

28.21 Healing the Nobleman's Son (Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 4:14, 15; John 4:43–54)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- If another script is desired, much of CEF’s Life of Christ, Vol. 2, pp. 16, 17 is suitable. It also has flannelgraph.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *repent*: to be sorry for sin and to turn from sin
- *nobleman*: one *who* was of the royal family, connected by birth with Herod Antipas; or one of the officers of the court, whether by birth allied to him or not (Barnes in Online Bible)
- *Capernaum*: a town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee; about a day’s journey (20+ miles) from Cana of Galilee
- *synagogues*: Jewish gathering places for worship. “In [Jesus’] time they were multiplied, not only in Judea, but wherever there were Jews. There were no less than 480 in Jerusalem alone, before it was taken by the Romans” (Barnes in Online Bible).
- *Jewish reckoning of time*: The beginning of the day was at sunset (about 6:00 p.m.), not midnight. However, they counted daylight hours from sunrise (about 6:00 a.m.); therefore, the seventh hour would be 1:00 p.m. (6:00 a.m. plus 7 hours = 1:00 p.m.).

Scripture Passage: (ESV)

Matthew 4:12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— 16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1:14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

John 4:43 After the two days he departed for Galilee. 44 (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) 45 So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 So Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” 49 The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” 50 Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. 51 As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. 52

So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” 53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” And he himself believed, and all his household. 54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

Introduction/Review:

Jesus had gone to Jerusalem for the Passover. While He had been there, many people had seen the miraculous signs He was doing. Except for the signs at Jerusalem, Jesus had done His signs pretty much in private up to this time. The Bible records two conversations He had had. Name the two people with whom He had visited. [Nicodemus, the woman at the well.] In spite of the private nature of most of these signs and conversations, word about Jesus had spread everywhere throughout Israel.

At this time John the Baptist’s ministry was basically cut off, for Herod put him in prison. Why? [Because he rebuked Herod for marrying his brother’s wife.]

Story:

Beginning of public ministry

Mark 1:14 and Matthew 14:17 state that after John the Baptizer was imprisoned, Jesus began to say, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” It sounds as if Jesus is taking up the same subject for preaching that John had proclaimed. They both said, “The kingdom of God is at hand.” This means that Jesus Himself was the King, yes, ✓even the kingdom itself. He was present; it was time to prepare for Him. Jesus was telling people to repent—to turn from their sin to Him.

Thus, a shift was taking place in Jesus’ ministry, ✓changing from private to public as well as this increased challenge to repent. Luke 4:14 and 15 summarize nicely: “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit [from Jerusalem through Samaria] to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.” See how He began teaching in public places—in synagogues? Lots of people had heard about Him before; now even more were learning about this amazing Man.

Nobleman meets Jesus

After His two days in Samaria, Jesus again headed to Galilee. [Locate on map.] He came to the town named Cana. What had Jesus done at Cana before? [Turned the water to wine.] There an important man—a nobleman—met Jesus. He had come all the way from Capernaum. [Locate on map.] What caused him to come so far? What did he want?

“Please come with me to Capernaum, Jesus.* My son is desperately ill, about to die. You can heal him. Please come,” begged the man.

✓Perhaps, testing the nobleman’s motives, Jesus answered, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”

The man seemed to ignore this mild rebuke, for he repeated [Teacher, state with anguish], “Sir, come down before my child dies.”

Jesus responded, “Go; your son will live.”

Nobleman returns

This man believed without a visible “sign and wonder,” for he turned around and started for home, a 20-mile walk that would take about a day. I wonder what he thought as he walked, ✓maybe ran sometimes, or rode in his chariot toward Capernaum.

As he got nearer home, ✓he saw in the distance some men. As they got closer, he recognized them—his own servants. Why were they meeting him? What would they tell him?

“O master!” I imagine they shouted as they ran to meet the nobleman. “Your son is recovering! He is getting better! It looks as if he will soon be well!”

“Great news! When did my son start to get better?” he asked.

“Yesterday at about the seventh hour (1:00 p.m.) the fever left him,” the servants answered.

“That’s exactly the time Jesus told me my son would live!” exclaimed the man. “Oh, I believe Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

“We believe too,” answered the servants.

When the nobleman joyously reunited with his son and family, they all believed in Jesus. Praise the Lord.

Jesus’ move

Jesus had come to Galilee, getting out of the area where Herod lived, when He had heard that John had been arrested. Rather than stay in His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus moved to Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. This move was another fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture, which stated in Isaiah 9:1 and 2, “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” Jesus was that great light, bringing truth to the world.

*“This nobleman would have Christ *come down and heal his son*; Christ will heal his son, and not *come down*. And thus the cure is the sooner wrought, the nobleman’s mistake rectified, and his faith confirmed; so that the thing was better done in Christ’s way. When he denies what we ask, he gives what is much more to our advantage; we ask for ease, he gives patience. Observe, His power was exerted by his word. In saying, *Thy son lives*, he showed that he has *life in himself*, and power to *quicken whom he will*” (M. Henry in Online Bible).

Lessons from this lesson:

- Jesus is God: He healed a boy twenty miles away.
- “Sickness or any deep affliction is often the means of great good. Here the sickness of the son resulted in the faith of all the family. God often takes away earthly blessings that he may impart rich spiritual mercies” (Barnes in Online Bible).
- God answers prayer but not always in the way we expect. Instead, it is usually in a better way. The son was healed sooner than if Jesus would have gone to Capernaum (Matthew Henry).

Activities:

- Play dough: bed, use a cookie cutter for a boy
- Sing this song by Marilyn Alexander to the tune “London Bridge.” Students may play the “London Bridge” game while singing these words.
 1. Little boy was very sick, very sick, very sick;
Little boy was very sick; None could help him.
 2. Off to Jesus Daddy went, Daddy went, Daddy went.
Off to Jesus Daddy went; Christ can help him.
 3. Jesus Christ said, “Go back home,” “Go back home,” “Go back home.”
Jesus Christ said, “Go back home; I have healed him.”
[Repeat melody of the last line with the following words:] “He’s all better.” “Hallelujah!”
- Sing “A Little Boy Was Sick/The Nobleman’s Son” found at the end of this lesson.

- Students review the story with a method other than the method used while telling the story; *e.g.*, students use flannelgraph figures if you used pictures.
- Action rhyme: (Copied)
A little boy was sick; (hands holding head)
He could not run and play. (fingers run)
Then Jesus told the daddy,
“Your boy is well today.” (hands down at side, palms up)
- Play act what the boy could do before and after he was made well.
- Put a Bandaid® on each student as a reminder what the story was. Perhaps this will help them answer when parents ask, “What did you learn today?”
- Compare pictures of boy—some have him getting well in bed, others, running as if totally well. Which was it? Discuss. (John 4:52 states, “. . . when he began to get better,” but he could have been well by the time his father reached him.)
- Print and prepare take-home booklets for this story. The online source for ordering or downloading for \$12.99 is <https://www.carsondellosa.com/products/0499--New-Testament-Take-Home-Bible-Stories-Resource-Book-0499#/?book%20media%20type=f389e45b92884d48844baaf09d49e3c5>. The book is less expensive at other sites, but those sites do not offer the ebook.
- Refer to the map below to show Naphtali and Zebulon in the land of Galilee.
- Review questions: (Game: For each student print a game board found at the end of this lesson. Give each student a marker—a button or a dried bean—that [s]he places on the stepping stone closest to Cana. Ask each student a question. If the answer is correct, every student moves his/her marker one stepping stone closer to Capernaum.)
 1. How did Jesus’ ministry change after the death of John the Baptizer? [He was more public; He took up John’s message of “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”]
 2. In what city and what area was Jesus when the nobleman came to Him? [Cana of Galilee.]
 3. From where had the nobleman come? [Capernaum.]
 4. What did the nobleman want from Jesus? [To come to heal his son.]
 5. (Trick question.) How far did Jesus go with the nobleman before He turned back? [He didn’t go with the nobleman at all.]
 6. What did the nobleman’s servants tell him before he reached home? [That his son was better.]
 7. When had the son started to get better? [At the time, the seventh hour, when Jesus had said he was healed.]
 8. What happened to the nobleman, his servants, and his family as a result of this healing? [They all believed.]
 9. Although Jesus had done miracles in other places, this healing was only the second in what area of Israel? [Galilee.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Mark 1:14—Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”
- John 1:1–14:
 - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 He was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
 - 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.
- 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
- 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
- 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
- 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Handwork:

- Color a picture of the sick boy. Glue fabric to the clothes of the sick boy.
- Do the find-the-shapes activity found at the end of this lesson.

nobleman

Capernaum

synagogues

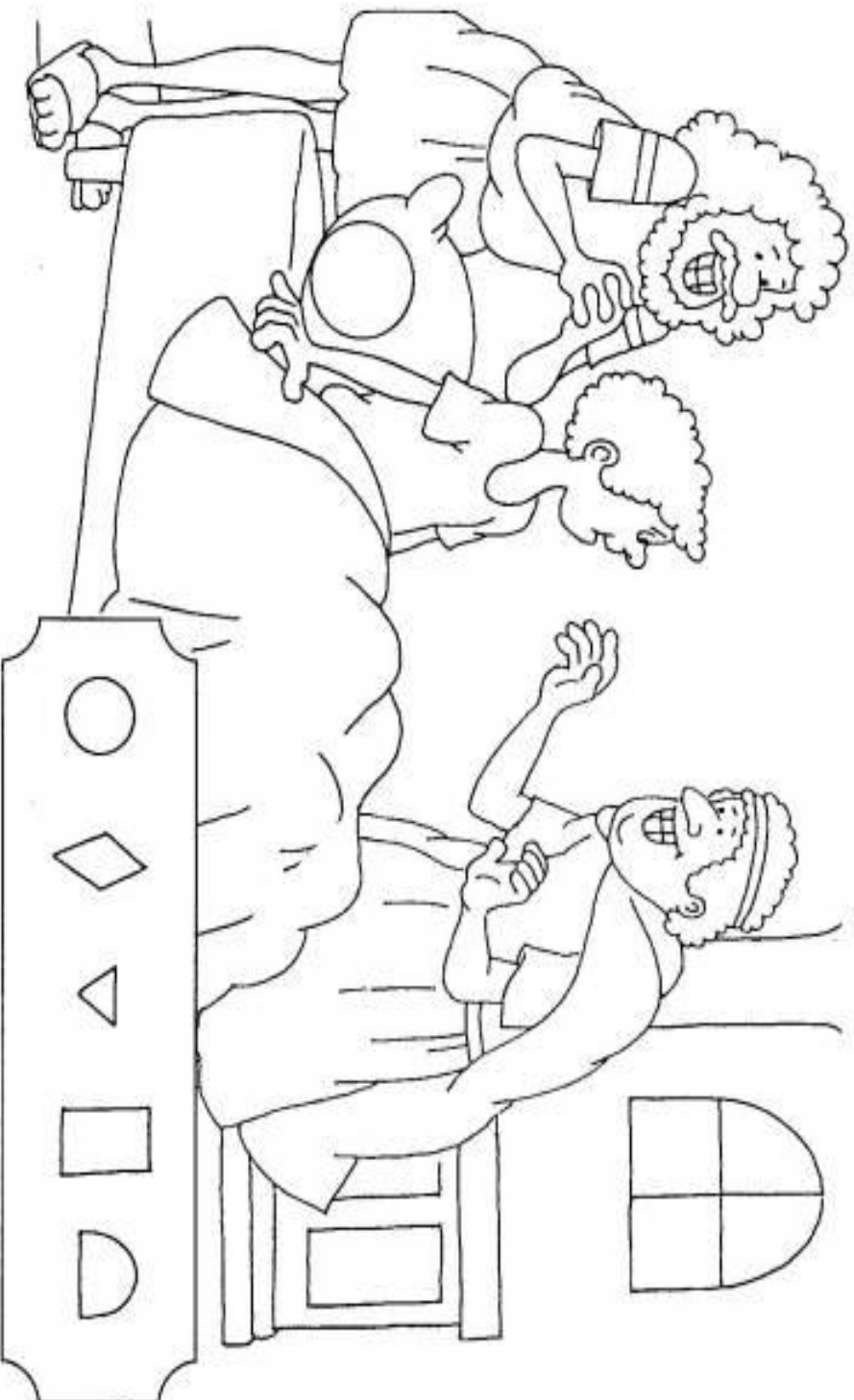
reckoning time



JESUS HEALS THE OFFICIAL'S SON

John 4:43-54

The shapes in the box are hidden in the picture. Can you find them?



One time a royal official came to ask for Jesus' help. The man's son was very sick and he believed that Jesus could make the boy well. The man wanted Jesus to come to his house. But Jesus said, "You can go home. Your son is well." The man believed Jesus and went home to find that his son was fine!



The Nobleman's Son

(John 4:46-53)

Marilyn Alexander

1. A lit - tle boy was sick in Cap - er - na - um. His
2. "Go home; your boy will live!" That's what Je - sus said. The

3

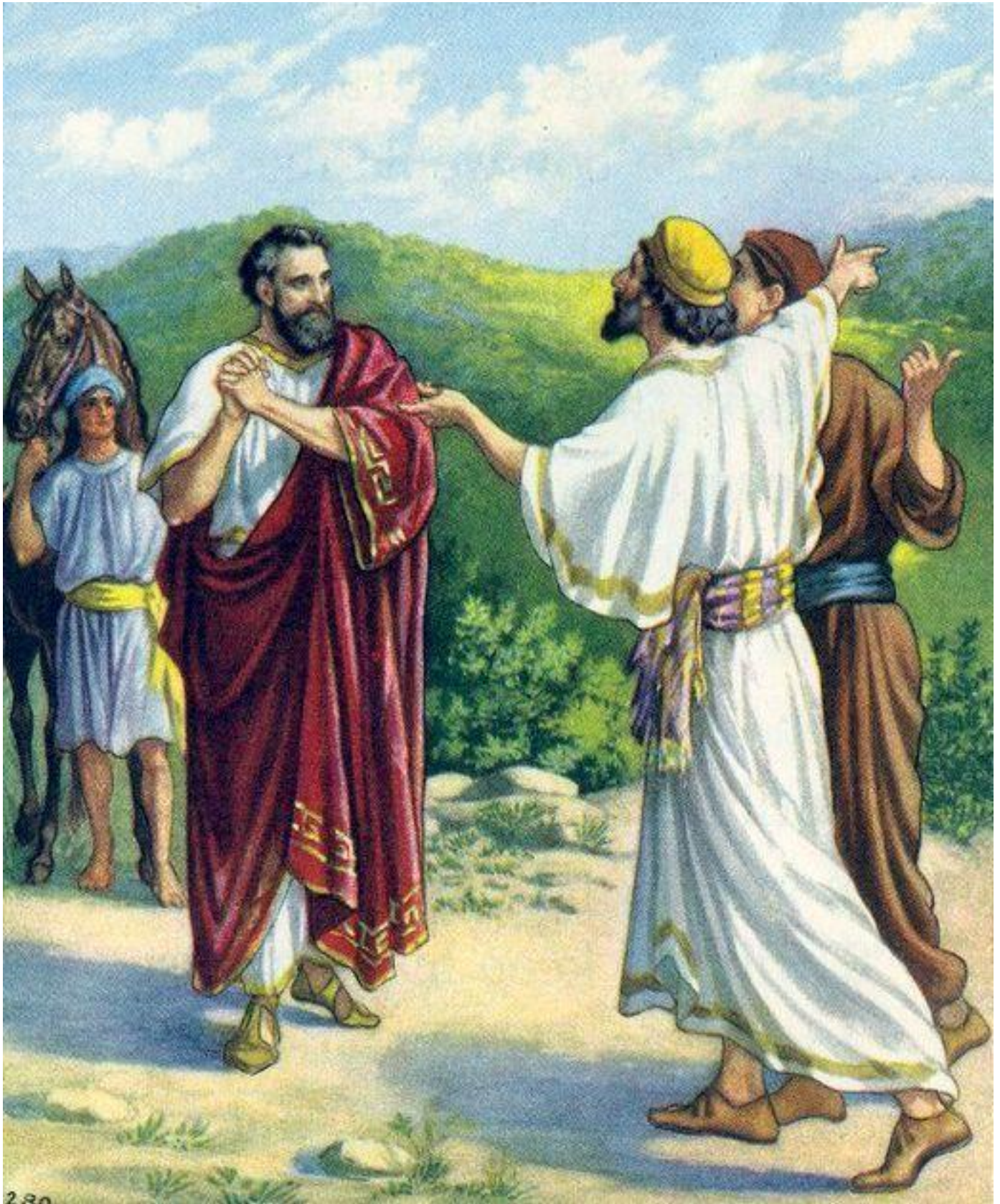
fath - er went to Christ in Ca - na of Gal - i - lee, say - ing,
man went on his way. Some ser - vants met him there, say - ing,

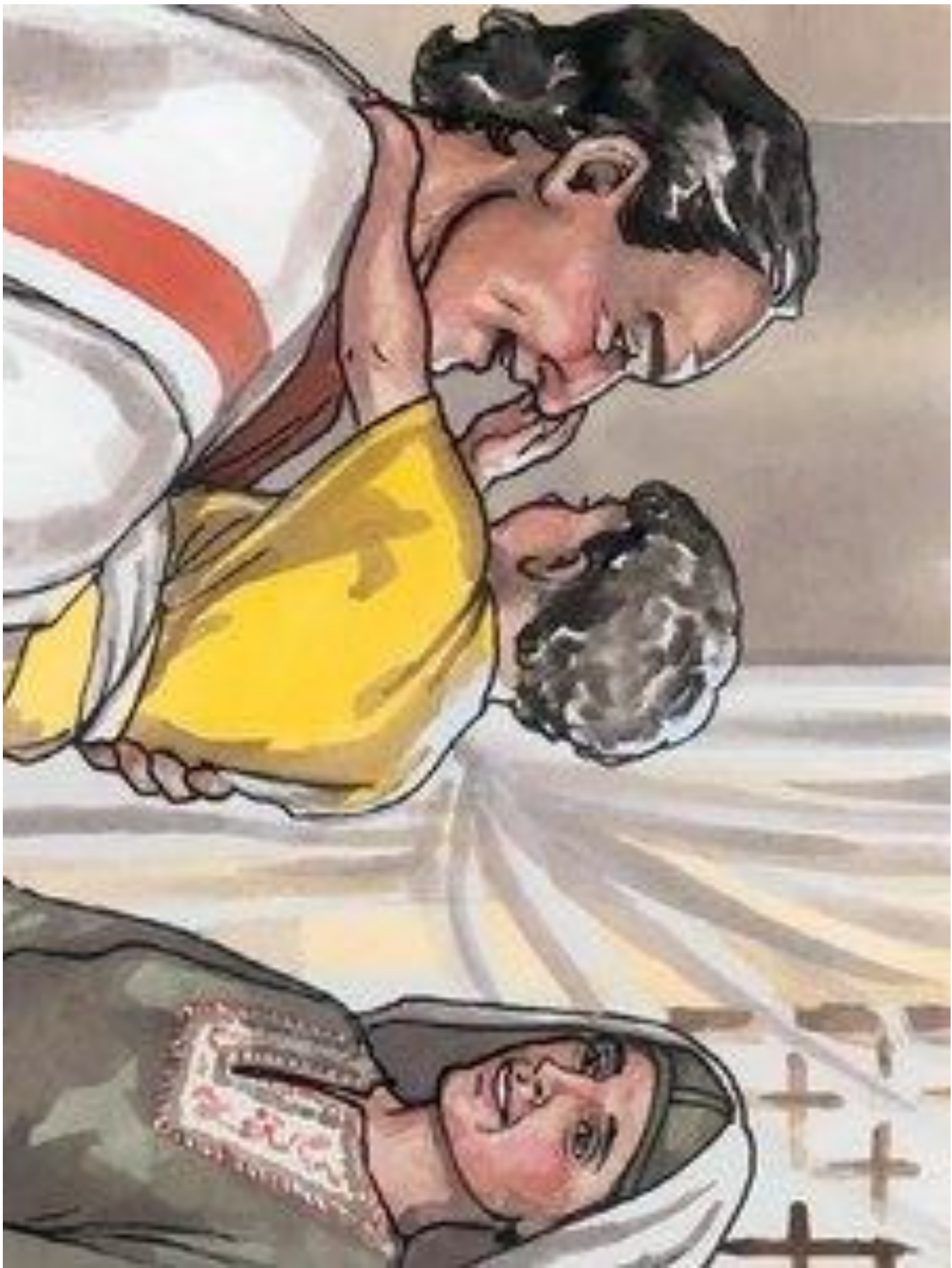
5

"Please, please come with me and heal my lit - tle boy,
"Sir, your boy is well; he got bet - ter yes - ter - day":

7

Or he will die."
Just when Je - - - sus said.





Going from Cana to Capernaum

