

March 19 Su Reading 78 — John 4:46-54 — Healing an Official's Son

<sup>46</sup> *Then He came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum.* <sup>47</sup> *When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and was asking [Him] to come down and heal his son; for he was about to die.* <sup>48</sup> *So Jesus said to him, "Unless you [people] see <sup>[fn]</sup>signs and wonders, you will never believe."* <sup>49</sup> *The royal official said to Him, "<sup>[fn]</sup>Sir, come down before my child dies."* <sup>50</sup> *Jesus said to him, "Go; your son lives."* *The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way.* <sup>51</sup> *And while he was still going down, his slaves met him, saying that his <sup>[fn]</sup>son was alive.* <sup>52</sup> *So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, "Yesterday at the <sup>[fn]</sup>seventh hour the fever left him."* <sup>53</sup> *So the father knew that [it was] at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives"; and he himself believed and his whole household.* <sup>54</sup> *This is again a second <sup>[fn]</sup>sign that Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.*

#### LSB Footnotes

(4:48) Or *attesting miracles*

(4:49) Or *Lord*

(4:51) Or *boy*

(4:52) Perhaps 7 p.m. Roman time or 1 p.m. Jewish time

(4:54) Or *attesting miracle*

**Healing at a Distance** — The news of miraculous things Jesus had done in Jerusalem at the Feast was spread not only among the Jews in Galilee, but also to Gentiles. The “*royal official*” (v. 46) was a Gentile in a high governmental position who lived in Capernaum on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee, over 16 miles (27 km) from Cana. Twice, the official asked Jesus to “*come*” (vv. 47, 49) to Capernaum, but He didn’t need to go there. He had the power to heal at a distance, so He simply told the royal official, “*Go...*” (v. 50). The miracle was instantaneously done, and the boy was healed (“...*your son lives*”—v. 50). Jesus made a statement to the official that He repeated many times in future situations, that “*Unless you [people] see signs and wonders, you will never believe*” (v. 48, both “*you*” pronouns are plural). Most people had a show-me-first attitude. This Gentile official, however, “*believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way*” (v. 50). He believed before he saw the evidence. His faith was strengthened even more, however, after he heard the report from his servants that his son was restored: “*he himself believed and his whole household*” (v. 53). His faith spread to his family after he arrived at home. He had believed that Jesus could heal his son, which is why he went to Him. What he discovered, however, was that Jesus was even more powerful than he thought—healing at a distance!

I could not find  
music for this hymn  
by Charles Wesley,  
but it is a wonderful  
poem that  
summarizes this  
story.

Jesus, great healer of mankind,  
Who dost our sorrows bear,  
Let an afflicted parent find  
An answer to his prayer.

I look for help in Thee alone,  
To Thee for succor fly;  
My son is sick, my darling son,  
And at the point to die.

By deep distress a suppliant made,  
By agony of grief,  
Most justly might Thy love upbraid  
My lingering unbelief.

But Thou art ready still to run,  
And grant our heart's desire:  
Lord, in Thy healing power come down,  
Before my child expire.

O save the father in son,  
Restore him, Lord, to me;  
My heart the miracle shall own,  
And give him back to Thee.

I will, I will obey Thy word,  
To Thee my all resign,  
I, and my house will serve the Lord,  
And live forever Thine.

— Charles Wesley (b. 1707)

March 20 M Reading 79 — Luke 4:16-30 — Jesus' Reception at Nazareth

<sup>16</sup> *And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read.* <sup>17</sup> *And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the scroll and found the place where it was written,*

<sup>18</sup> *"THE SPIRIT OF THE <sup>[fn]</sup>LORD IS UPON ME,  
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.  
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES,  
AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,  
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,*

<sup>19</sup> *TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE <sup>[fn]</sup>LORD."*

<sup>20</sup> *And He closed the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.* <sup>21</sup> *And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your <sup>[fn]</sup>hearing."* <sup>22</sup> *And all were <sup>[fn]</sup>speaking well of Him and marveling at the <sup>[fn]</sup>gracious words which were coming forth from His lips, and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"* <sup>23</sup> *And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard took place at Capernaum, do also here in your hometown as well.'"* <sup>24</sup> *And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown.* <sup>25</sup> *But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land,* <sup>26</sup> *and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to <sup>[fn]</sup>Zarephath, [in the land] of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.* <sup>27</sup> *And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."* <sup>28</sup> *And all [the people] in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things,* <sup>29</sup> *and they stood up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the edge of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.* <sup>30</sup> *But passing through their midst, He went on His way.*

<sup>31</sup> *And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath.*

**LSB Footnotes**

(4:18) In OT, Yahweh, cf. Is 61:1

(4:19) In OT, Yahweh, cf. Is 61:2

(4:21) Lit ears

(4:22) Or *testifying*

(4:22) Or *words of grace*

(4:26) Gr *Sarepta*

**From Marveling to Murdering** — After Jesus claimed to be the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah, the people "*were speaking well of Him and marveling at the gracious words...*" (v. 22a). That sounds good, but their next comment was a question: "*Is this not Joseph's son?*" (v. 22b). That was a question of doubt; it was like asking, "How could someone we know claim to be the Messiah?" Jesus recognized their doubt, and He also knew something else about their superficial marveling: they were highly prejudiced against Gentiles. So, Jesus took two examples from Israel's prophets, Elijah and Elisha. When Israel was plagued by famine, God sent Elijah to a Gentile widow who would care for him (v. 26). Although there were many unhealed lepers in Israel, God sent a leprous Gentile general to Elisha for healing (v. 27). At this point of Jesus' comments, the people "*were filled with rage*" (v. 28) and the marvellers became murderers. Jesus knew their hearts and He exposed them. When they tried to kill Him, Jesus produced a miracle by somehow "*passing through their midst...*" (v. 30). Jesus was a proclaimer of truth, even when it hurt.

## [Hail to the Lord's Anointed - YouTube](#)

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
great David's greater Son!  
Hail in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free;  
To take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.

— James Montgomery (1821)

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March 21 Tu Reading 80 — Matthew 4:13-17 — Jesus Moves to Capernaum

<sup>13</sup> ... and leaving Nazareth, He came and lived in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled, saying,

<sup>15</sup> "THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI,  
[fn]BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE [fn]GENTILES—

<sup>16</sup> THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT,  
AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH,  
UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED."

<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to [fn]preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

### **LSB Footnotes**

(4:15) Or *Toward the sea*

(4:15) Lit *nations*, usually non-Jewish

(4:17) Or *proclaim*

**Predicted and Proclaimed** — Jesus was that "*GREAT LIGHT*" predicted through Isaiah. It is interesting that this passage was quoted in connection with Jesus' move from Nazareth, where He was raised, to Capernaum, which was the center of His subsequent ministry. Nazareth was located in the region assigned to the tribe of Zebulun, mentioned by Isaiah, and Capernaum was in Naphtali. This relocation was predicted almost 700 years earlier. Another transition is noted in this short passage when it suggests that "*from that time*" (v. 17), John the Baptist's proclamation also became the proclamation of Jesus: "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (v. 17). Those are the exact words of John the Baptist's message quoted in Matt. 3:2. Mankind is required to repent in order to see "*the kingdom of heaven*," which is the predicted "*LIGHT DAWNED*" in Isaiah. The spiritual light of Jesus is seen only if people are willing to repent.

## [Shine, Jesus, Shine - YouTube](#)

Shine, Jesus, shine!  
Fill this land with the Father's glory.  
Blaze, Spirit, blaze!  
Set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow!  
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.  
Send forth your word,  
Lord, and let there be light!

— Graham Kendrick (1987)

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<sup>1</sup> Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing at the edge of the lake of Gennesaret; <sup>2</sup> and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake, and the fishermen, having gotten out of them, were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and [began] teaching the crowds from the boat. <sup>4</sup> And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." <sup>5</sup> Simon answered and said, "Master, we labored all night and caught nothing, but at Your word, I will let down the nets." <sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish. And their nets [began to] break; <sup>7</sup> so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw [this], he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!" <sup>9</sup> For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and <sup>[fn]</sup>James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon, [were] also likewise [amazed]. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men." <sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

#### LSB Footnote

(5:10) Or *Jacob*; James is the Eng form of Jacob; so in Luke

**Divine Words and Power** — Jesus was a great teacher, as evidenced by the great crowds that followed Him. He had to get into a boat to distance Himself from the press of the people. Why was His teaching so great? It was because He was teaching them "*the word of God*" (v. 1)—divine words. Then, after He finished teaching, He demonstrated His divine power, which also involved His divine knowledge. He didn't tell Peter to go to a particular spot where He knew the fish were located; He very generally told him to go "*into the deep water*" (v. 4). He had the fish come to where Peter decided to let down the net. That is supernatural knowledge and power. Jesus was not only Master of the crowds of people, but also of the schools of fish. The result was that Peter, James, and John were filled with "*amazement*" (v. 9). They knew they were in the presence of God, which is why Peter fell on his knees in a boat full of fish to declare, "*I am a sinful man!*" (v. 8). The closer we are to God, the more we are aware of our sinfulness. The fishermen's response was to surrender to Jesus: "*they left everything and followed Him*" (v. 11).

#### [I Surrender All - YouTube](#)

All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, In His presence daily live. — Judson W. Van De Venter (1896)
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<sup>16</sup> As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." <sup>18</sup> And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. <sup>19</sup> And going on a little farther, He saw <sup>[fn]</sup>James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. <sup>20</sup> And immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away <sup>[fn]</sup>to follow Him.

## LSB Footnotes

(1:19) Or *Jacob*; James is the Eng form of Jacob; so in Mark

(1:20) Lit *after Him*

**Becoming Fishers** — Was this calling of disciples simply Mark's rendition of the same event that we read about yesterday in Luke? There are several differences. Andrew was not mentioned in Luke's account (cf. Mark 1:16). Luke wrote that Peter was *washing* nets (Luke 5:2), while Mark said they were *casting* a net (Mark 1:16). In Luke 5:10, Jesus said only to Peter, "*from now on you [singular] will be catching men,*" but in Mark 1:17, Jesus said to both Peter and Andrew, "*Follow Me, and I will make you [plural] become fishers of men.*" If these were two events, why would they leave their fishing twice to follow Jesus? We might not have enough information in these two accounts to properly decide. Three parts of Jesus' call in Mark's account interested me. The first was the initial responsibility of the disciples ("*Follow Me*"): they had to follow Jesus. That involved a deep decision for these disciples; it was an act of courage to abandon their vocation. They were leaving their source of income. The second important part was that it was Jesus' responsibility to bring them to the point of becoming "*fishers of men.*" He is the source of power and change. Disciples follow but Jesus changes. The final part is that "...*make you become...*" implies a process. Jesus lived with them, taught them, and gave them an example over a period of three years before they were thrust out into ministry after Jesus' resurrection. How is your "fishing" coming along? Are you disappointed in the results of your attempts to influence others toward Christ? Don't forget that you are still "becoming." Keep fishing!

### [I Will Make You Fishers of Men - YouTube](#)

I will make you fishers of men,  
Fishers of men, fishers of men.  
I will make you fishers of men  
If you follow Me.  
If you follow Me,  
If you follow Me.  
I will make you fishers of men  
If you follow Me.  
— Harry D. Clarke (1927)

Here is a contemporary song with the same theme:

### [Fishers Of Men \(The Newsboys\) - YouTube](#)

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March 24 F Reading 83 — Mark 1:21-28 — Demons Obey Him

<sup>21</sup> *And they went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and [began to] teach.* <sup>22</sup> *And they were astonished at His teaching; for He was teaching them as [one] having authority, and not as the scribes.* <sup>23</sup> *And immediately there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,* <sup>24</sup> *saying, "What <sup>[fn]</sup>do we have to do with You, Jesus the Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"* <sup>25</sup> *And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!"* <sup>26</sup> *And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him.* <sup>27</sup> *And they were all amazed, so that they were arguing among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."* <sup>28</sup> *And immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee.*

### LSB Footnote

(1:24) Lit *What to us and to You* (a Heb idiom)

**Astonished and Amazed** — There are two reactions of the people in the synagogue regarding what they saw during Jesus' visit. The first was astonishment: "*And they were astonished at His teaching*" (v. 22). The Greek word for "*astonished*" is used 13 times in the New Testament, and 11 of them involve reactions of people about Jesus. Here, the crowd was struck by His teaching because of the authority with which He taught. The people were used to teachers quoting earlier, prominent rabbis regarding what they had said about certain Scripture passages. Jesus only told them what He thought because He was God, the source of the Scriptures. He spoke more like a prophet than a priest. That should alert us to the importance of spending time meditating on passages we read in the Bible, asking God to teach us with His insights. The second reaction of those synagogue people was that of amazement: "*And they were all amazed ...*" (v. 27a). What amazed them in addition to His teaching? It was His control over the demons: "*He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him*" (v. 27b). Why did they obey Him? It wasn't because of His higher rank—they had already rebelled against God in disobedience. It seems that they were afraid of Jesus' power. This demon, representing the whole body of rebellious demons, asked, "*Have You come to destroy us?*" (v. 24). They knew that their rebellion against God was going to end in eternal punishment, but they didn't know when. This demon obeyed out of fear that his punishment would begin then. Astonishing teaching and amazing power—let us wonder together at Jesus' greatness!

### I Stand Amazed - YouTube

I stand amazed in the presence  
Of Jesus the Nazarene  
And wonder how He could love me,  
A sinner, condemned, unclean.  
  
How marvelous! How wonderful!  
And my song shall ever be.  
How marvelous! How wonderful!  
Is my Savior's love for me!  
  
— Charles H. Gabriel (1905)

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March 25 Sa Reading 84 — Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39 — Healing Peter's Relative

### Mark 1

<sup>29</sup> *And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.* <sup>30</sup> *Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to <sup>[fn]</sup>Jesus about her.* <sup>31</sup> *And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she <sup>[fn]</sup> [began] waiting on them.*

### LSB Footnotes

(1:30) Lit *Him*

(1:31) Or *served*

### Luke 4

<sup>38</sup> *Then He stood up and [left] the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him <sup>[fn]</sup>to help her.* <sup>39</sup> *And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she stood up and <sup>[fn]</sup>[began] waiting on them.*



### LSB Footnotes

(4:38) Lit about her

(4:39) Or served

**Gentle Authority** — Peter's mother-in-law was very sick. Mark said that she was "*sick with a fever*" (Mark 1:30) and Dr. Luke wrote that she "*was suffering from a high fever*" (Luke 4:38). The four disciples had just seen Jesus cast a demon out of the man in the synagogue, so they brought her illness to His attention. Luke said that Jesus "*rebuked the fever*" (Luke 4:39), which is apparently the only place in the NT where Jesus spoke to an illness in the process of healing. This seems to personify the sickness and, at least in this example, may connect it to Satan's involvement. Jesus' rebuke is a picture of authority. Notice, on the other hand, that Mark's account also pictures Jesus as being personal and gentle: "*He ... raised her up, taking her by the hand*" (Mark 1:31). Jesus cares about our physical needs. The next time you are sick in bed, think of Peter's mother-in-law and offer your hand to the Great Physician!

### [Gentle Savior - YouTube](#)

And when I reach the valley, every soul must journey through,  
I'll remember then how well You know the way;  
I'll put my hand in Your hand like a trusting child would do,  
And say,  
Gentle Savior, lead me on;  
Let Your Spirit light the way.  
Gentle Savior, lead me on;  
Hold me close and keep me safe.  
Lead me on, gentle Savior.

— David Phelps, et al. (2005)

**Meditation:** Twice in these three verses, and three times in yesterday's reading, Mark used a word translated "*immediately*." It seems to have been a favorite word for him because he used it 41 of the 59 times it is used in the New Testament. In a few of those places, Mark seems to mean it in the way we usually think of it, i.e., "at once" or "instantly." In most situations, however, he seems to have used it in a sense that might even be thought of as, "so then," meaning simply that one event followed a previous event. For example, in Mark 1:29, even if the house of Simon and Andrew were located near the synagogue, it would have taken several minutes for them to get there. When Luke wrote that Peter's mother-in-law stood up "*immediately*" (Luke 4:39), he used a different Greek word that seems to have an even more instantaneous meaning. Her healing was instantaneous and complete.