

The Miracle at Cana

John 2:1-11 Text: 4b *"My hour has not yet come."*

The Bible has a lot of sadness in it. Many stories of sorrow, struggle, hardship, reflect the difficulties of human life and suffering. However, they also offer hope, redemption, and the promise of God's presence and support through tough times. But the Bible is, also, filled with messages of joy, hope, and celebration. Today, we're going to learn about one. It's a powerful and transformative event in the life of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John, chapter 2, verses 1 to 11. Transformative.

That's a big word meaning "power to bring about significant change, or transformation." And it can be seen in different ways. Personal growth. Social change. Spiritual transformation. It's something that makes a big difference in people's lives that can affect many areas of life. So, in John 2:1-11, the transformative power of Jesus is shown through His miracle of turning water into wine. That not only changed the physical element of the water. It symbolized the spiritual transformation that Jesus brings into people's lives. This miracle was not just a display of Divine power. It was a sign of transformation. And it was the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

And the way the story begins is a joyous occasion—a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. Weddings are important in Jewish tradition. Though the exact location of Cana is unknown, it's mentioned in other parts of the Gospel of John such as when Jesus visited Cana and healed the son of a royal official there. (John 4:46-54) And Nathanael. He was one of Jesus' disciples and was from Cana. (John 21:2)

Now, Jewish weddings are wonderful. They symbolize *coming together*. Not just the couple getting married. It's a celebration for the whole community. A Jewish wedding is a deeply meaningful and joyous event, rich with music blending ancient traditions with joyous celebration showing the couple's commitment to each other and their faith. Jesus, His mother Mary, and His disciples were invited to this wedding in Cana. That put emphasis on the importance of relationships and fellowship in Jesus' ministry. However, during the celebration a problem arose. The wine ran out! That would have been a major social embarrassment for the hosts in the cultural setting of the time. But Mary, aware of the situation, turned to Jesus and said, *"They have no wine."* That's a simple statement! But it set the stage for a miracle! A miraculous intervention. An extraordinary event believed to be caused by Divine powers.

Miracles are acts of God when He steps in to alter the natural course of events in a way that defies scientific explanation. Typically, miracles are considered to be signs of Divine favor. But Jesus responded to his mother Mary with a statement that may seem puzzling at first: *"Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."*

Well, first of all, He called His mother, *"Woman."* If I had talked to my mother that way, I'm sure she would have had something to say about it! But despite that, Mary instructed the servants to do whatever Jesus told them, which shows Jesus' awareness of Divine timing.

It also shows Mary's faith in Jesus' ability to address the situation. So, Jesus asked the servants to fill six stone water jars with water. Each held twenty to thirty gallons. Now, that's a lot! About 180 gallons. And a standard wooden wine barrel holds about 60 gallons. Meaning Jesus created 3 barrels of wine and then told them to draw some out and take it to the Master of the Banquet to taste. When the Master tasted the water that had been turned into wine, he was astonished by its quality. He didn't realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then the Master of the Banquet called the bridegroom aside and said, *"Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink. But you have saved the best till now"* meaning, you served only the best wine!

Now, The "Master of the Banquet" at a Jewish wedding is also known as a "headwaiter" or "chief steward." He played a crucial role in overseeing the arrangements and service of the wedding feast. The Master was responsible for ensuring that the guests were well cared for and that the provisions, particularly the wine, were adequate and of good quality. And in first-century Judea, weddings were significant social events. They often lasted several days. The provision of food and drink was a matter of honor and hospitality. Running out of wine would have been a social embarrassment for the host family, which showed the importance of the Master of the Banquet's role in managing the feast. The Master of the Banquet would have been a person of trust, often tasked with maintaining the order and flow of the celebration. The Master of the Banquet's reaction to the superior quality of the wine shows the abundance and excellence of God's provision through Christ.

This event also predicts the Messianic banquet, in both Old and New Testament teaching of end times, where the coming of God's kingdom is likened to a grand feast. This miracle demonstrates Jesus' transformative power, turning ordinary water into extraordinary wine. But this miracle is more than just a solution to a social dilemma. It's a sign that reveals Jesus' glory and Divine nature. It marks the beginning of His public ministry, and it serves as a testament to His ability to bring about change and abundance. The disciples witnessing this miracle believed in Him, and their faith was strengthened by His display of Divine power.

Billy Graham used this miracle of turning water into wine as an example for transformation. He spoke about how Jesus can transform lives, just as He transformed water into wine. This was not just about physical changes. It's about a sincere spiritual renewal. The transformation of water into wine symbolizes the transformative power of Jesus' ministry.

Just as He turned ordinary water into the finest wine, Jesus has the power to transform lives, bringing them from a state of emptiness to one of fullness and abundance.

This miracle also points to the New Covenant that Jesus brings. A covenant of grace, joy, and eternal life. The New Covenant that Jesus brings is a new relationship between God and humanity established through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Covenant is forgiveness of sins. The Old Covenant, required repeated animal sacrifices for the atonement of sins. The New Covenant offers complete and final forgiveness through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. (Hebrews 9:15 and 10:10-18) The New Covenant promises a transformation of the heart and mind. God writes His laws on the hearts of believers enabling them to live in accordance with His will. And it's highlighted in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:26-27. Under the New Covenant, believers have direct access to God through Jesus Christ made possible by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It's described in John 14:16-17 and Romans 8:9-11.

The New Covenant is inclusive. It goes beyond the Jewish people to all nations and peoples and is shown in passages like Matthew 28:19-20 and Galatians 3:28. The New Covenant promises eternal life to those who believe in Jesus Christ. And this assurance of salvation is the cornerstone of Christian faith, as seen in John 3:16. Say it with me. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* And 1 John 5:11-12. *"¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life."*

And the New Covenant is celebrated in the Lord's Supper, when believers remember and proclaim the sacrificial death of Jesus and the establishment of this new relationship with God. So, think on the miracle at Cana. Remember Jesus is the source of true transformation and abundance in your life. He meets you in your moments of need. And He offers His compassion, grace, and Divine power.

Place your trust in Him. Know that He can turn your ordinary moments into extraordinary blessings. And may your faith be strengthened. Be like the disciples. Believe in the One who reveals His glory through acts of love and transformation. Amen.