**THE WEDDING IN CANA**

***Water Turned Into Wine***

***John 2:1-11***

Sunday School Lesson 1

*The Miracles of Jesus*

01/13/2019

**Introduction:** In our first lesson in our new Sunday School series on the miracles of Jesus, we will observe the first recorded miracle during the earthly ministry of Christ. It’s important to note that this was not necessarily Jesus’ first miracle, as His birth itself was an amazing miracle. Additionally, we know that Jesus has existed with God the Father for eternity, so He was also present and active in the many miracles that we find in the Old Testament. We mention this as His first miracle because the book of John indicates that the miracle performed at the wedding was the beginning of the miracles that Jesus did. This first miracle we see from Jesus is unique because it does not resemble the majority of His miracles. The “need” at the wedding does not have the same perilous potential outcome that we find with those whom Jesus healed or saved from physical harm. The attendees of the wedding feast would have survived without detriment if they had not received additional wine. The miracle’s unique nature causes us to consider the reason for it being mentioned in the Word of God. If the events themselves were not of great significance, then perhaps there are important symbolisms that we are supposed to observe from the story. As we examine this miracle, we will notice the obvious applications as well as the subtle symbols that God’s Word gives us.

1. MARY’S FAITH IS SEEN IN THE SIMPLE WAY THAT SHE SPOKE TO THE LORD. SHE STATED THE PROBLEM, SHE WAS NOT DETERRED, AND SHE EXPECTED AN OUTCOME. (JOHN 2:1-5)
2. **Notice that Mary was concerned with the needs of others, and she brought those needs to Jesus (John 2:1-3).** The Bible does not tell us who was getting married there in Cana. It only tells us that Mary was there at the wedding and that Jesus and His disciples were called to it as well.One of His disciples (Bartholomew) was from Cana, so perhaps it could have been someone from his family. It would not have been any of Jesus’ brothers because Cana would not have been the likely place for the wedding, as it was not the city where they lived in Galilee. Most likely, Mary was invited because the wedding involved a friend of the family. It is interesting, then, that Mary took interest in the fact that there was no wine for the guests. She concerned herself with the cares of others, and she brought those cares to Jesus. She did not come to Him complaining or doubting what might be done. She simply came to Him and told Him that there was no wine. While Jesus had not revealed Himself to the world yet, His mother knew Who He was. She knew that He would have the answer to the problem.
3. **Notice that Mary was not deterred by Jesus’ initial response, as she expected that He would find a way (John 2:4-5).** When Mary comes to Jesus to tell Him of the problem, she may have been surprised to hear His answer back. He said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.” What did this mean? We know that He ultimately performed the miracle, so if He had been unauthorized to perform it by the Father, her response would not have changed that. As Jesus often did, He answered her that way to challenge her faith. The first challenge was to see if she was speaking to Him as her son or as the Lord. This is why He responds with “woman” instead of mother. He called her that when He was on the cross as well, so we clearly see that this was His way of separating between being her Son and being the Lord. The second challenge was to see if her faith was strong enough to overcome obstacles. He told her that His hour had not yet come. This was true. The question was whether He could prefer a miracle without revealing Himself to all of the people at the wedding feast. Mary believed that He could, and she showed this by giving instruction to the servants to do what He asked. He never told her that He would help or that He needed the servants. She just trusted that He would find a way.
4. THE SERVANTS’ OBEDIENCE IS IMPRESSIVE BECAUSE THEY OBEYED COMPLETELY AND UNQUESTIONGLY, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE IGNORANT TO HIS POWER. (JOHN 2:6-8)
5. **Notice that the servants’ obedience required significant work, but they did the work completely (John 2:6-7).** The servants were instructed to do exactly as Jesus commanded them. Jesus told them to fill the six stone water pots that were used to wash people throughout the day. The Bible tells us the general size of these water pots, as they were two to three firkins apiece. That translates to each pot being able to hold roughly 20 gallons of water. That means that the servants had to collect 120 gallons of water to put into those pots. Consider how much work would have been involved in that day to collect that much water. They would have needed to take smaller pots to a well and transported them back. Yet, the Bible notes that the servants filled all of the pots to the brim. What great display of obedience from these servants! It’s especially amazing when you consider that they were not even His servants. Reasonably, we can assume that these servants worked for the wedding party.
6. **Notice that the servants never stopped to ask Jesus about the water, even though they had never seen Him perform a miracle (John 2:6-8).** The servants not only obeyed Jesus completely, but they also obeyed Him without question. The disciples could not even stake claim to this, as there were several times that they questioned Jesus during His earthly ministry. The servants may have wondered whether Jesus was planning on serving water instead of wine, but they did not ask. The servants may have wondered if that much water was necessary, but they didn’t ask. The servants may have wanted to question Jesus when He told them to take the water to the governor of the feast, but they did it without asking. The servants had never seen Jesus do anything miraculous. They may not have even known Who He was. They had not been given any sign physically of His greatness. Yet, they obeyed without question. We don’t know if they did it out of faith or not. It is very likely that they obeyed because that’s just what a good servant does. They wanted to do anything to help the master.
7. THE MIRACLE IN CANA WAS USED TO FORETELL OF THE JOY THAT WOULD COME AS A RESULT OF JESUS’ EARTHLY MINISTRY. (ISAIAH 24; JOHN 2:7)
8. **Notice that a lack of wine was prophesied before the arrival of Jesus (Isaiah 24).** The Bible uses wine as a picture of joy several times (Psalm 4:7). This is because wine was reserved for times of festivity. In Isaiah 24, Isaiah prophesied that the nation of Israel would run out of wine and cry out for the Lord. This was speaking figuratively of the lack of joy that would be in Israel before the arrival of the Messiah. With Jesus’ coming, He brought joy back to Israel and to the whole world. It is no accident that this miracle is listed in the Bible because it is a literal fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy. Without reconciliation with God, the world thirsts for joy. The wine of happiness that Satan offers to them always runs out. It is only a matter of time before it happens. The governor of the feast observed that they had saved the best wine for the last. Jesus made enough to where there would not be any other that was needed. When we drink of the joy of salvation, it is sufficient to sustain us. It is also the best joy that we could ever receive.
9. **Notice the significance of Jesus using water to make wine (John 2:7).** Jesus did not need for there to be water in order to perform this miracle. He could have simply had the servants draw out of the pots and find wine in there. The water has significance. Consider that water is an ordinary but necessary item. It is lacking in flavor or excitement, but there is no life found without it. As Jesus often did, He took that which was ordinary and performed a great miracle. This was reflective of His coming. He came in the form of a normal man. Yet, all who taste of the water that He brings know that He is much more.
10. JESUS PERFORMED THIS MIRACLE FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS SERVANTS. (JOHN 2:9-11)
11. **Notice that the disciples were present during this feast, but they were absent from the miracle (John 2:1-11).** The beginning of the story tells us that the disciples came to the wedding with Jesus and His mother, but the disciples are then absent from the story after that point. What were the disciples doing while Jesus was turning the water into wine? The easy answer is that they were just watching. Keep in mind that they had just been called to follow after Christ. Right before this feast, they had seen John the Baptist testify of Jesus as the Messiah. This event would have undoubtedly strengthened their faith. Yet, they had not really seen what Jesus could do or would do yet.
12. **Notice that the disciples’ faith was increased because they had seen the glory of the Lord (John 2:11).** At the conclusion of the story, the Bible mentions the disciples again. It simply tells us that this miracle manifested His glory, and the disciples believed on Him. Their eyes were opened at the feast when they saw the glory and power of Jesus. Only the servants and the disciples are mentioned as eyewitnesses of this event. He did not proclaim His glory for all to see. The servants knew that the water was turned into wine, but the Bible does not tell us whether they told anyone. They remained quiet when the governor drank of the wine, and they allowed him to give credit to the bridegroom without interruption (The Lord made the bridegroom look good, just as He makes us look good!). Jesus always performed His miracles to increase the faith of others. Since only the disciples and servants knew, it is clear that Jesus was using this opportunity to increase their faith.

**Conclusion:** As servants of Jesus, how closely do we resemble the faithful servants found in this story? Do we exhibit the type of faith that Mary exhibited when she was not deterred by the initial response? Perhaps, we are closer to resembling the disciples at this point, who were present physically but absent from involvement? Let’s take the time to examine the type of service that we are performing for the cause of Christ. Hopefully, you recognize the joy that has come into our lives since the day that we met Jesus Christ. That joy should never diminish or wane. That joy should also be a driving force for our service.