

LESSON 12

THE HEALING OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON

After spending two days with the Samaritans, He left for Galilee. This area is the place Jesus spent a lot of time preaching. When He arrived, verse 45 of John 4 says that the Galileans received Him. They were excited that Jesus had returned, and they would have the benefit of His preaching. You might say Jesus held a gospel meeting. John says that they had been in Jerusalem for the feast, and they had observed all the wondering things He did while He was there.

It is important to understand that the Galileans were religious people and more open to teaching than the Jews in Judea. They were also said to have caused the worst revolts against the Roman government. In looking back at the way the Galileans reacted, they based their belief in Jesus more on His miracles than on His teaching. The Samaritans were convinced because of Jesus' teaching.

Jesus made a stop in Cana, the place where He performed His first miracle. He met a man whom John calls a nobleman. He would have been a royal officer from the house of Herod Antipas. Whether He met this man along the road or actually in Cana, we do not know. The man was from Capernaum, about 25 miles from Cana. It was the man's son that brought him searching for Jesus. His son was ill, and he believed Jesus had the power to heal him. He was surely convinced of Jesus' ability based on the stories he had heard about the miracle of turning the water to wine that Jesus had performed. The boy, John says, was at the point of death, and this man begged Jesus to go home with him before his son died. His urgency is real, just as ours would be should our child be at the point of death.

Jesus tested the nobleman by saying, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe". This is where the man begs Jesus to accompany him to his house. Jesus simply says to him, "Go; your son will live". John says the man believed Jesus and left to make the journey home. On the way, servants of the nobleman met him and told him that his son was well. When he asked the servants when the boy got better, they told him the seventh hour, which would have been 1:00 P.M. He realized that was the exact time Jesus told him his son would live. Scripture says that the man believed, and all his household believed.

John says this was the second miracles Jesus did when he came from Judea to Galilee.

Some things we need to think about in this brief lesson. Jesus' word was enough to heal this boy. The Lord's word should be enough for us. It is important for us to acknowledge that God always keeps His promises. Anything Jesus promised, He did. God has never gone back on a promise He made to anyone.

This nobleman no longer has to rely on the reports of Jesus' teachings or stories about the things He is able to do. He knows firsthand. We should be aware of those things that are answers to our prayers and be thankful for the way God deals with us.

When we pray, how strong is our faith that our request will be given to us? About ten years ago, a young woman in my Bible class told the class that she had been told she would never have a child. Her health issues were impossible to overcome, and she should resign herself to the fact that she would never be able to conceive. She was, of course, devastated. She asked us to pray for her that something would happen to allow her to have a child. In class that night, I asked God to bless her with a baby. We all wept with her as she struggled to accept the news. A few days later, this young wife received a phone call from her aunt. It seems her aunt's daughter had become pregnant out of wedlock. She was planning to give the baby up for adoption, and the aunt wanted to know if she would be willing to the child. She was thrilled, as were we. She did adopt the little girl, and she has dedicated herself to raising her in the Lord.

Did God answer our prayers? Absolutely. He found a way to give her the child she so desperately wanted. When you think of what could have happened—the mother could have had an abortion. She could have lost the baby. But God answered our prayers, and we are so thankful He did.

We learn something else from this story. This man's faith developed. He had heard about Jesus which led him to go for help for his son. He was brave enough to ask the Lord for help, then he trusted Jesus when He said his son would be ok. His faith then led him to return home, relay his story, and convince his household to believe in Jesus.

This story proves to us that we have to convince those we teach to be open minded. We must have patience to bring them along on the road to faith in Jesus Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION: WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THE LESSON?

1. Compare the Samaritans with various groups of people today. Are there people who are outcasts, considered not worthy to hear the gospel?
2. What risk did the nobleman take to go to a man whom both the Jews and the Romans distrusted?
3. Do we become discouraged when we pray to God for something, and we don't receive exactly what we ask for?
4. What should be our motivation when we ask God for something?
5. How can we help our faith to grow, even those of us who have been Christians for many years?