

John Chapter 4, Second Continued

John 4:39 "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did."

This is a continuation of the Samaritan woman who went back into the city of Sychar and told the men about Jesus. It appears that the thing that convinced them was that He told her all about her past.

At first they believed because of the woman's testimony. But to people of this culture this was not adequate. They would have to hear for themselves. Jesus' acceptance of the woman in her new role shows that He did not share this condescending attitude toward women.

Notice how much more eager to believe were these Samaritans than the scribes and Pharisees.

John 4:40 "So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days."

These people knew they were in need of Jesus' teachings. They were not like the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees which wanted to be rid of Jesus. These people of Sychar wanted to hear more. This little bit that the woman had told them had really stirred them up, and they wanted to hear more.

The Lord loves the humble in heart. The self-satisfied group of the temple could not receive anything from Jesus. These people of Samaria were eager to hear.

John 4:41 "And many more believed because of his own word;"

These people came at first because of the testimony of the woman, but now they believed because of the words Jesus had spoken.

John 4:42 "And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

This phase occurs also (in 1 John 4:14). The verse constitutes the climax to the story of the woman of Samaria. The Samaritans themselves became another in a series of witnesses on John's gospel that demonstrated the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. The episode represents the first instance of cross cultural evangelism.

These people that the Jews looked down on and were thought to be ignorant of the Word of God accepted the Truth when they came face to face with it. Jesus had said of the self-righteous temple leaders that they had ears and did not hear.

They were so opinionated that they would not listen. But these Samaritans had ears, and they did hear and receive Jesus as Christ as Savior and Lord. The woman planted the seed here, and Jesus harvested this crop of souls. They had a two day revival and many were saved.

From (verse 43), to the end of this chapter, the episode of Jesus' healing of the nobleman (Royal Official)'s son, constitutes the second major "sign" of 8 which John used to reinforce Jesus' true identity for producing belief in his readers (verse 54).

In this episode, Jesus chided the official's unbelief in needing a miraculous sign in order to trust in Christ (verse 48). While some believe that his story is the same as the healing of the centurion's son. Sufficient differences exist to demonstrate that it is different from the synoptic account.; i.e.

1. No evidence exists that the official's son was a Gentile,
2. The official's son, not his servant, was healed, and
3. Jesus was far more negative regarding the official's faith (verse 48), than the centurion's.

One may divide this section into 3 parts.

- (1) Jesus contemplating unbelief (verses 43-45),
- (2) Jesus confronting unbelief (verses 46-49), and,
- (3) Jesus conquering unbelief (verses 50-54).

John 4:43 "Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee."

This is where He was headed when He came through Samaria, resuming the trip that began (in verse 3).

John 4:44 "For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

Jesus didn't go back to Nazareth. He would not have been recognized as a prophet in Nazareth, because these people saw Him grow up, supposing Him to be Joseph's and Mary's son. Since they had been around in His youth, they did not believe He was Messiah. Even His family (brothers), did not believe.

Jesus says here a prophet hath no honor in his own country. This is true even today. If you are called to the ministry, usually the last ones to accept the call is real are your family and close friends. The reason is they know the old you.

This proverb (also in Matthew 13:57 and Mark 6:4), contrasts the believing response of the Samaritans (verse 39), with the characteristic unbelief of Jesus' own people in Galilee (and Judea), whose reticent faith depended so much on Jesus' performance of miracles (verse 48).

While in Samaria, Jesus had enjoyed His first unqualified and unopposed success. His own people's hearts were not open to Him, but exhibited reluctance and hardness.

John 4:45 "Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast."

The miracles that had been done at Jerusalem at the feast caused them to believe. In Jerusalem, Jesus had been proclaimed by many as a prophet. These people had been there for the feast and were eyewitnesses to His miracles, as well as hearing some of the messages He brought to the people.

The apostle may have meant these words as irony especially in light of the surrounding context of (verses 44-48). The reception was likely that of curiosity seekers whose appetite centered more on seeing miracles than believing in Jesus as Messiah, as it had been at "the feast".

Galilee covers a pretty large area and probably does not mean that He went back to Nazareth, because of what we read (in verse 44), about not being accepted by those who know you.

This is certainly true of many ministers today. You can go away and be well accepted and not be accepted at all in your own area until you have been recognized elsewhere first. Certainly, this is the case here.

John 4:46 "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."

The deep irony of the statement (in verse 45), increases with the fact that Jesus had only recently performed a miracle in Cana at the wedding. Instead of responding in belief, the people wanted more.

Remember, Jesus had not allowed them to tell at Cana of the miracle. It is certain that there was no way to keep some from knowing of it. This "Royal Official" or nobleman could have even been a guest at this large wedding.

"Royal Official" is a term most likely designated someone officially attached to the service of King Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D.

We do know that for some reason he knew that Jesus was a healer. The news had travelled, and this nobleman feels that distance doesn't matter with the Lord and that He will heal his son.

Capernaum was approximately 16 miles Northeast of Cana.

John 4:47 "When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea 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."

A father will go to any amount of trouble to get help for his dying son. Possibly he had been searching for Jesus and caught up with Him here in Cana. At first he requests Jesus to go with him to Capernaum and heal his boy.

The language here indicates that he repeatedly begged Jesus to heal his son. His approach to Jesus was out of desperation, but he had little appreciation of who Jesus was.

Apparently, the nobleman's motivation centered in Jesus' reputation as a miracle worker rather than as Messiah.

John 4:48 "Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

This scolding remark is not just for this father, but for all those listening even to now. Those who followed Jesus followed to see a miracle or to be fed.

The "ye" is plural. Jesus addresses these words to the Galileans as a whole and not just to the royal official. The response of the Galileans was fundamentally flawed because it disregarded the person of Christ and centered in the need for a constant display of miraculous signs.

In 1 Corinthians 1:22 we read "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:"

Over and over they said "What sign will you give us?" Belief based on signs and wonders is really pretty shallow. Such an attitude represents the deepest state of unbelief.

Jesus will say later "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

John 4:49 "The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die."

This is almost a pleading for his son's life. He believes if Jesus comes to his house and lays hands on his son, he will live. It is almost as if the dad is saying "I will do anything, just come."

John 4:50 "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."

Jesus has power over life and death. This man believed these strong words that Jesus spoke. He did not doubt the healing of his son. He went away, fully believing that his son was well.

Just as the lepers were healed (in Luke: 17:11-19), this father stepped out in faith, as he left Jesus and headed for home, believing that his son was healed.

Jesus met the demands of Galilean unbelief by healing the official's son, revealing not only His sympathy, but His marvelous graciousness in spite of such a faithless demand for miracles.

John 4:51 "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth."

The servant comes to find this troubled father and tell him that his son is well. The father was headed home with confidence, not worried as he had been before he left there. He believed that his son was healed.

John 4:52 “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.”

About 7:00 p.m. reckoning from noon, using the Roman system.

THIS IS JEWISH/Hebrew TIME IN THE BIBLE - The Jewish Day starts at about Evening of one day (6pm), to the evening of the next day.

Third hour--6am-9am

Sixth hour--9am-12pm

Ninth hour--12pm-3pm

Twelfth hour--3pm-6pm

First Watch--6pm-9pm

Second Watch--9pm-12am

Third Watch--12am-3am

Fourth Watch--3am-6am

The Roman times of day, are just as English Time, the Third Hour would be literally the Third Hour, from 12am (3am). In Roman time, the day starts at 12am. By the time of the wars against Pyrrhus some slight progress had been made by dividing the two halves of the day into two parts: into the early morning and forenoon on one hand; and afternoon and evening on the other.

John 4:53 “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.”

The time when the official's son improved corresponded precisely with the time that he had spoken with Jesus. This served to strengthen the official's faith and, as a result, the “whole household” believed.

This belief here goes much further than believing that the son was healed by Jesus. This nobleman's whole family now believes that Jesus is Messiah (the Christ). There was no question what healed the boy.

This miracle has not only saved the son's life, but the whole family for all of eternity.

John 4:54 “This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.”

Obviously, this is speaking of this miracle of the son and also the miracle of turning the water to wine. Both had been done just after entering Cana.

John 4 Second Continued Questions

1. In verse 39, why did many of the Samaritans believe?
2. How long did Jesus stay with the Samaritans?
3. How were they different from the rulers of the temple?
4. In verse 41, we read many more believed because of what?
5. After they heard Jesus, they proclaimed Him to be whom?
6. When Jesus left Samaria, where did He go?
7. Where does a prophet have no honor?
8. Why did the Galileans receive Him?
9. What city in Galilee did He come to?
10. What miracle had He done here before?
11. Who came and found Jesus there?
12. What was his need?
13. Where was his son?
14. What did the father try to get Jesus to do?
15. Jesus said "Except ye see _____ and _____, ye will not believe."
16. Who requires a sign?
17. How does Jesus heal the son?
18. What is the father's part in the healing?
19. Who met the father to tell him his son liveth?
20. What did the nobleman ask the servant?
21. What result did this healing bring?

22. What is meant by verse 54?