

RELEARNING ANCIENT BIBLE STORIES IN A BRAND-NEW WAY

EPIC TALES

TOO



Epic Tales in the Life of Jesus

- **Visiting the Temple in Jerusalem during Passover at age 12**
- **Baptism by John the Baptist**
- **Temptation in the Wilderness**



The background of the slide is a photograph of a rocky beach. The foreground is filled with numerous smooth, rounded, greyish-brown rocks of various sizes. In the distance, the ocean meets a hazy, overcast sky. The overall tone is muted and atmospheric.

***First Recorded
Miracle of Jesus***

John 2:1-12

And He [Jesus] went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. Luke 2:51

- It appears that Joseph died prior to our Lord's adult years, since he is never mentioned after our Lord's early years. Jesus honored His mother and lived in submission to her authority, but it is now time for our Lord to indicate to His mother that there will be a change.**
- Not only is He a grown man about to set out on His own, He is the Messiah, who will some day establish His kingdom on the earth. He can no longer relate to Mary as He formerly has. He cannot allow His submission to His Father to be "overruled" by the requests of His earthly mother.**

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus [Mary / Miryam] was there; and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

John 2:1-2

- **Cana was about 8 miles away from Nazareth**
- **Possibly a relative of Mary is getting married**
- **5 disciples have been called by Jesus at this point...**
Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, John (author of this book)

“the mother of Jesus was there”

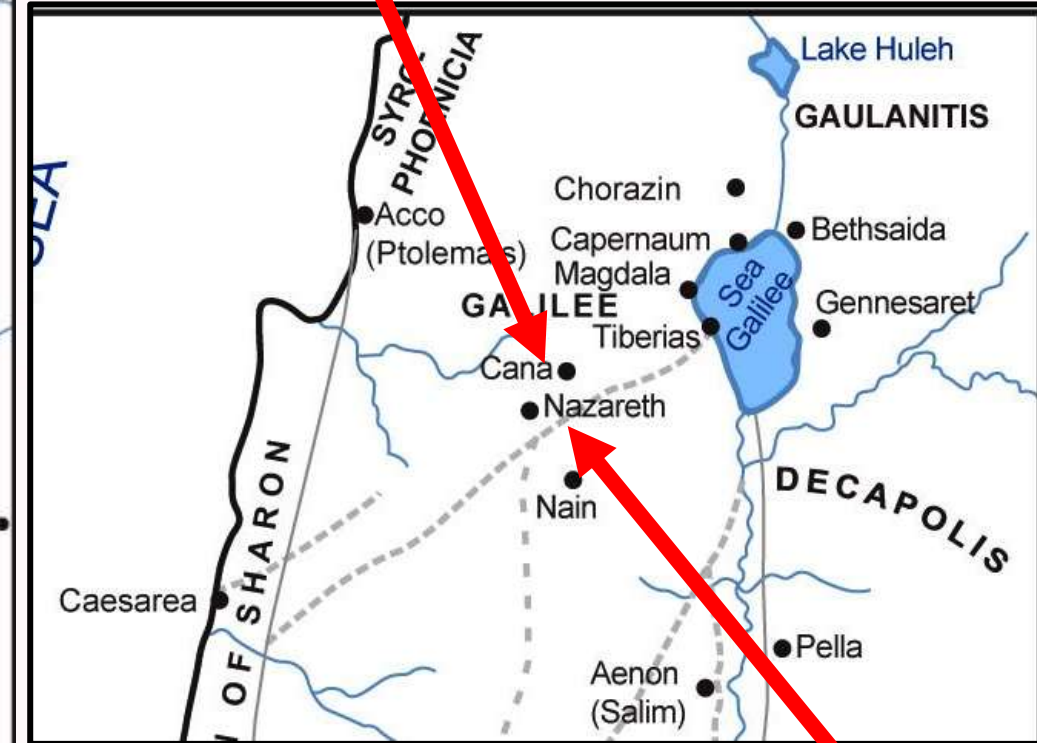
In his Gospel, John the Apostle never named himself or the mother of Jesus.

For example...

Then He said to the disciple, “Behold, your **mother!” From that hour the **disciple** took her into his own household. John 19:27**

“On the third day” probably means three days after the calling of Philip and Nathanael. It would take a couple of days to reach Cana in Galilee from Bethany near Jericho of Judea (John 1:28).

- Bible Knowledge Commentary





Biblical wedding feasts

- A big party that took lots of preparation and planning.
- The party included seven full days of food, music, dance and celebration.
- The feast followed the groom's taking of his bride to his home or his father's house, before the consummation of the marriage.
- Regarding the wedding of Jacob and Leah... "Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a **feast**." Genesis 29:22
- "Then his father went down to the woman; and Samson made a **feast** there, for the young men customarily did this."
Judges 14:10

חופה chuppah



**Orthodox Jewish wedding
with *chuppa* in Vienna, 2007**

The *chuppah* represents a Jewish home symbolized by the cloth canopy and the four poles. As a *chuppah* is open on all four sides, so was the tent of Abraham open for hospitality. The *chuppah* represents hospitality to guests. This "home" initially lacks furniture as a reminder that the basis of a Jewish home is the people within it, not possessions. The covering of the *chuppah* represents the presence of God over the covenant of marriage, to signify that the ceremony and institution of marriage has divine origins. The groom enters the *chuppah* first to represent his ownership of the home on behalf of the couple. When the bride enters the *chuppah* it is as though the groom is providing her with shelter or clothing, and he thus publicly demonstrates his new responsibilities toward her.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuppah>



Old Testament Chuppahs

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his **chamber** (חֲפָה *chuppah*); it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Psalm 19:5

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and the nursing infants. Let the bridegroom come out of his room and the bride out of her bridal **chamber** (חֲפָה *chuppah*).

Joel 2:16

chuppah at a synagogue in Washington, D.C.

According to the Mishnah the wedding would take place on a Wednesday if the bride was a virgin and on a Thursday if she was a widow (*Ket.* 1:1). The bridegroom and his friends made their way in procession to the bride's house. This was often done at night, when there could be a spectacular torchlight procession. There were doubtless speeches and expressions of goodwill before the bride and groom went in procession to the groom's house, where the wedding banquet was held.

- Leon Morris

The Groom Comes for the Bride ***Jesus is Coming for the Church***

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14:1-3

When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” John 2:3

- Running out of wine would be an embarrassment for the wedding feast hosts (the groom’s family)**
- The wedding party would have been ashamed at being poor hosts and not planning ahead well**
- Hospitality was a prized cultural value**
- Mary, mother of Jesus, cares about the hosts, feels their pain and wants Jesus to ease their shame**

And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour [*ὥρα ora*] has not yet come.” John 2:4

- Jesus is not confused or rude. The word “woman” applied to His mother may seem strange to a modern reader, but it was a polite, kind expression (cf. John 19:26).
- “Why do you involve Me?” was a common expression in Greek that referred to a difference in realms or relations. Demons spoke these words when they were confronted by Christ (“What do You want with us?” [Mark 1:24]; “What do You want with me?” [Mark 5:7]).
- Mary would soon learn a painful lesson (cf. Luke 2:35), that Jesus was committed to God the Father’s will and the time for His public manifestation as Messiah was in the Father’s hand.
- Jesus cares about the daily lives of His family and friends but He cares most about the Father’s eternal plan for Him as Messiah. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

“My hour has not yet come.” John 2:4

- So Jesus said to them, “My **time** is not yet here, but your **time** is always opportune.” John 7:6
- Jesus said, “Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My **time** has not yet fully come.” John 7:8
- So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His **hour** had not yet come. John 7:30
- These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His **hour** had not yet come. John 8:20
- And Jesus answered them, saying, “The **hour** has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.” John 12:23

“My hour has not yet come.” John 2:4

- Jesus said, “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this **hour**’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.” John 12:27
- Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His **hour** had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. John 13:1
- Jesus said, “Behold, an **hour** is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” John 16:32
- Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the **hour** has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You” John 17:1

What did Mary expect Jesus to do?

Mary had carried the stigma of Jesus' miraculous birth for thirty years. It was only natural she would want some public revelation that her son was the Messiah. Jesus seemed to be saying, however, "What you expect out of this will not occur yet. I'm on a divine timetable and the revelation of my purpose will not happen today." But God's timetable for the Lamb did allow Him to begin giving evidence of His calling by performing this local miracle. – Kenneth Gangel

**His mother said to the servants,
“Whatever He says to you, do it.” John 2:5**

- **Mary has a sense about the deity of Jesus but has not yet seen Him perform any miracles [as written in the gospels], so what kind of help was she requesting?**
- **Maybe just normal human help – finding more wine or explaining the problem**
- **Jesus did not ignore the problem noted by Mary**

His mother said to the servants,
“**Whatever He says** to you, do it.” John 2:5

- Are we ready to live this way?
- How strong is our faith?
- How ready is our obedience?
- Will we **do** what Jesus **says**?



Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each. John 2:6

- **Stone vessels and utensils do not become ritually unclean like those made of pottery (earthenware)**
- **As for any earthenware vessel into which one of them may fall, whatever is in it becomes unclean and you shall break the vessel. Leviticus 11:33**
- **The wedding feast was held by a religious family valuing ritual purity**

Ritual Purity Stone Jars

Cana Synagogue

Jesus' first two miracles

John 2:1; 4:46; Jos. Life 86



Israel Museum

The 20-30 gal. ceremonial stoneware pots were not being used for catering the wedding, indicating they were inside the Cana synagogue or an adjoining building where the pots were stored. Stoneware was excavated a Kh. Qana.

www.bible.ca/pottery

Stoneware is unique to the first century and was used for ritual purity by the Jews. Standard pottery could not be reused and had to be broken after sacred use. Stoneware, the Pharisees reasoned, could be reused. Pottery is made from formed and fired clay. Stoneware is a cup or storage pot carved out of a single chunk of stone and therefore very expensive until you factor in that it could be reused.

Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.”

John 2:7a

- The jars weren't just sitting around, already full of water. In preparation for this miracle, Jesus told the servants to fill these jars to the brim, which involved them carrying these six heavy stone jars to the local well or spring, and then bringing them all the way back—this time with extra weight from the water. - <https://www.bibleplaces.com/john2/>
- The water in the six water jars (of 20 to 30 gallons each) was used for Jewish purification rites before and after meals (cf. Matthew 15:1–2).
- Probably the water jars were outside. The master of the banquet, in charge of the festivities, would not know he was drinking from the purification jars. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

So they filled them up to the brim. John 2:7b

- **120-180 gallons of wine would provide about 2,400 glasses of wine**
- **This was more wine than they needed for the wedding feast... Have you experienced the abundant power and grace of Jesus?**



And He said to them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it to him.

John 2:8

- **These servants knew they were handling water when the host asked for wine. **We have to conclude that the water became wine somewhere between the kitchen and the head table at the banquet.** This demonstrates great faith and obedience on the part of these servants. Despite misgivings, they followed through on Mary’s words.
– Kenneth Gangel**
- **After I obey Jesus the first time, will I obey the second time?**
- **Will He ask me to go public with my obedience?**
- **What if people think I am crazy?**



When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, John 2:9

- **People often experience the grace and power of Jesus without knowing the source of that gift**
- **The Greek word οἶνος *oinos* is used for both intoxicating and non-intoxicating wine**

and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.”

John 2:10

- **What looks like certain shame has turned to sudden fame for the bridegroom and the head steward.**
- **What the world offers me will soon fail to satisfy... the longer it is experienced, the less satisfying it becomes.**
- **What Jesus offers me is more than enough.**

Reminder to be careful

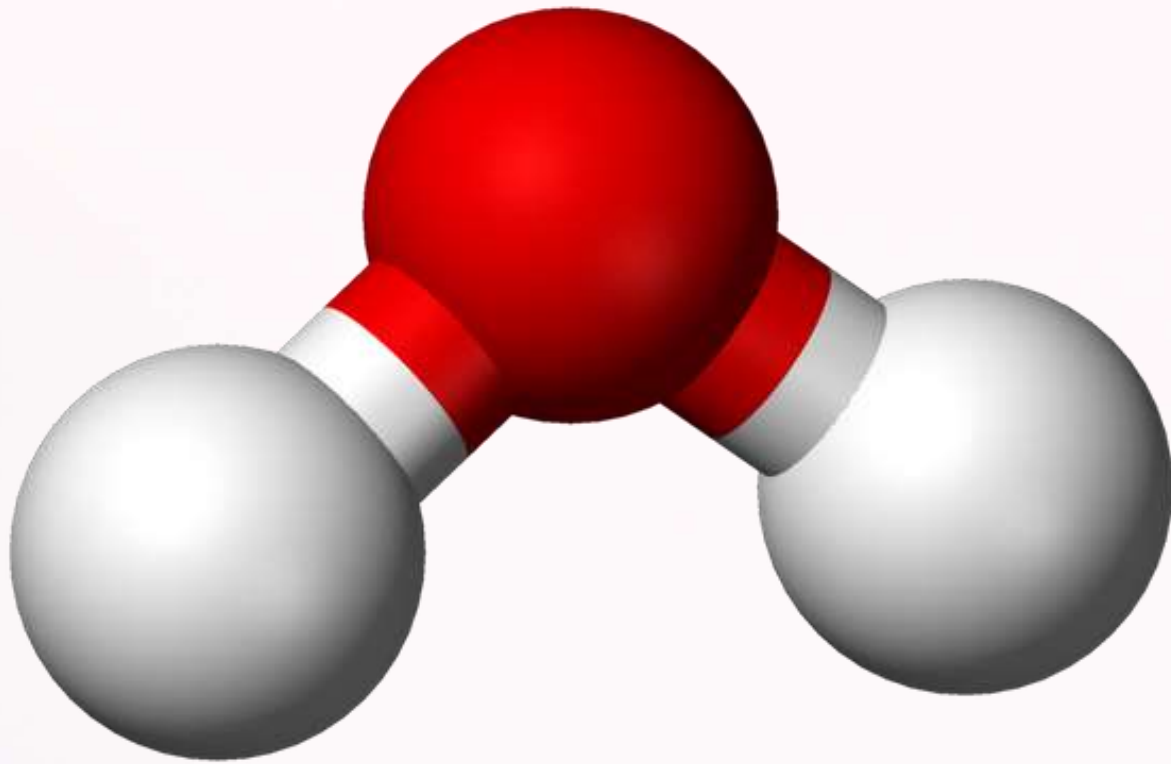
- **And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,
Ephesians 5:18**
- **Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.
Proverbs 20:1**



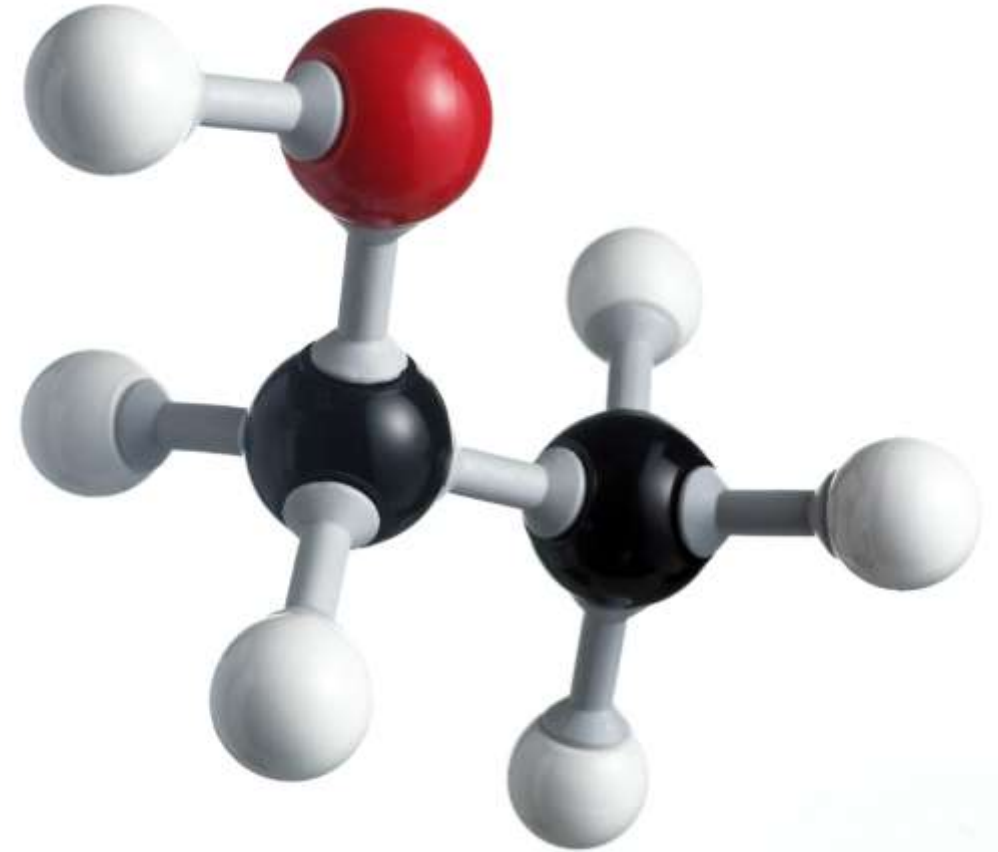
Dr. Cliff Lewis writes:

- **Jesus really did change the water into wine, thus revealing His glory. At a molecular level, the water, basically hydrogen and oxygen, was changed into wine that contains sugars, yeast, and water, which contain carbon and nitrogen along with oxygen and hydrogen. Thus, by changing water into wine Jesus demonstrated His authority over even the atomic structure of atoms by commanding oxygen and hydrogen atoms to disassemble and reform into other atoms of different configurations.**
- **The amount of energy it would take to perform this atomic deconstruction and reconstruction is staggering... To do so without any visible energy transformation of the liquid (John does not say anything about people noticing the transformation) indicates a mastery of natural law far beyond our current comprehension. And Jesus accomplished it with no physical exertion.**
- **With this single act Jesus proves that the basic forces in nature are at His command and control.**

Water Molecule (H₂O)



Ethanol Molecule (C₂H₆O)



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things came into being through Him**, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. John 1:1-3

You Can Be Made New

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

2 Corinthians 5:17



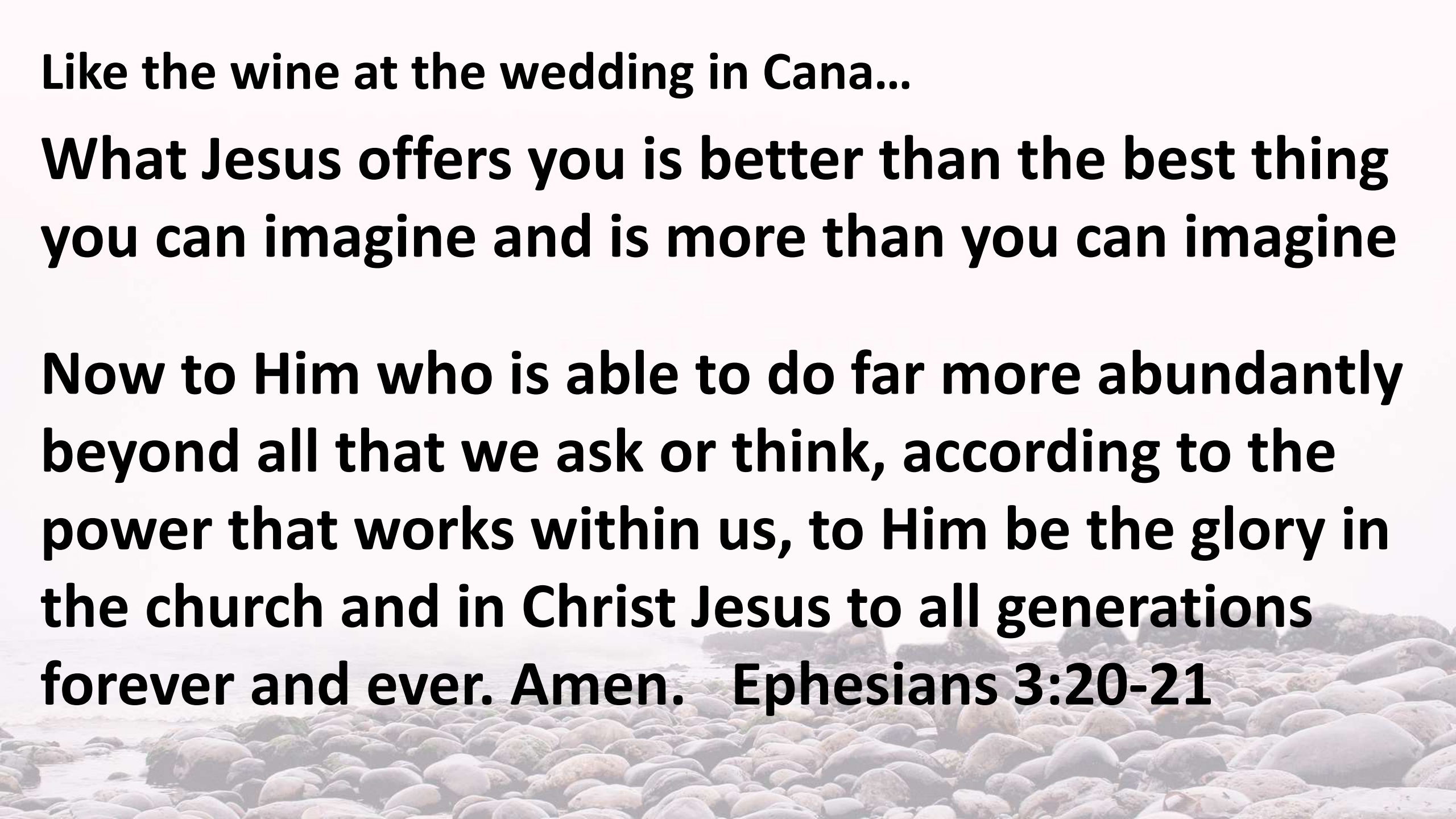
- **Most of the people never knew a miracle had taken place. It seems that only Mary, the servants, and the disciples were aware of what happened. John tells us that because of this miracle, the disciples believed in Him (verse 11). It seems that the servants knew “what” happened, but they were not sure exactly “how” it happened, so they simply kept quiet, scratching their heads with wonder.**
- **Minimizing the visibility of this first display of our Lord’s power is by design. Everything our Lord did in transforming the water into wine was intended to minimize His exposure. Done in this way, our Lord was able to perform the miracle without violating His Father’s will concerning “His time.” It was not yet the moment for our Lord to publicly display His power and glory. Thus, He performed the miracle privately, in a way that conformed to God’s timing.**
- **In one sense, there are two miracles here in these first verses of John 2. The first is the transformation of water into wine. The second is accomplishing this miracle in a way that was not apparent to everyone.**

- **This miracle was not a “necessity,” but rather a “luxury.” Stop and consider this fact for a moment. This miracle is not like some of the other miracles Jesus performed, where an individual has suffered for years, or a child’s life hangs in the balance. This is not an emergency situation which demands immediate and dramatic action on our Lord’s part.**
- **There is a lesson to be learned from this miracle. *God is concerned with our “non-critical” problems.***
- **He is a compassionate and merciful Father, who cares about His children. God is never annoyed when we come to Him with our small problems.**

Like the wine at the wedding in Cana...

What Jesus offers you is better than the best thing you can imagine and is more than you can imagine

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21



This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. John 2:11

- **Some observed the power of Jesus and were interested**
- **Some observed the power of Jesus and were impressed**
- **Some observed the power of Jesus and believed**

In this Gospel, miracles are referred to as “signs” (*semeion* σημεῖον), meaning that they served as authentication for Jesus’ nature and mission.

When you see the power of Messiah Jesus at work, will you believe in Him as your Savior?

**This turning
water into
wine was
the first of
35 recorded
miracles
Jesus
performed.**



MIRACLES OF JESUS

Permanent Disabilities Healed	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus Heals a Mute Man	9:32-34			
Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man		7:31-37		
Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman's Spine			13:10-17	
Jesus Heals a Lame Man at Bethesda pool				5:1-15
Jesus Heals a Paralytic Man	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
Jesus Heals a Blind, Mute Demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
Jesus Casts Out Demons and Heals Many Sick at Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind				9:1-41
Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
Jesus Heals Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
Jesus Heals Two More Blind Men	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
Jesus Heals Ten Lepers			17:11-19	
Jesus Heals a Man With Leprosy	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
Jesus Heals a Man With Dropsy on the Sabbath			14:1-6	
Illnesses / Injuries Healed	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus Heals a Woman with Issue of Blood	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:43-48	
Jesus Heals a Servant's Severed Ear			22:50-51	
Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
Jesus Heals an Official's Son Remotely				4:46-54
Jesus Heals Many Sick in Gennesaret	14:34-36	6:53-56		

Evil Spirits Removed	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus Delivers a Gentile Woman's Demon-Possessed Daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
Jesus Delivers a Demon-Possessed Man		1:21-28	4:31-37	
Jesus Delivers a Demon-Possessed Man and Casts Demons into a Herd of Pigs	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
The Dead Raised to Life	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus Raises a Widow's Son in Nain			7:11-17	
Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead				11:1-45
Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter to Life	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
Other Miracles	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Temple Tax Placed in a Fish's Mouth	17:24-27			
Jesus Walks on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
Jesus Turns Water into Wine				2:1-11
First Miraculous Catch of Fish			5:1-11	
Second Miraculous Catch of Fish				21:1-14
Jesus Feeds 5000 with 5 Loaves & 2 Fish	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
Jesus Feeds 4000 with 7 Loaves & few Fish	15:32-39	8:1-13		
Jesus Causes a Fig Tree to Wither	21:18-22	11:12-14		
Jesus Calms a Storm	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	



When Jesus held a cup of wine at the Last Supper [about 3 years later] and said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you” (Luke 22:20), we wonder if any of them remembered the wedding in Cana where old covenant water became new covenant wine.

– Kenneth Gangel



***Why Turn Water to Wine?* by Dr. Nicholas J. Schaser**

Jesus' use of water to produce wine echoes the prophecy of Joel, which details an abundance of wine and purifying waters in the messianic age: "In that day, the mountains shall drip with **wine** (עסײם *asis*)... and all the stream beds of Judah shall flow with **water** (מײם *mayim*); a **spring** shall come forth from the House of the Lord" (Joel 3:18; cf. Amos 9:13). The fact that John's Gospel is particularly interested in Jesus' offer of **life-giving water** supports the likelihood that His first miracle alludes to Joel's prophetic words (cf. John 3:23; 4:7-15, 46; 5:7; 7:38). These ancient contexts underscore **Jesus' role as a heavenly Savior.**

***Why Turn Water to Wine?* by Dr. Nicholas J. Schaser**

- Jesus' first sign validates His own **messianic identity** and recalls the **prophetic vision** of time when the blessings of water and wine would flow in abundance.
- Jesus' sign of turning water into wine alludes to divine cleansing for Israel. The transformed water comes from "six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding two or three *metretas*" (John 2:6). A *metretes* was an ancient measure of about ten gallons. Look at John's exact numbers: **six** jars with **two** or **three** *metretas* each. Six multiplied by two is 12; six times three is 18.
- **Twelve** signifies the tribes of Israel (cf. Matthew 19:28; Revelation 21:12) and **eighteen** alludes to God's gift of renewed life or prosperity (Luke 13:11-16). In the system of gematria, in which each Hebrew letter also represents a number, the word for "life" [חַי *chai*] equals 18.
- Thus, Jesus' sign shows that He has come to **purify all Israel** and offer the gift of **eternal life** to the whole world.

What About Our Lives?

You probably don't need Jesus to turn water into wine for you. But perhaps you do need Jesus to take the messed-up parts of your life and make them right again. Or to take that deep-seated feeling of loneliness, or inadequacy, or hopelessness, or anxiety, or fear, or shame, and to turn it into something else.

– Kevin Wood