

The First “Sign”

GOSPEL OF JOHN SUMMER SERIES

Amos 9:11-15 Revelation 19:6-9 John 2:1-11

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Can you imagine seeing Jesus work a miracle? *Wouldn't that be something?!* That must have been how the disciples felt at that wedding in Cana. They had just started following Jesus, they were trying to get to know Him, they were starting to learn His teachings, they were beginning to have faith in Him as the Messiah. And now at a wedding in a small town, unknownst to the other guests, *out of the blue*, Jesus works a **mighty miracle** right before their eyes! Jesus commands Creation by simply speaking; and water turns into wine!

In the Gospel of John, this is the first of Jesus' **miracles**. However, John doesn't call them “**miracles**”; he calls them **signs**. The miracles, the “signs,” point to Jesus and His Word. Jesus' powerful miracles are “signs” that He really is God the Creator who has come into the world as a Man ---> with *flesh and blood*. Miracles show that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in Him you will have eternal life.

Miracles are also “signs” to **authenticate** the Word and Teachings of Jesus. *If Jesus can do these great and powerful works, then His words are true and trustworthy as well.* You can trust Jesus. You can believe His Word.

By writing his gospel, John has given us a *front row seat* -- to see for ourselves -- the miracles of Jesus and to hear for ourselves His teachings. Like the disciples that were there that day, we are to put our faith in Jesus

as well. Jesus **is** the Christ; He **is** the Son of God, He **is** the Savior of the world!

One of the interesting things is why Jesus even chose to do this miracle in the first place. Why did He choose to turn water into wine? The bride and the groom could have probably used a new house, or a bag of gold, or beautiful vineyard or a new olive grove. Why did Jesus choose to turn *water into wine* as His **first** miracle?

Because it was prophesied in the Old Testament¹. Jesus is signaling -- at the beginning of His Ministry -- that the new era of Salvation is here! The Messianic Age has begun! The Old Testament is like the water in the jars at the wedding, it is unable to bring joy to people. The Old Testament is unable to forgive sins and give eternal life. There is no “purification” nor cleansing of your conscience in the Old Testament sacrifices and rituals. *Everything in the Old Testament pointed forward to the Messiah.* **Now the Messiah is here:** Jesus is the long awaited Messiah of the Old Testament. In the prophecies, the Messiah will bring new wine *in abundance* that will bring great joy to people. Jesus the Messiah brings great joy by forgiving sins and giving eternal life. Jesus’ first sign signals that the Messianic age is here, the New Testament is beginning. Jesus is the Messiah; and He will do the work of salvation that brings forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all people. He will purify us and cleanse our consciences!

¹ An abundance of wine is one of the dominant images that characterized the visions of the Messianic era foretold by the ancient prophets of Israel (Isaiah 25:6; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13-14;). And the wedding feast mirrors the Old Testament image of marriage as an expression of God’s relationship to Israel (Isaiah 54:5-6; 62:4-5; Hosea 2:19-20). In the New Testament, this Messianic age is likened to a wedding banquet (Matthew 22:1-14; Revelation 19:9). When Jesus changed the water held in jars used for Jewish ritual purification (John 2:6) into wine, he was indicating that the Messianic age had now arrived. With this “new wine” (Luke 5:33-39), the Messianic era had begun (= wine) – an era in which Jesus himself is the bridegroom (John 3:29) --> and the old Jewish purification rites are over (=water)!

At the wedding at Cana, not only the **miracle**, but also His **Words** points us forward to the work that He will do to forgive sins and give eternal life. He calls the work that He came to do His “hour”.

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? **MY HOUR** has not yet come." John 2:3-4

Jesus uses this phrase “**MY HOUR**” seven times in the gospel of John to refer to His death and resurrection. When Jesus dies on a cross, then His “**HOUR**” has come, and His work will be complete. This phrase points Mary, and us, to the cross! He did not come to supply wine for a bride/groom in Cana; rather He came to give His life for the sins of the world. Jesus’ “**HOUR**” will come when He suffers and dies on a cross for to set us free from sin and death! Jesus is not just a miracle worker; He is the Savior of the world!

The story of the Wedding at Cana ends with the key point being highlighted: *the disciples put their faith in Him.*

This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And **His disciples believed in Him.** John 2:11

That is why the story of the Wedding at Cana is written down in Scriptures: so that you too will put your faith in Jesus. Like the disciples you see the **miracle**, and you hear His **Words**.

Believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of God,
and that by believing you will have life in His Name!

Faith is your connection to the Savior! Faith is a gift of God that comes through God's powerful Word. You learn to know that Jesus is the Savior, and believe that He has saved you personally. This story of the Wedding

at Cana is written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you will have life in His Name!

Through faith in Christ, by believing His works and His Word, you are invited to *yet another wedding feast*: not in Cana of Galilee, but in **God's Kingdom in Heaven**.

You see, there were two grooms at that wedding in Cana that day. Jesus, the Messiah, is the groom of His Bride, the Holy Christian Church. *Salvation is pictured as a marriage between Christ and His People*. Christ loves you and gave Himself for you. He keeps His promises to you and remains faithful to you throughout your life. He is committed to you and your well-being; and He uses His mighty power to watch over you and make all things work for good. He has given you His name in Holy Baptism, you belong to His Family. He feeds you at His Table. Christ is the groom; the Holy Christian Church is His Bride. *It's a way to describe His unending love for you*. Through faith in Christ, you are united to the Savior for eternity. **Heaven is pictured as a Great Wedding Feast that has no ending!**

"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the **Marriage of the Lamb** has come, and **His Bride** has made herself ready; Revelation 19:6b-7

'Blessed are those who are invited to the **Marriage feast of the Lamb**'" Revelation 19:9

Husbands, love your wives, as **Christ loved the church** and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27

Christ is the groom; the Holy Christian Church is His Bride. It's a way to describe salvation; and your Savior's unending love for you!

The Wedding at Cana was Jesus' first miracle; it was quiet and private and only a handful of people knew what was happening. His disciples saw it and put their faith in Him.

Today may you see it also through the eyes of faith and the words of Holy Scripture.

**See the miracle,
and believe in the Savior!**

Amen!