'It must be true'."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 175). It is this kind of faith the brings down the powers of heaven. This is the primary requirement for miracles.

24 - **Sir** – The word "Sir" is translated from the Greek word "κύριος" or "kyrios". It means he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, or lord. **"Kyrios means both 'sir' and 'lord'; perhaps the latter is meant here. In the Syrophenician story (Mark vii 28) the woman's response to Jesus' rebuke also employs kyrios."** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191).

25 - **ere** – The word "ere" is translated from the Greek word "πρίν" or "prin". The word means before or formerly. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the phrase "ere my child die" with "before my child die". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 49, page 171).

26 - **my child die** – The word "child" is translated from the Greek word "παιδίον" or "paidion". The word means a young child, a little boy or little girl. It can reference an infant, toddler, or child. It is believed that the word "pais" or "paidion" was added by scribes, replacing the original Greek word "huios". The belief is that the original manuscript was consistent in its use of the word "huios", which means "son".

27 - **saith unto him** – The word "saith" is translated from the Greek word "λέγω" or "legō". The Greek word means to say, speak, teach, exhort, advise, command or affirm. Once the Savior established faith in the nobleman, He answered his righteous plea. **"Truly the Master Healer uses his power in a perfect way for the blessing and benefit of his mortal brethren."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 7).



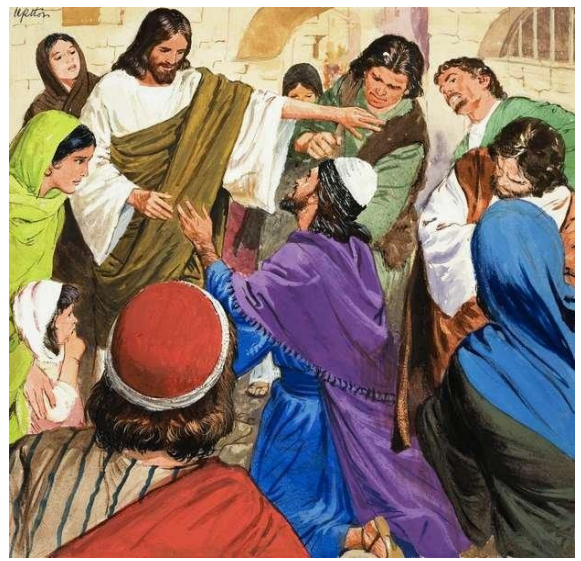
28 - **Go** – The word "Go" is translated from the Greek word "πορεύω" or "poreuō". It means to lead over, depart on a journey, or transfer. This might seem like an insignificant word in the overall story, but it is not. Jesus commands the nobleman to go, with only a promise that his son was healed. He required that the noble act on his faith. With only a word, the nobleman was asked to go. He did! He trusted the Savior's word and acted in faith by leaving. **"Jesus was touched. Here indeed was genuine faith, and therefore Jesus sent a signal across the distance from Cana to Capernaum and spoke to the millions of intelligences in the dying body of the nobleman's son. Those intelligences heard the Master's voice and the healing process began."** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 179).

29 - **way** – The phrase "he went his way" and "Go thy way" are both translated from the Greek word "πορεύω" or "poreuō". It means to lead over, depart on a journey, or transfer. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "Go thy way" as simply "Go", omitting the words "thy way". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 50, page 171).

The message seems to be for the nobleman to go home. Thy way, would be the way to his own house. **"Though he was in Cana, Jesus gave the command and the nobleman's son, some twenty miles away in Capernaum was healed. By the power of faith the sick are healed regardless of their geographical location. God is God of the universe; his power is everywhere manifest."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 159). The nobleman was to go home and witness the power of God. His son was healed.

30 - **thy son liveth** – The word "liveth" is translated from the Greek word "ζάω" or "zaō". It means to live, breath, and be among the living. **"Semetic has no exact word for 'recover'; 'to live' covers both recovery from illness (II Kings viii 9; 'Shall I live from this disease') and return to life from death (I Kings xvii 23; 'Your son lives' to a mother whose son was dead). The two fold meaning is convenient for John's theological purposes."** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191).

Our understanding of God's power leaves much to be desired. Our cures are typically complicated and imperfect. God's solutions are immediate and complete. For the nobleman's son, **"There was to be no gradual cure; distance meant nothing where the exercise of healing power was involved. Jesus spoke, and the event transpired. Without further assurance, knowing only that this Man's words must all be fulfilled, the nobleman 'believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way'."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 7).



Jesus performed an incredible miracle, but he did so without fanfare or spectacle. The nobleman was simply told to go home, and he would find his son healed. **"In this joyous assurance, which needed no more ocular demonstration, he 'went his way', either to the hospitable home of a friend, or to some near lodging-place on the way, to be next day met by the gladsome tidings, that it had been to him according to his faith."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 429). Jesus performed the miracle, like all His mighty works, without a need for self propagation. He never sought to elevate himself, but rather blessed those of faith.



- 31 - **believed** – The word "believed" is translated from the Greek word "πιστεύω" or "pisteuō". The Greek word means to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, or place confidence in. Belief is a close relative of faith, and in this case it is highly probable that the later is the intended term. Faith differs from belief in that faith is established by spiritual confirmation. We can believe in many things because we have experienced them by one or more of the five senses. We see or smell something and so we believe it to be true. Faith is often assisted by the five senses, but it cannot exist without the confirmation of the spirit.

Somewhere in this story, and perhaps before he left Capernaum, the nobleman experiences the influence of the spirit. He knew he needed to go to Jesus to cure his son. His faith told him so, and he acted upon that faith. Faith without any action, is not faith. We must give ourselves over to that faith. **"Here was a courtier who surrendered. He was not a man who got out of Christ what he wanted and then went away to forget. He and all his household believed. That would not be easy for him, for the idea of Jesus as the Anointed One of God must have cut across all his preconceived notions. Nor would it be easy at the court of Herod to profess faith in Jesus. He would have mockery and laughter to endure; and no doubt there would be those who thought that he had gone slightly mad."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, pages 175-176).

Faith, unlike belief, is the basis for spiritual power. **"As already noted, the whole morale of the history lies in this very matter, and it marks the spiritual receptiveness of the courtier, which, in turn, was the moral condition of his desire being granted."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 429).

- 32 - **the word** – The term "word" is translated from the Greek word "λόγος" or "logos". It means of speech, a word, or something uttered by a living voice. Jesus spoke, and the nobleman believed. What is not included in the text is why he believed the word. It is obvious to me that the spirit was present and spoke truth to the nobleman's heart. He gained faith in the word of God.
- 33 - **his servants** – The word "servants" is translated from the Greek word "δούλος" or "doulos". It means a slave, bondman, or a man of servile condition. Zondervan speaks of servants at the time of Jesus, **"Servant, sometimes applied to any one under the authority of another, and not necessarily a domestic or slave. In some passages of Scripture, the word properly means 'young man' or 'minister'. It is applied to the relation of men to others occupying high position."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 599). Slavery was not as common at the time of Jesus as it was in Old Testament times. Even so, it an accepted cultural practice. Individuals who could not meet debt obligations were often required to serve as slaves in lieu of payment. It was common for entire families to serve as slaves if the debt required it. Slaves were also obtained subsequent to war. Slaves were then sold to those who were affluent enough to buy and care for a slave. The servants of the nobleman were likely under his employ. It is doubtful that they were slaves. If he was Herod's steward, he would have had a staff to assist in the running of his house. These staffs members would be referred to as servants.
- 34 - **met** – The word "met" is translated from the Greek word "δούλος" or "apantaō". The word means to go to meet. In the ancient world, it was common to go out from the home and greet a traveling guest, or a returning member of the family. It would have been culturally normal for the servants to go out and greet the nobleman upon his return.
- 35 - **inquired** – The word "inquired" is translated from the Greek word "πυνθάνομαι" or "pynthanomai". It means to enquire, to ask, ascertain, or by enquiry. The nobleman had great faith in the words of Jesus. Nevertheless, as his servants went for to met him upon his return, he asked them about the status of his son. He had obviously not arrived home yet, but knew that the servants would know if his son was healed.
- 36 - **the hour** – The word "hour" is translated from the Greek word "ώρα" or "hōra". It is used to reference a twelfth part of the day-time, an hour, (the twelve hours of the day are reckoned from the rising to the setting of the sun). The ancients measured day time by the sun. The nobleman had marked the time that Jesus pronounced that his "son liveth". He knew wants to know what time the servants marked his recovery. He expected the times to coincide.
- 37 - **began** – The word "began" is translated from the Greek word "ἔχω" or "echō". It translated as "have" 613 times in the New Testament, "be" 22 times, and "need" 12 times. The term began is an uncommon translation. It would appear the scribes chose this translation because it fits so smoothly with the story context.
- 38 - **amend** – The word "amend" is translated from the Greek word "κομψότερον" or "kompoteron". It means more finely, or better. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "amend" as "mend". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 52, page 171). It points to a turning point in the sons illness. At some point, the symptoms started to subside. At some point, he started to recover, perhaps his fever broke. The nobleman inquired when that precise point of time was.
- 39 - **Yesterday** – The word "yesterday" is translated from the Greek word "ἐχθές" or "echthes". It means yesterday. **"Literally 'yesterday at the seventh hour' Some object that if the official left Cana at 1:00 P.M., by the next day he should have been home and not still on his way. But there are many unknown factors. Did he set out immediately? How is the next day reckoned? According to one form of Jewish reckoning, the next day began that evening, and so he may have been traveling only a few hours."** (The Gospel according to John: I-XII, Anchor-Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 191).



- 40 - **the seventh hour** – The word "seventh" is translated from the Greek word "ἑβδόμος" or "hebdomos". The Greek word means seventh. The number seven is a symbol for completeness and totality. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 117). **"It is**

perfection; security; safety; rest; plenty" (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 117). The number 7 is consequently associated with the creative periods, the dispensations of time, the days of the week, and the arch angels. It is a symbol of heavenly completeness.

There is much debate as to when the seventh hour was. The Jews reckoned time from the rising of the sun. The seventh hour of the day according to Jewish time would be equivalent to our 1:00PM, just after noon. The Romans reckoned time the same way we do today. Therefore the seventh hour would have been 7:00PM. Edersheim wrote, "The exact time indicated by the servants as the commencement of the improvement is, 'Yesterday, at the seventh hour.' Now, however the Jewish servants may originally have expressed to themselves, it seems impossible to assume, that St. John intended any other than the Roman notation of the civil day, or that he meant any other hour than 7 P.M. The opposite view, that it marks Jewish notation of time, or 1 P.M., is beset by almost insurmountable difficulties. For it must be borne in mind, that, as the distance between Capernaum and Cana is about twenty-five miles, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the courtier, leaving his home that morning, not only to have reached Cana, but to have had the interview with Jesus by 1 P.M. The difficulty is only increased, when we are asked to believe, that after such a journey the courtier had immediately set out on his return. But this is absolutely necessary for the theory, since a Jew would not have set out on such a journey after dusk." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 428). The problem with the time of day is trying to reconcile the nobleman's journey, his meeting with Jesus, and then returning home the next day. Many scholars have written that it would have been impossible for the nobleman to make his journey to Cana by 1:00PM and therefore they look for other options. Here is the way I see it;

The average pace for a walking traveler in the ancient world was about 3 miles per hour. This pace includes rest stops, and meal stops. The sunrise in Galilee on December 22 was at 6:37AM. If the nobleman left at sunrise, and ancient travelers refrained from traveling in the dark, he would have needed to travel approximately 19 miles to reach the traditional site of Cana. Of course, there is some debate as to the original site of Cana, a more probable site is as much as 23 miles away. If he was underway at sunrise, and he kept a typical pace, the nobleman would travel, by foot, 19.8 miles, by the time he is said to have spoken with Jesus in Cana (1:00PM). Given the fact that his son was dying, it is not unreasonable to assume that the nobleman might have even picked up the pace. He would not have had to travel at a unreasonable pace to travel the required distance for the more distant site of Cana. People have been known to hike in rough conditions for extended periods at up to 4 miles per hour. A pace of 3.6 miles per hour would be all that was required to travel 23 miles by 1:00PM. Whatever the case may be, the nobleman could have surely traveled from Capernaum to Cana in the time provided.

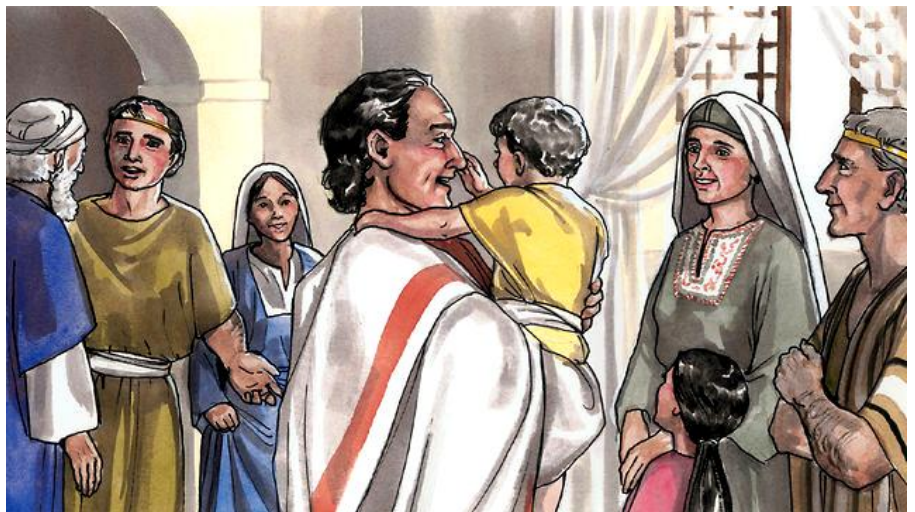


Sunset in Galilee on December 22 was 4:36AM. Had the nobleman left Cana the same day that he arrived, he could have only hoped to have travel for 3 hours before it became dark. Again, traveling in the dark was not a common practice. Additionally, he would have already traveled a day's journey and would have been fatigued. It is likely that he spent the night and left the following morning. Even if he left at the same time, sunrise, one might suppose that the he would take longer going home. He did not have the same urgency. Jesus had assured him that his son liveth. He might also have traveled at a slower pace due to fatigue from the previous day's journey. It is reasonable to assume that he arrived home sometimes after 1:00PM the day after he spoke with Jesus.

Most travel in ancient Palestine was done on foot. Even if camels or donkeys were employed, they were typically used for cargo, wares, and supplies. The traveler still walked. Only women and children were expected to ride on such animals. The exception to this rule might be for royalty, or extremely long journeys. Since the nobleman was associated with royalty, though Herod Antipas was just a vassal king, it is not outside of reason that the nobleman traveled by animal. The gospel record gives us no insight in this matter. Even so, it makes little difference. Traveling on an animal would not change the probability of the timeline.

Farrar seems to agree. he wrote, "The interview had taken place at the seventh hour - i.e., at one o'clock in the day. Even in the short November day it would have been still possible for the father to get to Capernaum; for if Cana be, as we believe, Kefr Kenna, it is not more than five hours' distance from Capernaum. But the father's soul had been calmed by faith in Christ's promise, and he slept that night at some intermediate spot upon the road." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 162).

- 41 - **fever** – The word "fever" is translated from the Greek word "πυρετός" or "pyretos". It means a fiery heat or a fever. See footnote #8 of this chapter. The son apparently had a life threatening illness that was accompanied by fever. It is highly probable that the son had malaria.
- 42 - **left him** – The word "left" is translated from the Greek word "ἀφιῆμι" or "aphiēmi". It means to send away, to bid to go away or depart, or let go. At the seventh hour, precisely when the Savior announced that the nobleman's son "liveth", the fever broke. It left the son. The cure had arrived by a comman issued 20 miles away. There is significance here to you and I. "The Savior, though physically distant from us, can still heal us." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 140). Distance is no barrier to Him.
- 43 - **the father** – The word "father" is translated from the Greek word "πατήρ" or "patēr". It means generator or male ancestor. We would assume that we are speaking of a literal biological father. The nobleman's biological son was the recipient of Jesus' miracle.
- 44 - **knew** – The word "knew" is translated from the Greek word "γινώσκω" or "ginōskō". It means to learn to know, to come to know, to get a knowledge, perceive or feel. The nobleman could now testify of truth. He had had a spiritual experience. He witnessed the power of Jesus, and he knew through spiritual confirmation that it was nothing less than the power of God.
- 45 - **the same hour** – The word "same" is translated from the Greek word "ἐκεῖνος" or "ekeinos". The Greek word is translated 99 times in the New Testament as that. The word "same" is an uncommon translation here. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "at the same hour" as "at that hour". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 53, page 171).
- 46 - **his whole house** – The word "house" is translated from the Greek word "οἶκία" or "oikia". The word refers to an inhabited edifice, a house or home. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "his whole house" as "all his house". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 53, page171). The house symbolizes the center of the universe. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 86). The symbol of the house is closely associated with the family, which symbolizes the



basic unit of eternity. **"He and all his house were converted."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 140).

47 - the second – The word "second" is translated from the Greek word "δεύτερος" or "deuteros". The word means second or the other of two. The number two symbolizes diversity, conflict, balance and opposition. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 114). We should be careful and not become confused by this statement. Jesus performed many miracles during his visit to Passover in 27CE, as well as during the nearly 9 month ministry in southern Judæa. The healing of the nobleman's son was not, nor could it even be reasonably considered, Jesus' second miracle. **"Not the second miracle performed by Jesus, but the second performed in Cana. He had worked miracles in Jerusalem at the Passover (John 2:23-25); indeed, it was the reports of what had taken place at the Passover which caused the nobleman to plead for help."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 159). The first in Cana, was the turning of water to wine at the marriage just prior to the start of His mortal ministry.

Some argue that chronologically, the healing of the nobleman's son, is the second miracle recorded in detail by the gospel writers. The problem I have with this is that we don't have the original record, and cannot even begin to declare what was in that record. Even so, it is true that the record, as it stands today, does show the healing of the nobleman's son as the second miracle of Jesus described in some detail.

Regardless of its chronological order, the healing of the nobleman's son was a significant act in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Savior Himself was declaring His nature, His mercy, and His love. Elder McConkie wrote, **"This is the first healing miracle that is set forth in detail in the Gospels. Those performed at the Feast of the Passover and throughout all Judea are not described or explained. This miracle - the second performed in Cana - adds a new dimension to Jesus' healing ministry that we have not seen up to this point. It is in fact a dual miracle: one that healed the body of the absent son, and one that cured unbelief and planted faith in the heart of the present father."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 7).

48 - miracle – The word "miracle" is translated from the Greek word "σημεῖον" or "sêmeion". It is the same word used to translate the word sign. It means a sign, mark or token. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "miracle" as "sign". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, John, Chapter 4, Verse 54, page 171). Miracles are acts for which we have no knowledge to explain. Surely, they are not miraculous to God. He understands the eternal laws that govern all things. He operates in a state of perfection, and is capable of controlling things beyond our understanding. To us, these acts are miraculous. They testify to us His divine nature and power. Miracles are beyond our comprehension, but allow us to see beyond ourselves. In the miracles, we catch a glimpse of the celestial. In the miracles, we should see our potential. And if that is our desire, then we humble ourselves and follow. This is what the nobleman and his family did.

