–Save This Page as a PDF–

The Early Response to Jesus' Miracles
John 2: 23-25

The early response to Jesus' miracles DIG: Why does Jesus not entrust Himself to the crowds? Did everyone believe in His name? None? What were they responding to? His message or His miracles? What did faith have to do with any of this?

REFLECT: When have you trusted someone only to be let down? How did that experience affect you later on? How can you protect yourself without withdrawing from society? How much do you need the approval of others? If so, why? Do you seek to please an audience of One?

Now while He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival (Yochanan 2:23a). This is the first of four Passovers mentioned in the ministry of **Jesus**. The first is mentioned here and in **John 2:13a**. The second is in **John 5:1**, the third is in **John 6:4**, while the fourth is referred to in **John 11:55, 12:1, 13:1, 18:28 and 39,** and **19:14**. By dating these, we are able to conclude that **His** public ministry lasted three-and-a-half years. The gospel tradition suggests that **Yeshua's** ministry began shortly after the Baptist's. **Luke** says that our **Lord** was **about thirty years of age** when **His** ministry began **(Luke 3:23)**. If **Jesus** was born in the winter of 7 or 6 BC, **He** would have been 33 or 34 in 29 AD (**to see link click Aq – The Birth of Jesus**). **He** performed miraculous **signs**, not to convince skeptics or sway dissenters, but to signal **Messiah's** arrival. **He** offered **signs** to prompt willing, prepared hearts to respond to the Good News.



Many people saw the signs He was performing and believed in His name (John 2:23b). They walked by sight and not by faith; they **believed in the signs**, but not **in the Lord**. They didn't **believe** in **Him**, just in **His name**. The miracles **Yeshua** performed excited **them**, but they were not ready to acknowledge **their** sin and repent. The verb **believed** is in the aorist tense. In other words, **many people** came to a point of decision, but did not cross over the line from intellectual knowledge about **Yeshua** to faith. The writer of **Hebrews** spoke of this (see the commentary on **Hebrews As – Today, If You Hear His Voice, Do Not Harden Your Hearts**). **The Holy Spirit** here says to **the Hebrews** who were on the edge of decision – but had never made a commitment, "**Do not harden your hearts**, **hear today** and do **today** what **God** wants you to do. Don't do what the children of Isra'el did even after they had seen proof of **God's** power and care for forty years. They continued to disbelieve in **Him**. Don't do that."

But, **Jesus** wasn't depending on a favorable response from anyone, from the religious leaders to the masses. **He would not entrust Himself to them, for He knew all people (John 2:24).** What an indictment of the total depravity of mankind. This does not mean that the lost are totally insensitive in matters of the conscience, or that mankind is as sinful as they can possibly be. Nor does it mean that the sinner engages in every possible form of sin. But it does mean, and is evidenced by what **God** saw, that the lost are truly slaves to sin **(Rom 6:1-23)**, and completely unable to free themselves from their sinful condition. In the garden of Eden, Adam showed that man after the flesh is not to be trusted. As another has said, "Man's affections may be stirred, man's intelligence informed, man's conscience convicted; but still **God** cannot trust him." Mankind in the flesh is condemned and must be born again. That is why **the Master would not entrust Himself to them.**[328]

The Lord's example here should be a warning to us all. We would do well to remember that all that glitters is not gold. It is not wise to trust in someone you've known for only a short time. We should be kind to all, but confidential with only a few. In other words, do you put yourself too quickly in the power of others? When **the Galilean Rabbi** sent out **the** twelve **apostles He** warned them not to be naive, saying: **I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves (Matthew 10:16).** In Egyptian hieroglyphics, as well as in much ancient lore, **snakes** symbolized wisdom. They were considered to be **shrewd**, smart, cunning and cautious. In that characteristic, at least, believers are to emulate **snakes**. We are to be **shrewd** and cunning in

dealing with the unbelieving world around us.[329]

He did not need any testimony about mankind, for He knew what was in the heart of **each person (Yochanan 2:25). Messiah knew** human nature. **He knew** the fickleness and instability of the human heart. **He** wasn't running for election, and **He** didn't entrust **His** mission or **His** future to humanity. **He** trusted **His** Father, and then **He** invited humanity to trust **Him**.[330] And **the Nazarene** will know the heart of such **a man** next in Nicodemus.