John 2 Part 1 Jesus First Miracle

After Jesus was Baptized and spent 40 days in the wilderness, having victory over temptation, he visited John the Baptist to be publicly announced as the promised Messiah. Chapter 2 is the beginning of His ministry.

Read John 2:1-12

Vs 1 What does the phrase “after 3 days” mean? The Bible was not written in Chapter and Verse. John continued the story from the previous chapter that noted happenings on a particular day (John 1:19-28), on the next day (John 1:29-34), the next day after that (John 1:35-42), the following day (John 1:43-51) and now on the third day. The third day is probably to be counted from the event last mentioned, the call of Nathanael. We would say ‘two days later’. Throughout Scripture (155 times), the third day is associated with decisive events in God's dealings with humanity. Significant “third day” references in the Bible;

- Old Testament: Genesis 22:4 (faith & obedience); Exodus 19:11 (preparation for God’s presence); Esther 4:15-5:2 (courage & deliverance) Hosea 6:1–2; Jonah 1:17 (deliverance).
- Jesus predicts His resurrection: Matthew 16:21; Matthew 20:19; Luke 18:33.
- The empty tomb: Luke 24:6–7.
- The risen Christ explains the Scriptures: Luke 24:46.
- The apostles proclaim the resurrection: Acts 10:40.
- The central statement of the gospel: 1 Corinthians 15:3–4.

What happened on this day? There was a wedding at Cana of Galilee. Cana is about 8 miles north of Nazareth. Interesting note - Cana is identified as the hometown of Nathanael, the one just called to follow Jesus at the end of Chapter 1. What person was specifically named as being there (invited)? Jesus’ mother, Mary. By this time Joseph had already died. Jesus, being the first-born son, was responsible for taking care of Mary and the other children. It would be fair to assume Mary was either related to, or good friends with, the bride and/or groom’s family.

Vs 2 Jesus (and his brothers) and His disciples were invited to the wedding. Most Jewish weddings lasted several days (see ancient Galilean weddings). Everyone knew the wedding would take place, just not the exact day. Most of the community would have been invited. At this time, hospitality was a serious social responsibility. A host was expected to provide for guests, and an invitation was not merely a casual suggestion. In Matthew 22:1–14, Jesus tells the parable of a king who prepares a wedding feast for his son. When the feast is ready, the invited guests refuse to come. Some made excuses, while others mistreated the king's servants. The king responded by inviting people from the roads and streets until the banquet hall was filled. The first guests had been offered the privilege of attending a royal celebration, yet they treated the invitation as unimportant. Jesus was teaching that an invitation to God's kingdom is a tremendous privilege, but people can reject it. The parable also portrays the invitation extending beyond the original guests (the Jews) to others.

Vs 3 What did Mary become aware of? The host ran out of wine. It appears that Jesus’ mother had an important role in this particular wedding. She may have been in charge of the arrangements, sort of a wedding coordinator. She was personally concerned when the wine ran out and she also had the authority to order the servants to do whatever Jesus told them to do. In that culture, running out of wine during a wedding celebration would bring embarrassment to the host family. Mary recognized the problem and brought it to Jesus' attention. She did not tell Jesus how to solve the problem. She simply made Him aware of the need. There are deeper meanings to this,

- **Theological Symbolism:** The exhaustion of the old wine represented the futility of the animal sacrificial system and the Jewish purification laws (represented by the stone jars), which Jesus replaced with the abundant joy of the New Covenant (consuming wine leads to joy Ps 104:15,Ecc 9:7,10:19).
- **Divine Revelation:** By turning water into high-quality wine, Jesus performed His first sign to demonstrate his power over creation, affirming His identity as the Messiah and the source of true spiritual joy.

Vs 4 How did Jesus respond to His mother’s statement? First, He called her “woman”. This is not a disrespectful response. “Woman” was a term of endearment and respect. It’s more like saying “Lady”. Next He asked what this issue had to do with Him, because it was not time for Him to act yet. What He really said to Mary was, “We now have a different relationship. Let me consult My heavenly Father.” Jesus is no longer her “little boy,” obliged to do whatever she tells him to do. Jesus was saying to his mother “it’s not for you to decide”. He is the Messiah. His submission is to his heavenly Father. Jesus must have prayed and then known what to do, because He we know He only did the Father’s will (John 5:19,30,8:28-29). Remember, Mary knew Jesus was the promised Messiah. What do you think “My hour has not yet come” means? “Hour” means *season*, implying just the right time. “Come” means *arrived*. Jesus is saying the season of His ministry hasn’t arrived yet.

Vs 5 If there was one Scripture I could use to be the key to receiving anything from the Lord, it’s this one! Since the Word is Jesus, anything promised in the Word is yours if you will just do it! It is the DOERS, not the hearers only, who receive. James 1:22. Mary expected Jesus to respond, so her instructions to the servants was “hear Him and do what He says”.

Vs 6 Jesus began this miracle by using what was at hand. There were 6 water pots available. The number 6 is widely interpreted in Biblical symbolism as representing humanity (created on the sixth day) and imperfection or incompleteness, standing one short of 7 (divine perfection). What were the pots made of? Stone! This is remarkable! They were not clay pots made by human hands. They were rock vessels hewn by human hands. Stone was perfect for holding water, better than clay, as they would not leak. What were these pots used for? Ceremonial cleansing. This water may have been used to clean the feet of people as they entered the house. Remember that the roads were dusty. You would need a good supply of water on hand, especially if you were having a week full of wedding guests. Or it's possible that this water was used to wash hands. Before eating, each guest would have water poured over their hands. If the feast went on for a number of days, that process would have to be repeated numerous times, so with any sizable number of guests, there would have been a need for a large amount of water. How much did they each hold? 20 – 30 gallons, so in total that would be 120 – 180 GALLONS of water! By performing His first miracle using these vessels of old-covenant ritual law, Jesus symbolically demonstrated that He was fulfilling and transforming the traditional Jewish purification rites into the abundant grace of the New covenant.

Vs 7 What did Jesus tell the servants to do? Fill the pots with water. The word "fill" means *to top off.* There probably was some water in these pots. Jesus was telling them to make them full. Did the servants obey? Yes, they filled them to the brim. They made them full, all the way to the top. The servants, under the direction of Jesus, were in a unique place of blessing. Jesus wanted the cooperation of men in this miracle. He could have filled the pots Himself, or just as easily created the liquid in the pots. But He knew that if the servants shared in the work, then they also shared in the blessing. Think about the effort and time it took to do this. We don't know how empty the pots were or how many servants there were, but they didn't have hoses so they would have had to grab buckets, go to the well, carry the full buckets of water and dump them into the pots repeatedly until the job was done.

Vs 8 After the servants filled the pots, what did Jesus tell them to do? He told them to draw from the pots. Notice there was no time mentioned between when the pots were full and when they were to draw some out. What were they to do with what they drew out? Bring it to the Master. This took faith on behalf of the servants. Imagine how angry the master of the feast would be if they brought him ceremonial cleansing water (not fit for drinking) to taste! Yet in faith, they obeyed the word of Jesus. The Master of the Banquet, or chief steward, was the official responsible for ensuring the quality and distribution of food and drink. His role was critical to the host family's honor.

Vs 9 This verse is where we learn about the actual miracle. Up to now, we have Mary's request and the faith-actions of the obedient servants. The servants knew exactly what happened but the Master did not. What was the Master's response to drinking the wine? He called the Bridegroom. Remember the groom has been preparing for this feast for the better part of a year. This was no last-minute celebration. He hired the Master to keep everything running smooth but it was the groom that arranged for the banquet food and drink, including the wine. The Master's response was pretty incredible to interrupt the groom on his special day to publically remark about the wine.

Vs 10 Summarize what the Master said to the groom. "You've done something extraordinary and unnecessary. Most hosts start with serving good wine and leave the nasty stuff for last. By now your guests could not tell a Thunderbird from a Rothschild yet you are serving the best wine to drunks who would not appreciate it".

Jesus asked the servants to do something that was outlandish. They had no reason to expect the outcome that occurred. But that's why Jesus rewarded their faith. Every guest at the feast <u>benefited</u> from the miracle, but Mary and the servants <u>experienced</u> the miracle. Through their faith and obedience, they became instruments that God used to bring glory to His Name. It had nothing to do with their ability. But they were faithful and obedient. And as a result, their eyes were opened to see Jesus for Who He is.

Vs 11 What did this miracle represent? The beginning of signs. This beginning of signs in the Gospel of John (the first of seven) represented a miracle of conversion, from the old ways of law, ceremony and purification to the new life of Jesus. Moses turned water into blood, showing that the Law results in death (Ex 7:17-21). Jesus' first miracle turned water into wine, showing the gladness and joy of His new work. This acts out what John said in John 1:17. The wine was after the water, and the New Covenant is after the Old Covenant. The wine was from the water, and the New Covenant is from the Old Covenant. The wine was better than the water; and the New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant. What was the result of this sign? Jesus' glory was manifested. Who believed? The disciples! The faith of the disciples is significant, especially in comparison to the others present who benefited from the miracle, but of whom no specific belief is mentioned. The master of the feast didn't believe. The bridegroom didn't believe. Scripture doesn't even say that the servants believed. Those who were His disciples believed.

Vs 12 After the wedding, where did Mary, her sons and the disciples go? Capernaum, about 20 miles (roughly an 8 hour walk) on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Did they stay there long? No. This brief period served as a transition between the miracle at Cana and the subsequent journey to Jerusalem for the Passover, where Jesus would cleanse the temple.