

The first sign in the Gospel of John

Signs

Semeion say-mi'-on from Semaino see-mah'-ee -no - to signify a legal term used in evidence or a scientific term used in a proof

1st sign John 2:1-11

The Miracle at Cana

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

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

7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

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

9 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, 10 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."

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

Cana

Cana was located about 7 km north east of Nazareth (Shepherd's Historical Atlas, 1923)

The village is probably Kafar, Kanna in Modern Israel

It is also mentioned in John 4:46 when Jesus is there visiting and asked by an official to come to Capernaum to heal his son and in John 21:2 when John indicates that Nathanael (Bartholomew) comes from Cana of Galilee

The wedding probably (by tradition) took place on a Wednesday, late in the day and typically lasted for several days. It was a very happy and important event in the life of the Jewish community.

Jesus' Mother (Mary) was there for the wedding and Jesus with his disciples were invited. And so he came, with five (?) disciples.

Provision of the wedding feast was the responsibility of the groom's family. To run out of wine was a very bad thing, socially. Some commentators say that the bride's family could have sued the groom's family for lack of support if this happened.

Regardless, it would have been a very bad thing.

And it happened.

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

**4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us?
My hour has not yet come."**

5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

The comment:

The words are what they are, but the tone in which they are stated is not indicated.

"Woman" is the same word Jesus used when he asked John to care for his mother when he was on the cross (19:26). There is no good English word for it and it might also be translated as "Lady", as a title of respect.

"What does that have to do with us?" "What have I to do with you?" This was a common conversational phrase of the time, like, "Don't worry, you don't quite understand what is going on; leave things to me and I will settle this in my own way."

So perhaps Jesus said, "Darling Mother, you may not fully understand, but I will take care of this in my way."

And Mary responded by telling the servants, "Do what he says."

The miracle:

1 - Happened at a wedding. – Jesus was at home at this happy occasion.

2 – It happened in a humble home in a village in Galilee – a place where nothing but the best was good enough.

3 – It happened in response, as an act of kindness toward ordinary people.

4 - It happened to spare them from hurt.

Significance of the events:

1 - Mary instinctively trusted her son. She instinctively went to him when something went wrong. This is called faith.

2 – Even when Mary did not understand what Jesus was going to do, she trusted him in faith that he would do what was correct and proper. The happiest people trust Jesus, even when they have no idea what he will do.

3 – She did not tell him how to solve the problem. This is called trust.

The "my hour" statement from Jesus indicates he, from the beginning, knew what the end would be.

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John tells those who would not know that the pots were there for purification. (for washing the feet when entering the home and for hand washing before a meal and between courses.

The outcome was about 180 gallons of very good (excellent) wine. More than any wedding party would ever need.

- The grace of Jesus is sufficient – more than sufficient for every need.
- The grace of Jesus is good, more than needed.

When the grace of Jesus comes to men and women (is poured out onto men and women), there is enough to spare for all. It is called the abundant grace of our Lord.

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

When Jesus comes into a person's life, it is like changing water into wine.

What better place to start?

The examples of signs began in a simple home, during a joyous event, in a small town, among friends, in kind response to a humble need.

The sign manifested His Glory – Demonstrated his father's love and care.

John doesn't say what the reaction to anyone else was, or if anyone else, other than the servants actually knew, but his disciples saw and believed. Evidently the sign was for the benefit of the disciples.

Sign = witness and belief.