

STORY

The Marriage at Cana - John 2:1-12

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in Heaven, through the miracle at the wedding at Cana help us to believe that He was not only a good man, but also the Son of God sent to be our Savior. Strengthen our faith in Him that we may turn to Him both for forgiveness and for whatever needs we may have. And having asked, help us to leave our needs in His powerful hands to meet them according to His will. You, O Lord, established the estate of marriage from the 6th day of Creation. Today marriages are so much under attack and so many homes lie shattered by thoughtless sin and selfishness. I pray that you would impress on us Your desire for a Christ centered home where Jesus Christ's blessing will rest, even as He blessed with His presence and glory that marriage at Cana. In Jesus Name we ask, Amen.

VOCABULARY

Manner of purification - Jewish customs and religious ceremonies used large quantities of water for washing and cleaning. Guests would bathe their feet upon entering the house; people would wash before and after every meal, and various household objects would be cleansed. The water was stored in large pots.

Master of the feast - he was in charge of the servants and the arrangements for the feast. Wine and food were prepared under his supervision before being given to the guests.

Manifested His glory - revealed, or made known His divinity, that He was God as well as man.

OUTER AIM

Jesus changed water into wine to show He is God.

INNER AIM

Jesus' miracles strengthen our faith that He is God and will take care of all our needs.

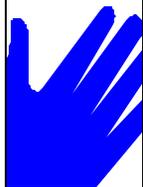
BACKGROUND

Rupprecht Bible History References Vol.2, pp. 94-99)

Although Jesus is God, in order to save us He took the body of a human being and lived under the laws of God. When He walked this earth those thirty-three years of His life, people saw Him primarily as a human being. Yet at times, Jesus let people see that He was also true God as He helped people with their problems and the effects of sin. This helped strengthen the faith of those who believed in Him as their Lord and Savior. It also further convicted those who rejected Jesus. (John 20:30-31; 10:37-38)

John 2:1

- ▶ A wedding was an especially joyous occasion for the Jews.
- ▶ The bride was led to the home of the groom.
- ▶ After the wedding, the feast would begin. This wedding feast might last for more than a day.
- ▶ Then the bridal couple went to the bridal chamber.
- ▶ This was the third day after John the Baptist sent Andrew and John to follow Jesus.
- ▶ This Cana is traditionally placed about 4 miles north east of Nazareth, Jesus' home town. See Rupprecht for connection of Galilee with Is 9:1-2.
- ▶ Jesus' mother Mary was there, but no mention is made of Joseph.



v. 2

- ▶ Jesus and His disciples attend the wedding.
- ▶ Five disciples had been called at this point: Andrew, Peter, John, Philip and Nathaniel (Bartholomew).
- ▶ From this many see Jesus' continued blessing on the estate of marriage and of celebrating weddings as special occasions.
- ▶ This event brings us to see that God favors marriage; the drink of choice may be alcoholic, but we know God doesn't approve of drunkenness.

v. 3

- ▶ Wine, often mixed with water, was used commonly throughout Palestine since much of the water was not good for drinking. And at a celebration it was also appropriate.
- ▶ Whether too many guests had come or the family had insufficient funds, the celebration (which lasted sometimes for days) had used up all the wine.
- ▶ Mary came to Jesus, requesting His special aid for the family when they ran out of wine.
- ▶ From Jesus' reply in the next verse, we sense that Jesus thought she was out of line with her expectations of Him.

v. 4

- ▶ Note that Jesus calls her only "woman" (like the modern term, "lady") and not "Mother." His mild rebuke lets her know that in matters of His work, she does not have authority over Him.
- ▶ (This passage condemns the false Catholic belief that Mary is "Co-redemptrix" or the "Queen of Heaven" or in some way equal to, or even greater than Jesus.)
- ▶ Jesus knew full well the situation and had in mind what He would do and when He would do it.

v. 5

- ▶ Mary accepted the rebuke of Jesus, yet showed her faith in Him with this request to the servants of the house.
- ▶ Her request implied the thought, "No matter how ridiculous it may seem, do it." Cf. 2 Kings

5:1-18

v. 6

- ▶ See vocabulary notes. Note the quantity: 120-130 gallons.

v. 7

- ▶ The servants thus far did what Jesus commanded, carrying water to the house to fill the jars to the brim.

v. 8

- ▶ Here the servants' faith was tested.
- ▶ Taking water to be used as wine to the master of the feast could get them into serious trouble.
- ▶ Despite that, they again obeyed Jesus and took the water to the Master of the feast. (see vocabulary notes.)

v. 9

- ▶ The man in charge of the feast suddenly found an abundant source of wine, whereas shortly before the wine had been gone.
- ▶ Only the servants knew where the wine had come from, the miracle performed by Jesus.

v. 10

- ▶ The wine that Jesus so graciously and miraculously provided not only was real wine but was better in quality than what had been previously served.
- ▶ This gift to His hosts served their needs and would be a gift they could keep on using for months or years.

v. 11

- ▶ This miracle was the first one that Jesus performed.
- ▶ Other traditions and writings speak of Jesus doing miracles in His youth, but this scripture contradicts them.

- ▶ He did this miracle a) to serve the needs of others and b) to reveal to people that He was the Christ, the Son of God, prophesied to be their Savior.
- ▶ We see that through this sign, Jesus' disciples believed in Him, as Jesus revealed the glory of His person, His purpose, and His work.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear God, Our Father in Heaven, help us to see through the awesome miracle He did that Jesus was not only a good man but also the Son of God come to earth to be our Savior. Teach us to turn to Jesus for our needs, knowing that in the way that is best for us, He will meet those needs, as He helped those people at Cana in their time of need. O Lord, bless our homes with your presence too and strengthen our trust in You for forgiveness of sins and all that we need. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

PRESENTATION

Briefly review previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account.

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

ACTIVITY

You may want to have the children glue page 4 on a separate sheet before doing this activity to make the vase more stable.

APPLICATIONS

1. Jesus used a miracle to strengthen the faith of His people. God uses this story and the rest of God's Word to make our faith stronger as well. We cannot make genuine wine instantly from water, so what does this show us about Jesus?
2. Review why Jesus performed miracles. He did not do them to show-off, just to impress people with His power. He did not do them for selfish reasons. He did them to a) prove that He was the Son of God, true God and True Man in one person, and 2) to serve people in time of need. The miracles were signs that pointed to Jesus as the One who could make satisfaction for the sins of the world. Jesus' primary work was to die on the cross for the sins of the world, so the miracles were never intended to overshadow Jesus' purpose.

** Note: The discussion of whether God performs miracles today may be beyond the scope of the time given to your lesson. God still does miracles today though we may fail to recognize them as such. In our time of need, we leave it to God to provide whatever method of deliverance He considers best as we pray "Thy will be done." Because we have God's Word, we do not need to be shown miracles today to believe in God or Jesus as our Savior. (Luke 16:16-31; John 20:30-31; Romans 10:17)

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson. For possible discussion: Genesis 2:22-24 - God created the first marriage.

Lower

Psalms 50:15 - Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

Middle any of the above and...

Genesis 2:24 - Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Upper any of the above and...

John 20:30-31 - And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

HYMN CHOICES

"Oh, Blest the House, Whate'er Befall" (TLH 625 all)

"Commit Whatever Grieves Thee" (TLH 520: 1,4, 5-9)

"The Lord My Shepherd Is" (TLH 426 :1-6)