

# Jesus' First Miracles



## SABBATH—SEPTEMBER 28

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** John 2:1–11; John 4:46–54; John 5:1–9; John 5:10–16; John 5:16–18; John 5:19–47.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Jesus did many other powerful works [miracles] in front of His followers. They [the miracles] are not written in this book. But these [the miracles in the Book of John] are written so you may believe that Jesus is the Christ [the Savior], the Son of God. When you put your trust in Him, you will have life that lasts [continues] forever through [because of] His name” (John 20:30, 31, NLV).



John says he included stories that will help us believe that Jesus “is the Christ [the Savior], the Son of God.”

**WHY DID JOHN WRITE HIS BOOK** about Jesus? Did John want to write mostly about Jesus' miracles? Or His teachings?

The Holy Spirit helps John explain why he wrote his book. Sure, people could write much more about Jesus' life than John wrote (John 21:25). But John says he included stories that will help us believe that Jesus “is the Christ [the Savior], the Son of God. When you put your trust in Him, you will have life that lasts [continues] forever through [because of] His name” (John 20:30, 31, NLV).

This week, we will read about some of Jesus' first miracles. These miracles include the story about how Jesus turned water to wine at a wedding. We'll also read about how Jesus healed someone's very sick son and healed the man at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem.

These miracles show us that Jesus is the Savior. In all these stories, we see examples of people who show faith in Jesus. Their examples invite us to believe in Him, too.

**THE WEDDING AT CANA (John 2:1–11)**

**What special miracle did Jesus do at Cana? How did this miracle help His followers believe in Him? Read John 2:1–11 for the answers.**

In John 2, Jesus does His first miracle or sign. Jesus changed water into wine. This miracle helped Jesus' followers decide to follow Him. The miracle was a very powerful sign that showed the followers that Jesus came from God. (For sure, the followers were not ready to understand at that time that Jesus **was** God.)

The miracle helped Jesus' followers to remember Moses, too. Moses was the leader of the Israelites in the desert. God used Moses to bring Israel out from Egypt with many "signs and wonders" (Deuteronomy 6:22, KJV; compare with Deuteronomy 26:8). (We can say that Moses was the same as a "savior" to Israel.) So, the miracle helped the Jews remember the time when God ended Israel's slavery in Egypt. (Later, God promised Moses that He would send a special messenger to His people in the future. This messenger would lead the same way as Moses. God told Israel to obey this special messenger. This messenger was Jesus.)

When Moses led Israel from Egypt, God punished Egypt with Ten Troubles. God changed the waters of the Nile River into blood with Trouble #1. The Nile was important to the Egyptians. The Egyptians worshiped the Nile the same as a god. At Cana, Jesus also does a miracle with water. But Jesus turns water into wine, not blood.

The water came from six water pots. This water was used to wash things clean. The Jewish religious laws said that some things must be washed to be holy. These laws showed how God saved people from sin. So, the miracle that Jesus did at Cana helped the Jews to think about the Bible truth of being saved. When John wrote about how Jesus changed the water into wine, he did two things. (1) John helped his readers remember how God helped Israel escape Egypt. And (2) John helped his readers to understand that Jesus was their Savior.

What did the master of the feast think about the water that Jesus changed into grape juice? The master of the feast was surprised. The juice tasted wonderful. The master of the feast didn't know that Jesus did a miracle. The master thought that the people in charge of the wedding saved the best juice for the end.



**Jesus changed water into wine.**

**JESUS' SECOND MIRACLE (John 4:46–54)**

Jesus did miracles all during His work on earth. These miracles helped people believe in Him. John wrote about these miracles so that people would believe in Jesus, too.

**Read about Jesus' second miracle in John 4:46–54. Why does John connect the second miracle with the first miracle that Jesus did at the wedding feast?**



**When the man got home the next day, he found that the fever left his son at the same time that Jesus made His promise.**

John wants his readers to understand that Jesus' miracles will help them know who Jesus is. So, John connects Jesus' second miracle with His first. Then, John adds, "That was the second miracle that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee" (John 4:54, ICB).

When we first read about the miracle, we may think that Jesus' answer to the leader is mean. But the leader refused to believe in Jesus until Jesus healed his son. Jesus understood what was in this man's heart. The spiritual sickness in this man's heart was worse than the sickness that made the man's son ill. Jesus' words touched the man's heart. The man understood that his own spiritual sickness could cost his son his life.

We must understand that miracles do not prove that Jesus is the Savior. Other people did miracles in the past. Some of these people were real messengers from God. What's more, false messengers can do miracles, too. Miracles show us that something more powerful than humans is doing work. The miracles don't mean that God is the One doing them. (Satan can do "miracles," right?)

The leader asked Jesus to show him mercy and to heal his son. Jesus' answer gave the man hope. Jesus said, "Go. Your son will live" (John 4:50, ERV). The words written as "will live" show us something that will happen in the future. But in the Greek language, the words "will live" really show an action that is happening right now. So, these words "will live" tell us that Jesus is so sure about His promise that John can talk about it as if it is already happening. When the man got home the next day, he found that the fever left his son at the same time that Jesus made His promise.

This story is a powerful reason to believe in Jesus!

**Many people may do miracles today and say they are from God. But how do we know when a miracle is from God?**

## THE MIRACLE AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA (John 5:1–9)

The next miracle that John writes about happens at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–9). People believed that an angel caused the water in the pool to move. When that happened, people thought that the first sick person to enter the water would get better. Many people hoped to feel better. These people sat next to the pool, waiting to get into the water. Jesus went to Jerusalem. When he passed the pool, He saw the crowd waiting there.

Picture in your mind all these people waiting for water to heal them. For sure, some of these people were very sick.

**Read the story about the paralyzed man in John 5:1–9. Anyone next to the pool wanted to get well. So, why did Jesus ask the paralyzed man if he wanted to be healed (John 5:6)?**

The man's answer helps us understand that he wants to walk again. The problem is that he looks for healing in the wrong place. The God who made man's legs stands right in front of him.

“Jesus doesn't ask this suffering man to show faith in Him. Jesus gives him a command: “ ‘Stand up! Pick up your mat [bedroll] and walk.’ ” [John 5:8, ERV]. With faith, the man believes Jesus' words. Health comes into the man's lame legs. The man doesn't doubt Jesus' words. He chooses to obey Jesus' command. All the man's muscles start to move. The man jumps to his feet. The man understands that he can walk now. . . . Jesus didn't give this man any promise that He would help him. The man didn't stop to doubt and lose his one chance of being healed. The man believed Jesus' word and acted on it. When he did, God gave the man strength to stand.” —Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pages 202, 203, adapted.

**Later, Jesus met this man in the temple. Jesus said to the man, “ ‘See, you are well now. But stop sinning or something worse may happen to you!’ ” (John 5:14, ERV). Can sin cause sickness? If yes, explain your answer. At the same time, why must we understand that sin doesn't cause all the sickness in our life?**



**Jesus gives him a command: “ ‘Stand up! Pick up your mat [bedroll] and walk.’ ” [John 5:8, ERV].**



**HARD HEARTS (John 5:10–16)**

Miracles, signs, and wonders do not always come from God. But when miracles are from God, we make a terrible mistake if we reject them.

**Read the story about the miracle that Jesus does in John 5:10–16. What lessons can we learn from Jewish leaders and their hard hearts?**



**Jesus wanted to help the Jewish leaders to understand the Bible truths that were more important than their man-made rules.**

Jesus went to the temple. There, He found the man that He healed. After Jesus talked with him, the man told the Jewish leaders right away that Jesus healed him. We may think that this news would cause the leaders to praise God. But “the Jewish leaders made trouble for Jesus because he did this [miracle] on the Sabbath day” (John 5:16, WE). So, the leaders made plans to kill Jesus.

The Jewish leaders allowed the sick to be healed on the Sabbath only in an emergency. The man had been paralyzed for 38 years. So, his healing was not an emergency. Also, why did Jesus command the man to pick up his sleeping mat on the Sabbath? The Jewish leaders believed that God would not tell someone to break Jewish man-made religious rules. If God really sent Jesus, then why did Jesus tell this man to carry a mat home on the Sabbath? Why did Jesus do these things? Jesus wanted to help the Jewish leaders to understand the Bible truths that were more important than their man-made rules. These strict rules hid the truth about God.

**Read John 9:1–16; Mark 3:22, 23; Matthew 12:9–14. What do these other stories teach us about how hard people can become in their hearts?**

How can these spiritual leaders fail to understand that Jesus is their Savior? The answer is that they had hard hearts. They also held on to the false belief that the Savior would make them free from the Romans. They loved power, and they refused to allow God to control their lives. All these things caused them to reject the Bible truth that Jesus was the Savior.

**What was Jesus’ warning? Read John 5:38–42 for the answer. What can we learn from Jesus’ words? What could be in us that blinds us to the Bible truth that we most need to know and live?**

**JESUS SAYS GOD IS HIS FATHER (John 5:16–18)**

The miracle that Jesus did at the Pool of Bethesda gave John a wonderful chance to explain who Jesus is. John writes about the miracle in nine verses. Then John uses about 40 more verses (John 5:19–47) to write about Jesus.

**Why did the Jewish leaders attack Jesus for doing a miracle on the Sabbath? Read John 5:16–18 for the answer.**

John 5:18 may seem strange or upsetting to us. Why? Because this verse seems to say that Jesus broke the Sabbath. But if we look closely at John 5:16–18, we see that Jesus says His “work” on the Sabbath honors His relationship with His Father. God doesn’t stop working just because it is the Sabbath. He continues to keep everything alive and running in heaven and on earth. In the same way, Jesus, as God, worked on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders attacked Jesus because they said He broke the Sabbath and because He said God was His Father. If God was Jesus’ Father, then Jesus said He was the same as God.

**Read Jesus’ words to the Jewish leaders in John 5:19–47. What did Jesus say to help the leaders understand who He truly was? How did the miracle that Jesus did show this Bible truth?**

Jesus explains His actions in three parts. First, Jesus explains His close relationship with the Father (John 5:19–30). Jesus says that He and His Father act together in perfect agreement. So, Jesus has the same power that God the Father has to judge and wake up the dead (John 5:25–30).

Second, Jesus names four “witnesses” who can support the things He says about Himself: (1) John the Baptist (John 5:31–35); (2) Jesus’ own miracles (John 5:36); (3) God the Father (John 5:37, 38); and (4) the Bible (John 5:39). Each of these “witnesses” announces or shows who Jesus is.

Finally, in John 5:40–47, Jesus shows the Jewish leaders their sins. Jesus compares His work with their selfish actions. Jesus says that the law of Moses will judge the Jewish leaders (John 5:45–47). The leaders’ hope for the future comes from Moses’ promises. Sad to say, they do not understand the words that Moses wrote.



**God doesn’t stop working just because it is the Sabbath. He continues to keep everything alive and running in heaven and on earth.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:**“We must have the same faith that the paralyzed man had. Then God will heal us. Sin cuts us off from God. Our spirits are paralyzed. We can’t live a holy life any more than that paralyzed man could walk. . . . All who are sad and fighting against sin should look up. The Savior bends over the ones He bought with His blood. The Savior says to them with pity that can’t be put into words, ‘Do you want to be healed?’ Jesus commands you to stand up in health and peace. Don’t wait to feel you are made whole. Believe His word. Then God will keep His promises. Give Jesus your heart. Choose to serve Him. When you act on His word, He will give you strength. Do you have an evil habit? Are you a slave to a habit that makes you the same as a prisoner in both mind and body? Jesus can save you. He wants to make you free. Jesus will give life to the spirit that is dead because of sin. Ephesians 2:1. Jesus will make free the person who is a slave to weakness and misfortune. Jesus will break the chains of sin.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 203, adapted.

“Jesus rejected the announcement that He sinned when He said He was God. Jesus said that He was the Son of God. Jesus and God were in perfect agreement: Jesus was One with God in His heart, One with Him in decisions, and One with Him in plans.”—*The Desire of Ages*, page 208, adapted.



**Jesus will make free the person who is a slave to weakness and misfortune.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Jesus healed people because they believed His message. The Jewish leaders showed that their hearts were filled with doubt. Why are asking honest questions and feeling doubt not the same thing? Why is it important that we know how these two things are different?
- ② Why is knowing the truth not enough to save us? What does save us, and how?
- ③ Look carefully at John 5:47. Today, many people reject that the Flood happened. They don’t believe that God made the skies and the earth in six days. How are these people doing what Jesus warned against in John 5:47?

## A SCARY MOMENT IN A CAMP CABIN

The eight Alaskan girls got ready for bed on their first night at Camp Polaris. Camp Polaris is a Seventh-day Adventist summer camp in the south of Alaska. The girls felt something strange and evil in the red wooden cabin. The two camp supervisors also felt that something strange and evil was in the cabin.

One camp supervisor was named Rachel. Rachel felt that evil angels were all around them. Rachel was 21. She was tired, but she couldn't sleep. Rachel thought about the eight teenage girls in her cabin. In the past, adults hurt some of the girls. Then some of the girls hurt their own bodies. Other girls used drugs. One girl's uncle was a witch doctor.

Rachel got up and put wood on the fire in a black stove. In August, the Alaskan summer nights were chilly. Rachel started to sing about Jesus. Rachel was a shy person. So, she didn't like anyone to hear her sing. But the song came from her heart. As Rachel sang, she walked to each bunkbed and prayed with each girl. Finally, the girls fell asleep.

After that night, Rachel sang every night and prayed with the girls. During this time, Rachel asked a girl if she wanted Rachel to pray for anything special for her. The girl said, "Yes, I want to pray to feel safe and protected."

Rachel asked, "Safe from what?"

The girl said that someone grabbed her neck the night before. The girl fought hard to breathe. Then a bright light appeared. The person who grabbed her neck let go of her. In the bright light, the girl saw an angel. The angel told her, "Don't be afraid." Peace filled the girl. She fell asleep. She didn't tell anyone about what happened until she talked with Rachel.

After Rachel prayed with the girl, the girl wanted to know more about Jesus. The girl didn't talk much because she was shy and quiet. But a "seed" for God was planted in the girl's heart.

Rachel was happy when the girl came back to camp to become a camp supervisor a few years later.

Rachel Carle now teaches at an Adventist school in Sitka, Alaska. Rachel continues to volunteer at Camp Polaris.

Rachel says, "My time at Camp Polaris showed me that many people in the United States don't know Jesus. My time working at this camp helped me to decide to become a teacher in Alaska."

Thank you for your 13th Sabbath Offering in 2015 that helped repair and add more buildings to Camp Polaris. Part of this quarter's 13th Sabbath Offering will help open an important center at the Adventist church in Bethel, Alaska. The Bethel church sends local kids to Camp Polaris every year.

## INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



The angel told the girl,  
"Don't be afraid."



Rachel Carle