

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

NOTHING RECORDED	NOTHING RECORDED	NOTHING RECORDED	CHAPTER 2, VERSES 1-11
			<p>2:1 - And the third day¹ there was a marriage² in Cana of Galilee³; and the mother⁴ of Jesus was there⁵:</p> <p>2:2 - And both Jesus was called⁶, and his disciples⁷, to the marriage².</p> <p>2:3 - And when they wanted⁸ wine⁹, the mother⁴ of Jesus saith¹⁰ unto him, They have no¹¹ wine⁹.</p> <p>2:4 - Jesus saith unto her, Woman¹², what have I to do with thee¹³? mine hour¹⁴ is not yet come¹⁵.</p> <p>2:5 - His mother⁴ saith unto the servants¹⁶, Whatsoever he saith¹⁷ unto you, do it¹⁸.</p> <p>2:6 - And there were set there¹⁹ six²⁰ waterpots²¹ of stone²², after the manner²³ of the purifying²⁴ of the Jews²⁵, containing two or three firkins²⁶ apiece²⁷.</p> <p>2:7 - Jesus saith unto them, Fill²⁸ the waterpots²² with water²⁹. And they filled²⁸ them up to the brim³⁰.</p> <p>2:8 - And he saith unto them, Draw out³¹ now, and bear³² unto the governor³³ of the feast³⁴. And they bare it.</p> <p>2:9 - When the ruler³⁵ of the feast³⁴ had tasted³⁶ the water²⁹ that was made wine⁹, and knew not whence³⁷ it was: (but the servants¹⁶ which drew³¹ the water²⁹ knew;) the governor³³ of the feast³⁴ called³⁸ the bridegroom³⁹,</p> <p>2:10 - And saith unto him, Every man⁴⁰ at the beginning⁴¹ doth set forth⁴² good⁴³ wine⁹; and when men have well drunk⁴⁴, then that which is worse⁴⁵: but thou hast kept⁴⁶ the good⁴³ wine⁹ until now⁴⁷.</p> <p>2:11 - This beginning⁴¹ of miracles⁴⁸ did Jesus in Cana of Galilee³, and manifested⁴⁹ forth⁵⁰ his glory⁵¹; and his disciples⁷ believed on him⁵².</p>

CHRONOLOGY: Between 17 February 27CE through 17 March 27CE

LOCATION: The village of Cana of Galilee (probably "Kana el-jelil", approximately 13 miles north of Nazareth)








COMMENTARY: "John's record of the marriage in Cana is fragmentary, it does not by any means tell the whole story." (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page135). "The very richness of the Fourth Gospel presents those who would study it and him who would expound it with a problem. Always there are two things. There is a simple surface story that anyone can understand and re-tell; but there is also a wealth of deeper meaning for him who has the eagerness to search and the eye to see and the mind to understand." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 95). On the surface we see a simple story of a problem at a local marriage in the small village in Cana. The host had run out of wine, and the guests were in need of more. This was a cultural embarrassment. Mary, the mother of Jesus, asks the Savior to produce more wine. The implied message was to perform a miracle. Jesus explains that the time of the ministry had not yet arrived, but Mary was confident in His compassion. Jesus directed the servants to fill large ceremonial water pots with water, and then with an act of Priesthood power, He changed the water to wine. The wine was good, and the guest were cared for. The underlying message is one of atonement. The world is not capable of meeting their eternal needs. In spite of our best efforts, we are found wanting. Only through the atonement of Jesus Christ can we be truly filled. The marriage story at Cana is one of hope. It is a great introduction to His mortal ministry. It foreshadows what He was going to do for all mankind.

FOOTNOTES:

1- **the third day** – The word "third" is translated from the Greek word "τρίτος" or "tritos". The word means literally "the third". The word "day" is translated from the Greek word "ἡμέρα" or "hēmera". The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "And the third day" as "On the third day". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:1, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). It means the day, and used more specifically to mean the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night. The Jewish day does not begin and end at midnight as does our secular calendar day. Midnight was not a distinguishable astronomical event. In the era before the modern clock, a specific hour of the night could not be precisely known, whereas an hour of the day was easily determined by sighting the location of the sun. Thus, the day had to begin by precise, simple and universally recognized standards. This meant that the day had to be reckoned either from the beginning of night or the beginning of day. In Jewish time, the day begins with the onset of night (the appearance of the stars) followed by the morning (which technically begins with the appearance of the North Star). According to some Jewish teachers, night and morning begin with sunset and sunrise respectively. For that is how the Torah describes it: "And there was evening and there was morning, the first day." For this reason, the Sabbath begins on Friday night and ends with the appearance of the stars on Saturday night.

Since the Jews view the beginning and ending of the day so differently from the Western world, it is often confusing to determine what statements like "the third day means. Joseph Smith helps us a little with his translation of the Bible. He changed it to read, "the third day of the week" (Joseph Smith Translation of John 2:1). Jews count the week from Sabbath to Sabbath. The Sabbath is the crown of the week; the crown of Jewish Holy Days; the crown of the Jewish spirit; the crown of the Jewish imagination. Everything builds to the Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath begins at sundown on the equivalent of our Friday evening, and concludes the appearance of the first three stars ("bein hashmashot") on the equivalent of our Saturday evening. It is called, "Yom Shabbat" or "Sabbath Day". In this passage, we are looking for the third day. In Scripture the number three is one of the so called "perfect numbers." The other "perfect numbers" are seven, ten, and twelve. In Scripture the number three signifies completeness or perfection and points to what is solid, real, and substantial. As a number which indicates completeness, the number three always identifies some important event in Salvation History. It symbolizes divine perfection.

The third day of the week corresponds to our Monday evening through our Tuesday when the first three stars appear in the sky. The Jewish week can be illustrated as follows;

1st day of Week	2nd day of Week	3rd day of Week	4th day of Week	5th day of Week	6th day of Week	7th day of Week
Yom Rishon	Yom Sheini	Yom Shlishi	Yom R'vi'i	Yom Chamishi	Yom Shishi	Yom Shabbat
						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

The third day of the week was significant in relation to a Jewish marriage. The Mishnah records, "A virgin is married on Wednesday, and a widow on Thursday. For twice weekly are the courts in session in the towns, on Monday and on Thursday. So if he [the husband] had a complaint at to virginity, he goes early to court." (The Mishnah, The Third Division: Women, "Ketubot", page 378). This can be confusing since the scripture reads that the marriage took place on the third day of the week (Tuesday) and the Mishnah says that the marriage of a maiden was to take place on a Wednesday. The answer might be that the marriage was not a ceremony as we have today with a walk down an aisle and have the exchange of "I do's". The ancient marriage covenant took place at least a year prior with the marriage contract, which is discussed in footnote #2 of this chapter. The marriage itself was actually the consummation. On the eve of the marriage, or consummation, the bride was traditionally led to the house of the Father of the Bridegroom. This would be Tuesday, the third day of the week. After the Father of the Bride reviews the term of the contract and agrees that everything is in order, the couple is escorted to the marriage chamber. The doors are closed and friends stand watch by the door. This would be after Sundown on Tuesday, which is Wednesday by way of Jewish reckoning. The couple arises from the marriage chamber on Wednesday with the Bride, hopefully, display signs of her virginity. The marriage is now consummated, on a Wednesday. "John, the writer of the fourth Gospel (and Joseph Smith, the inspired reviser of the Bible text), 'may have pointed to an ancient Jewish tradition, which is to perform weddings on Tuesday, the third day of the week, Sunday being the first (John 2:1). This tradition is based on Genesis 1:9-13, where the word 'good' (tov) is used twice for the third day of creation instead of once only for the other days. Accordingly, important matters like weddings were decided, settled, or celebrated on the third day of the week to call for a double blessing from God." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 107-108).

"The following day, when Jesus appeared a second time in view, and when the first two disciples joined Him, was the Saturday, or Jewish Sabbath. It was, therefore, only the following day, or Sunday, that Jesus returned to Galilee, calling others by the way. And the third day after it - that is, on the Wednesday - was the marriage in Cana." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 345).

The number "three is seen as a symbol of balance or synthesis. It represents the reconciliation of opposites." (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 176). "In Judaism, three usually represents completeness." (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 176). The Jewish day ends with the appearance of three stars. Another author records that the number three symbolizes the trinity of marriage; when a man, a woman, and God are united by covenant for eternity. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 114-115).

2- **marriage** – The word marriage is translated from the Greek word "γάμος" or "gamos". It means a wedding or marriage festival, a wedding banquet, or a wedding feast. Marriage is vitally important in Judaism. Refraining from marriage is not considered holy, as it is in some other religions. On the contrary, it is considered unnatural. The Talmud says that an unmarried man is constantly thinking of sin. The Talmud also tells of a rabbi who was introduced to a young unmarried rabbi. The older rabbi told the younger one not to come into his presence again until he was married. All teachers of the Law were required to be married.

The marriage process of ancient Israel does not readily equate to our modern customs. Consequently, understanding the marriage at Cana must start by understanding the ancient Jewish marriage protocol. An Ancient Jewish wedding can be divided into three major categories; **Contract, Consummation, and Celebration**.

1. CONTRACT or KETUBBAH:

The age & circumstances of marriage: It was quite common to be engaged to a relative.

In fact, it was almost custom for a young woman to marry her paternal uncle for inheritance purposes. Inter-marriage among the Tribes of Israel was common, but it was preferred to keep things within the tribe. Jewish priests had a custom, bordering on law, of choosing their wives from priestly families, and economic classes usually kept within themselves. A young Jewish girl was able to be promised in marriage between the age of twelve to twelve and a half years old. Edersheim wrote, "Minors—in the case of girls up to twelve years and one day—might be betrothed or given away by their father. In that case, however, they had afterwards the right of insisting upon divorce." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 133). Until such a time, her father still had rights over her. He was able to sell her as a slave to a Jew for up to seven years. After the age of twelve and one half, the young girl was able to be married. Only the husband could dismiss her by giving her his "writ of renouncement". The contrary was impossible (Mark 10:12 was written in Rome and reflected the juridical situation of that village.) Adultery was punishable by death. When a woman went out, she had to veil herself and she was banned from speaking to men. Marriage was arranged by her parents.



Since the young girl worked at home, her departure from it demanded an economic compensation. The Talmud recommends that a man marry at age 18, or somewhere between 16 and 24. Elder McConkie wrote, "**Men married at sixteen or seventeen years of age, almost never later than twenty; and women at a somewhat younger age, often when not older than fourteen.**" (The Mortal Messiah, Elder Bruce R. McConkie, Volume 1, page 223). Scholar Sidney B. Sperry noted, "[W]e know that it was the custom among the Jews for their young men to marry at an early age, generally between the years of sixteen and eighteen. And secondly, it is well known that the Jews considered marriage to be a religious obligation." (Paul's Life and Letters, p.9)



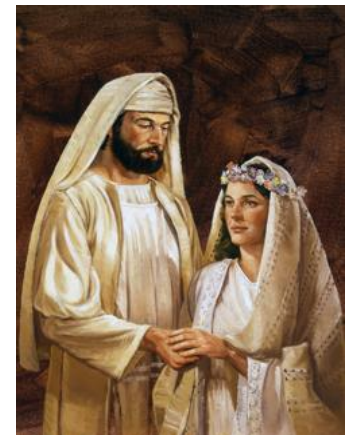
The bride chooses her bridegroom: Arranged marriages were common, but not as restricting as it initial seems. It is true that the Father of the bride negotiated the marriage of his daughter with the groom, the groom's father, or the groom's official representative without the bride being present. The father of the bride was responsible for looking out for his daughters best interest, including the selection of a spouse. That being said, the bride still retained the last say. Edersheim wrote, "**Where the social intercourse between the sexes was nearly as unrestricted as among ourselves, so far as consistent with Eastern manners, it would, of course, be natural for a young man to make personal choice of his bride. Of this Scripture affords abundant evidence. But, at any rate, the woman had, in case of betrothal or marriage, to give her own free and expressed consent, without which a union was invalid.**" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 133). This was especially important since daughters could be betrothed as young children, far before puberty.

The Engagement Gift: At the betrothal, the bridegroom, personally or by representative, handed to the bride a piece of money or a letter, it being expressly stated in each case that the man thereby espoused the woman. Edersheim clarified, "**At the betrothal, the bridegroom, personally or by deputy, handed to the bride a piece of money or a letter, it being expressly stated in each case that the man thereby espoused the woman.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 354). This should not be confused with the money required by the marriage contract, or the dowry. Betrothals were usually done by offering the gift of an engagement present to the fiancé. The costliness of the present typically depended on the means of the man. Edersheim wrote, "**According to Rabbinical law certain formalities were requisite to make a betrothal legally valid. These consisted either in handing to a woman, directly or through messengers, a piece of money, however small, or else a letter, provided it were in each case expressly stated before witnesses, that the man thereby intended to espouse the woman as his wife.**" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 139).

Ketubbah - The legal contract signed by the Father of the bride: The Ketubba, literally the "document", was a two way contract or covenant document. It also served a secondary function protecting the bride. The marriage contract required that money be paid by the bridegroom. "**The marriage contract, called a ketubah, literally 'document', is a legal agreement recording the financial obligations which a husband undertakes toward his wife.**" (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, pages 188-189). The Mishnah records, "**A virgin - her marriage contract is two hundred [zuz]. And a widow, a maneh [one hundred zuz].**" (The Mishnah, The Third Division: Women, "Ketubot", page 378). These were apparently minimum monetary values. Later in the Mishnah it says, "[I]f her marriage contract was worth a thousand zuz..." (The Mishnah, The Third Division: Women, "Ketubot", page 398). "**From the Mishnah (Bab. B. x. 4) we also learn that there were regular Shitre Erusin, or writings of betrothal, drawn up by the authorities (the costs being paid by the bridegroom). These stipulated the mutual obligations, the dowry, and all other points on which the parties had agreed. The Shitre Erusin were different from the regular Chethubah (literally, writing), or marriage contract, without which the Rabbis regarded a marriage as merely legalised concubinage (Cheth. v. 1). The Chethubah provided a settlement of at least two hundred denars for a maiden, and one hundred denars for a widow, while the priestly council at Jerusalem fixed four hundred denars for a priest's daughter. Of course these sums indicate only the legal minimum, and might be increased indefinitely at pleasure, though opinions differ whether any larger sums might be legally exacted, if matters did not go beyond betrothal.**" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 137-138). The amount of 200 zuz is equivalent to 50 shekel in the Jewish monetary system. Each shekel is generally valued at approximately 20 grams of silver, so that 200 zuz, strictly speaking, should equal the value of about 1000 grams of silver, or one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of silver. The value of 1000 grams of pure silver was \$553.64 on February 5, 2015. This is obviously not a huge sum of money. Even so, it is believed that the 200 zuz represents the amount of money required to feed and clothe a woman for one year. The amount which the father of a girl from Jerusalem would receive, at the time of betrothal of a spouse who was not from the same town was especially high: An inhabitant of a small town who married a girl from Jerusalem must give her, as a dowry in marriage, her weight in gold; a girl of a small village who married a man from Jerusalem must bring as dowry his weight in gold (Lam Rabba 4:2). This text showed the importance that was attached to Jerusalem, and well as the fact that the cost of living was much higher in Jerusalem than elsewhere.

The Ketubbah also included a complete inventory of the brides possessions and estate. It was an accounting of all assets; cash, property, livestock, businesses, etc. The bride was required to add to the grooms estate, but the Ketubbah also protected those assets in the event of divorce. Once all the details were agreed upon, three originals were signed. One copy was taken by the bridegroom, one for the father of the bride, and the third one was sealed and delivered to the synagogue where the marriage was recorded with the genealogies of the people. Only the elders were authorized to break the seal. Once signed it could only be broken by a legal divorce.

The couple is betrothed (Erusin Qiddushin): From the moment of betrothal both parties were regarded, and treated in law (as to inheritance, adultery, need of formal divorce), as if they had been actually married, except as regarded their living together. Elder McConkie taught that the Jews actually held a Betrothal ceremony to establish and celebrate this event. He wrote, "**Marriages and all that attended them had a significance and an import among the Jews that bespoke the divine origin of the sacred ordinance. They and their fathers believed that a proper marriage in the house of Israel had eternal implications. In Jesus' day there was a formal betrothal ceremony, after which both parties - as pertaining to inheritance, adultery, and the need for a formal divorce - were considered as married except that they did not live together as husband and wife until after the later and second ceremony.**" (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 299). Generally, a festive meal closed the ceremony of betrothal, but not in Galilee, where, habits being more simple and pure, that which sometimes ended in sin was avoided.



Dowry or Nedan / Nedanjah: The future husband had to pay the dowry, which consequently became the property of the woman in case of renouncement. The dowry also included property and wealth that came with her from her father. I would equate this to a modern day prenuptial agreement. Edersheim explains, "**On the other hand, a father was**

bound to provide a dowry (nedan, nedanjah) for his daughter conformable to her station in life; and a second daughter could claim a portion equal to that of her elder sister, or else one-tenth of all immovable property. In case of the father's death, the sons, who, according to Jewish law, were his sole heirs, were bound to maintain their sisters, even though this would have thrown them upon public charity, and to endow each with a tenth part of what had been left. The dowry, whether in money, property, or jewelry, was entered into the marriage contract, and really belonged to the wife, the husband being obliged to add to it one-half more, if it consisted of money or money's value; and if of jewelry, etc., to assign to her four-fifths of its value. In case of separation (not divorce) he was bound to allow her a proper aliment, and to re-admit her to his table and house on the Sabbath-eve. A wife was entitled to one-tenth of her dowry for pin-money. If a father gave away his daughter without any distinct statement about her dowry, he was bound to allow her at least fifty sus; and if it had been expressly stipulated that she was to have no dowry at all, it was delicately enjoined that the bridegroom should, before marriage, give her sufficient for the necessary outfit. An orphan was to receive a dowry of at least fifty sus from the parochial authorities." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 138). During the period of betrothal, the dowry was in effect as though the marriage had been consummated. During this time, the bridegroom had to feed, lodge, and clothe his fiancé. If she was convicted of adultery, she was renounced by a Letter of Divorce. If the bridegroom died, the fiancé was considered his widow. The processes of betrothal has significant symbolic overtures. Symbols could be defined as follows;

The Symbol	Meaning
The Father of the Bride -	God the Father
The Dowry -	The Atonement
The Bride Groom -	Jesus Christ
The Ketubbah -	The New and Everlasting Covenant
The Waiting Period -	Mortal Probation
The Bride -	The Faithful

The dowry has its origins clear back in the Book of Genesis. Jacobs sons practiced this same process. Genesis records, "Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife." (Genesis 34:12).

The waiting period: Generally, marriage was celebrated one year after the betrothal. Even so, it could last as long as seven years. The longer waiting period is often connected to the need of the bridegroom to raise the money required in the marriage contract. Speaking of the waiting period between betrothal and consummation, Matthews wrote, "Girls were usually married as soon as they reached puberty, while boys often waited until they received their inheritance or had earned enough to establish their own household." (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 21). Once the monetary requirements were in order, the father of the bride was notified and the Father then set a date for the consummation of the marriage. Until the terms of the contract were met, the bridegroom was not permitted have sexual relations with the bride. For this reason, the betrothal usually lasted one year. This would assure that the bride was not with child from previous discretions. After a year of watchful care, the bridegroom could be sure that he was marrying an non-pregnant wife.

Interestingly enough, the waiting period was a time for the married couple to date and get to know each other before they consummated their marriage. In the modern world, we date prior to marriage. Dating in ancient Israel was done under the watchful eyes of the maid of honor and the friend of the groom. They assured that the dates were moral and without intimacy.

The maid of honor & friend of the bridegroom: Certainly, during the time of betrothal, no intimate relationship were permitted. For this purpose, a maiden was assigned to the bride to accompany her wherever she went. She was to watch over her and assure that her chastity was maintained. The bride would be considered unfit and the marriage contract violated should she have sexual relations. The bridegroom had a right to a pure and undefiled bride. Likewise, "The friend of the bridegroom' was the person selected by the bridegroom to conduct the marriage negotiations on his part. It was he who carried messages between the bridegroom and the bride during the time of betrothal... When, on occasion of the marriage, they were brought to see each other in a private room or under a canopy provided for the purpose, the 'friend of the bridegroom' stood without, eager to catch the first words of delight which came from the bridegroom's lips, expressive of the satisfaction he experienced on conversing with his betrothed. This position John the Baptist claims for himself figuratively. He is not the Christ, but bears a relation to him similar to that borne by the paranymp to the bridegroom." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 423).

2. CONSUMMATION or CHUPPAH:

The Date: The date for a marriage was set by the Father of the bride. According to Jewish Law, a marriage could not be held on the Sabbath, or the day prior to the Sabbath. That ruled out Friday and Saturday. Similarly, a marriage could not be held on a holy day, i.e. Passover, Yom Kippur, etc. Virgins were married on Tuesday, with the Consummation taking place on Tuesday evening or what would be the start of Wednesday by Jewish reckoning. The bride would then show the sign of her virginity on Wednesday morning, with a celebration ensuing Wednesday afternoon. The day of the week was significant since the Sanhedrim met on Thursday. If the bride turned out to not be a virgin, and could not produce proof of virginity, the case would be brought to trial on Thursday. Edersheim writes, "Marriage with a maiden was commonly celebrated on a Wednesday afternoon, which allowed the first days of the week for preparation, and enabled the husband, if he had a charge to prefer against the previous chastity of his bride, to make immediate complaint before the local Sanhedrim, which sat every Thursday. On the other hand, the marriage of a widow was celebrated on Thursday afternoon, which left three days of the week for 'rejoicing with her.'" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, page 139). Because the Jews followed such a strict format for marriage, a series of dates can be established for occurrences involving the Savior surrounding the marriage at Cana. Edersheim continues, "This circumstance enables us, with some certainty, to arrange the date of the events which preceded the marriage in Cana. Inferring from the accompanying festivities that it was the marriage of a maiden, and therefore took place on a Wednesday, we have the following succession of events:—On Thursday (beginning as every Jewish day with the previous evening), testimony of the Baptist to the Sanhedrim-deputation from Jerusalem. On Friday (John 1:29), "John seeth Jesus coming unto him," and significantly preacheth the first sermon about "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." On Saturday (v 35), John's second sermon on the same text; the consequent conversion of St. John and St. Andrew, and the calling of St. Peter. On Sunday (v 43), our Lord Himself preacheth His first Messianic sermon, and calls Philip and Nathanael. On



"the third day" after it, that is, on Wednesday, was the marriage in Cana of Galilee. The significance of these dates, when compared with those in the week of our Lord's Passion, will be sufficiently evident." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 139-140).

"The Mishnah (Kethuboth 1) ordained that the wedding of a virgin should take place on Wednesday. This would agree with the guess that i 39 immediately preceded the Sabbath; the action of i40-42 would have taken place on Saturday evening Sunday; that of i 43-50 on Sunday evening-Monday; Monday evening-Tuesday would have been the second day of the journey; and Jesus would have arrived at Cana on Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., pages 97-98).

Purification before the Consummation: There is an element of personal worthiness that seems to be required for the marriage covenant to be binding under heaven. The marriage couple was to be prepared for this sacred event by seeking out God's spirit. There appears to be an implied understanding that the marriage covenant required the Holy Spirit of promise to be binding, and that was only possible through worthiness. Elder McConkie explained, "**Devout persons fasted and confessed their sins before marriage and believed they gained a forgiveness of sins by entering the holy order of matrimony. They even had an allegory among them that 'God Himself had spoken the words of blessing over the cup at the union of our first parents, when Michael and Gabriel acted as groomsmen, and the angelic choir sang the wedding hymn.'** (Edersheim 1:353)." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 299). In addition to fasting, and spiritual preparations, the couple was expected to repent of sins. This culminated in being ceremonially wash and pronounced clean. This was not a baptism, but a washing away of sins. "**Although Judaism does not celebrate birth with baptism, it does welcome 'new-born' Jews-converts and non-Jewish adopted children - into the community through the ritual of 'mikveh'. Jewish women traditionally go to the 'mikvah' before their wedding.**" (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 187). After the couple was washed, they were clothed in white garments symbolizing their worthiness to partake of God's greatest blessing; which are associated with the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. One author wrote, "**Other features of the wedding ceremony include immersing oneself in a mikvah prior to the wedding as an act of spiritual purification; fasting before the wedding, symbolic of the close connection between life and death; reciting a 'viddui' (confessional prayer) as at a deathbed; wearing a white kittle (for the man), symbolic of purity and vulnerability, since the kittle will also form part of his burial shroud; reciting seven blessings to invoke good luck and blessing...**" (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 189).

Preparing the Bride: The morning of the wedding, the bride, dressed by her parents, was covered with a veil that hid her eyes. "**The veiling 'bedeken' of the bride before the wedding ceremony, symbolic of female modesty.**" (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 188). Her friends put a sash on her. The sash symbolizes the binding of a oath. That evening, the bridegroom would remove the veil, and unfasten the sash. Before leaving the house of her father, the bride sang songs of lamentation. The maid of honor took care of attending to the beauty of the bride who was accompanied by virgins. "**The custom of a bridal veil—either for the bride alone, or spread over the couple—was of ancient date. It was interdicted for a time by the Rabbis after the destruction of Jerusalem. Still more ancient was the wearing of crowns (Cant 3:11; Isa 61:10; Eze 16:12), which was also prohibited after the last Jewish war. Palm and myrtle branches were borne before the couple, grain or money was thrown about, and music preceded the procession, in which all who met it were, as a religious duty, expected to join. The Parable of the Ten Virgins, who, with their lamps, were in expectancy of the bridegroom (Matt 25:1), is founded on Jewish custom. For, according to Rabbinical authority, such lamps carried on the top of staves were frequently used, while ten is the number always mentioned in connection with public solemnities. The marriage festivities generally lasted a week, but the bridal days extended over a full month.**" (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 143). Zondervan describes the same scene as follows, "**On the day of the wedding the bride is dressed in white, elaborately embroidered robes, bedecked herself with jewels, and put on a veil and a garland. The bridegroom, attended by friends and accompanied by musicians and singers, went to the bride's house; and then after receiving her from her parents with their blessing he conducted the whole party back to his own house. On the way other friends of the bride and groom joined the party, and there was much music and dancing. A feast was held at the bridegroom's house. Later in the evening the bride's parents escorted her to the nuptial chamber, while he was led there by his friends of the bride's parents. The next day the festivities were resumed and continued for one or two weeks. The wedding festivities included much music and joking.**" (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 889).

The Eve of the Marriage (Nissuin, Chathnuth): On the eve of the marriage, or rather the consummation thereof, the bride was led from her paternal home to that of the husband. From a distance, the bride could hear the sound of music, gradually coming closer. The bridal procession was approaching. Servants or friends were assigned to distributed wine, oil, and nuts among the children. The bride was covered with the bridal veil, her long hair flowing, surrounded by her companions, and led by 'the friends of the bridegroom,' and the 'the children of the bride-chamber.' All were in festive array; some carried torches, or lamps on poles; those nearest had myrtle-branches and chaplets of flowers. Every one rose to salute the procession, or join it; and it was deemed almost a religious duty to break into praise of the beauty, the modesty, or the virtues of the bride. Edersheim records the same scene as follows, "**On the evening of the actual marriage (Nissuin, Chathnuth), the bride was led from her paternal home to that of her husband. First came the merry sounds of music; then they who distributed among the people wine and oil, and nuts among the children; next the bride, covered with the bridal veil, her long hair flowing., surrounded by her companions, and led by 'the friends of the bridegroom,' and 'the children of the bride-chamber'. All around were in festive array; some carried torches, or lamps on poles; those nearest had myrtle-branches and chaplet of flowers. Every one arose to salute the procession, or join it; and it was deemed almost a religious duty to break into praise of the beauty, the modesty, or the virtues of the bride.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 354). When the bride arrived at her new home, she was led to her husband. Some such formula as 'Take her according to the Law of Moses and of Israel,' would be spoken, and the bride and bridegroom crowned with garlands. Then a formal legal instrument, called the Kethubah, was signed one last time, which set forth that the bridegroom undertook to work for her, to honor, keep, and care for her, as is the manner of the men of Israel; that he promised to give his maiden-wife at least two hundred Zuz (or more it might be), and to increase her own dowry (which, in the case of a poor orphan, the authorities supplied) by at least one half, and that he also undertook to lay it out for her to the best advantage, all his own possessions being guaranteed for it. Then, after the prescribed washing of hands and benediction, the marriage-supper began, the cup being filled, and the solemn prayer of bridal benediction spoken over it. Elder McConkie recorded the this part of the process as follows, "**On the evening of the marriage, the bride was taken in a bridal procession to her husband's home. It was customary for friends and neighbors and onlookers to join the procession. A formal ceremony was performed; a legal instrument was signed; the required washings were performed and benedictions spoken; the cup was filled, blessed, and drunk; and the marriage supper commenced. The marriage feast lasted from a day to a week or more, with a governor of the feast acting as master of ceremonies.**" (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 299-300).

The Procession: Outside the family's house, no religious ceremony took place. "**The usual festivities consisted of a procession in which the bridegroom's friends brought the bride to the groom's house, and then a wedding supper; seemingly the festivities lasted seven days.**" (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., pages 97). It began with a procession leaving the bride's home. It was preceded by musicians and participants carrying torches or lamps, among whom were the father of the groom, and friends of the spouse and bride. Most often the procession arrived late because they were haggling over last minute clauses in the contract of marriage, called the "Ketubbah". The procession led to the house of the father of the groom, but typically traveled by all the homes of the guests who joined the



procession and traveled with the bride to her new husband. **"The ceremony itself consisted in leading the bride into the house of the bridegroom, with certain formalities, mostly dating from very ancient times."** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 139). Typically, it was at the home of the father of the bridegroom that the marriage was consummated and celebrated. The father of the bride blessed the bride with seven blessings. Then the groom gave a gold or silver ring to his bride saying: "Behold, you are made holy for me according to the Religion of Moses and of Israel." He then proclaimed a blessing over a cup of wine meant for the couple. The banquet, accompanied by song and dance, followed. When the groom came in order to be one with his wife, his friends left and extinguished their torches. Only friends of the groom remained outside, waiting for the signs of virginity.

The Friends of the Bridegroom: The friends of the bridegroom had specific responsibilities necessary for a successful marriage. They assured fidelity prior to the consummation. This protected both the bride and groom. They acted as witnesses of the chuppah or consummation. They also assured that the wedding followed the proper design. **"It deserves notice, that at the marriage in Cana there is no mention of "the friends of the bridegroom," or, as we would call them, the groomsmen. This was in strict accordance with Jewish custom, for groomsmen were customary in Judaea, but not in Galilee (Cheth. 25 a). This also casts light upon the locality where John 3:29 was spoken, in which "the friend of the bridegroom" is mentioned. But this expression is quite different from that of "children of the bridechamber," which occurs in Matthew 9:15, where the scene is once more laid in Galilee. The term "children of the bridechamber" is simply a translation of the Rabbinical "bene Chuppah," and means the guests invited to the bridal. In Judaea there were at every marriage two groomsmen or "friends of the bridegroom"—one for the bridegroom, the other for his bride. Before marriage, they acted as a kind of intermediaries between the couple; at the wedding they offered gifts, waited upon the bride and bridegroom, and attended them to the bridal chamber, being also, as it were, the guarantors of the bride's virgin chastity."** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 140-141).

Finalizing the Kethubah: **"The wedding itself did not include a religious ceremony, although it is probable that the betrothal was ratified by an oath."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 889). There is evidence that the consummation of a marriage was preceded by a sacred covenant. We are not sure what this looked like at the time of Jesus. **"In some communities, the bride and groom are covered by or wrapped in a tallit, symbolic of God's sheltering love."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 188). This is done as the bride and groom take each other by the hand and the clasping hands are bound by the Jewish Tallit. The leather bands bind the commandments of God to their marriage, and with it God's greatest blessings are sealed upon them. Edersheim records that the bride **"Arrived at her new home, she was led to her husband. Some such formula as 'Take her according to the Law of Moses and of Israel,' would be spoken, and the bride and bridegroom crowned with garlands. Then a formal legal instrument, called the Kethubah was signed, which set forth that the bridegroom undertook to work for her, to honour, keep, and care for her, as is the manner of the men."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 354). It would appear that there was no ceremony that bound the marriage, but rather a covenant made with God. This is supported in at least two Old Testament passages. First, **"Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine."** (Ezekiel 16:8). Then, **"Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant."** (Malachi 2:14). Most people do not understand this covenant concept and believe that the marriage was somehow binding by the simple act of entering the bridegroom's house. One author wrote, **"Originally, the bride entered the marriage covenant by physically entering the groom's house and beginning her new life with him."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 188).

The Bridal Chamber or Chuppah Room: Finally, the marriage would be consummated as the bride and groom united in the bridal chamber. Edersheim wrote, **"Then, after the prescribed washing of hands and benedictions, the marriage supper began - the cup being filled, and the solemn prayer of bridal benediction spoken over it. And so the feast lasted - it might be more than one day - while each sought to contribute, sometimes coarsely, sometimes wisely, to the general enjoyment, till at last the friends of the bridegroom led the bridal pair to the Chedar and the Chuppah, or the bridal chamber and bed."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 354).

Proof of Virginity: The "Chuppah" is known today as the bridal canopy. Originally, and at the time of Jesus, it was known as the "virginity cloth". The virginity cloth was a piece of linen cloth, about 2 feet square, laid under the bride on the bed when she consummated the marriage. A virgin bride would leave blood on the cloth as a sign of her purity and virginity. The bride would use the "Chuppah" as proof of her virginity. Failure to produce the signs of virginity was a breach of the marriage contract. The bridegroom had every right to bring the bride before the local Sanhedrin and bring charges of immorality. A worthy bride retained her Chuppah during her life as proof of a valid and worthy marriage. If a groom falsely accuses his bride of not being a virgin, and she produces a chuppah with the signs of virginity, the husband would be flogged, fined, and prohibited from ever divorcing the bride. On the other hand, if the bride could not produce the appropriate chuppah, **"Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you."** (Deuteronomy 22:21).



At some point, the practice of brides producing a blood stained chuppah was replaced by the practice of making a canopy for the bride to walk under. A sheet was held up on its four corners by wooden poles. The sheet represents the bridal bed. The poles represent the four posts of the bride bed. **"In time, the huppah (marriage canopy) became a symbolic substitute for the groom's house. A custom arose of planting a cedar tree at the birth of a son, a pine or cypress at the birth of a daughter, from which branches, were cut to make the poles of their huppah."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 188).

3. CELEBRATION:

The Feast: The marriage was celebrated for three days if she were a virgin, if not a tribunal was set for the next day. If the bride was not a virgin, she was denounced immediately. If the groom married a widow, the marriage was celebrated for four days. Guest were brought to the marriage to celebrate. **"Entering the spacious, lofty dining room, which would be brilliantly lighted with lamps and candlesticks, the guests are disposed round tables on couches, soft with cushions and covered with tapestry, or seated on chairs. The bridal blessing has been spoken, and the bridal cup emptied. The feast is proceeding - not the common meal, which was generally taken about even, according to the Rabbinic saying, that he who postponed it beyond that hour was as if he swallowed a stone - but a festive evening meal."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 359). The feast was far more than a meal. A feast was something to behold. **"A steward was placed in charge of the arrangements for the feast, orchestrating the festivities and parceling out the wine and other refreshments. To separate these activities from the gathering, a special wedding garment was required for admission to the feast."** (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 225). This was a time for fine apparel and indulgence. It was symbolic for the blessings that come from marriage. Only through and by marriage can we obtain the richest blessings that God has to offer.

The Benediction: The celebration began with a benediction. The benediction closed or ended the betrothal, and started the celebration of the newly married life together. It is significant that the new couple would start life together with a prayer. "With such a "benediction," preceded by a brief formula, with which the bride was handed over to her husband (Tobit vii. 13), the wedding festivities commenced. And so the pair were led towards the bridal chamber (Cheder) and the bridal bed (Chuppah). The bride went with her hair unloosed. Ordinarily, it was most strictly enjoined upon women to have their head and hair carefully covered. This may throw some light upon the difficult passage, 1 Corinthians 11:1-10. We must bear in mind that the apostle there argues with Jews, and that on their own ground, convincing them by a reference to their own views, customs, and legends of the propriety of the practice which he enjoins. From that point of view the propriety of a woman having her head "covered" could not be called in question. The opposite would, to a Jew, have indicated immodesty. Indeed, it was the custom in the case of a woman accused of adultery to have her hair "shorn or shaven," at the same time using this formula: "Because thou hast departed from the manner of the daughters of Israel, who go with their head covered; . . . therefore that has befallen thee which thou hast chosen." This so far explains verses 5 and 6. The expression "power," as applied in verse 10 to the head of woman, seems to refer to this covering, indicating, as it did, that she was under the power of her husband, while the very difficult addition, "because of the angels," may either allude to the presence of the angels and to the well-known Jewish view (based, no doubt, on truth) that those angels may be grieved or offended by our conduct, and bear the sad tidings before the throne of God, or it may possibly refer to the very ancient Jewish belief, that the evil spirits gained power over a woman who went with her head bare." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 142-143).

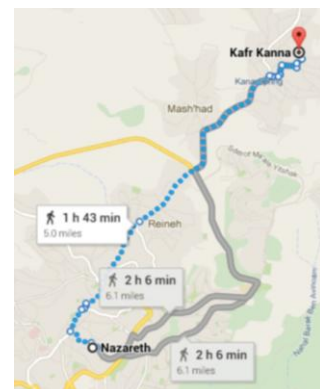
Thereafter: The woman was to look after her husband. The husband had to provide food, clothing and lodging and fulfill the conjugal duties. Besides this, he had to buy back his wife if she were ever captured. He had to get medicine if she fell sick, and a tomb for her burial. Even the very poor were obliged to procure two flute players and one who wailed for the funeral. The woman had to obey her husband, mill the grain, cook, wash, make the meals, nurse the infants, work the wool, and, in some cases, wash the face and feet of her husband. Polygamy was permitted. After 10 years of married life without child, the husband was permitted to take another woman. The right of divorce was exclusively on the side of the husband. The text from Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 24:1) was subject to different interpretations between the Hillelites and Shamaites. For Hillel, things that brought displeasure to the husband gave him the right to dismiss the woman. In case of a divorce, the husband had to return to the woman the dowry prescribed in the contract of marriage. Women had to veil themselves when going outside, so that no one could recognize their face. In the countryside, they were able to take water at the fountain. Women worked in the fields, and sold olives by the door. However, a woman was never allowed to go to the fields alone.

Marriage symbolizes the union between man and Jehovah. Jehovah is the bridegroom. The faithful who have entered into a covenant with Jehovah are the bride. The marriage contract is the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. It is the highest form of Godliness on earth. "According to Jewish tradition, the purpose of marriage is not only to provide couples with companionship and children, but also with fulfillment: 'He who has no wife lives without joy, blessing, goodness...Torah, protection...and peace.' The sages considered marriage the ideal human state, a fitting model for the relationship between God and Israel." (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 188). This leads us to the marriage at Cana. "Jesus' attendance at the marriage in Cana and his participation in the marriage festivities - whatever the reason and whatever part he played - puts a divine stamp of approval upon marriage and its attendant festivities. Those who forbid marriage to any portion of their adherents are not of God" (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 300).

- 3- **Cana of Galilee** – The village of "Cana" has its name translated in this verse from the Greek word "Κανά" or "Kana". It is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew word "קָנָה" or "Qanah". The word means "reed". "Cana of Galilee is so called to distinguish it from Cana in Coelo-Syria. It was a village quite near to Nazareth. Jerome, who stayed in Palestine, says that he saw it from Nazareth." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 96).



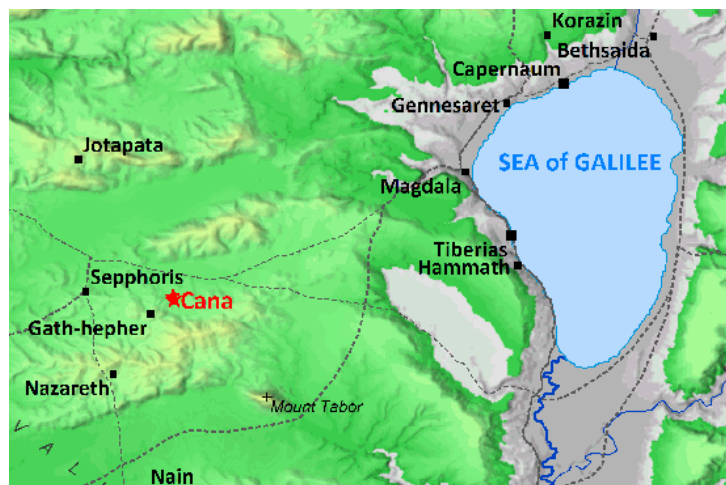
Nazareth was the childhood home of Jesus. Even so, we do not know if it was still the home of His family at the time of this chapter. They may have moved to Cana, a nearby village. If so, it makes sense that Jesus would come to Cana for a family wedding. For that matter, Jesus' family may have moved to Bethsaida or Capernaum, both of which were common cities for the Savior. The fact is, we do not know where Mary and Jesus' family called home by the time Jesus was 30. Cana is only a possibility. "Cana of Galilee (kā'ná of gāl'î-lê), is mentioned four times in the Gospel of John (2:1-11; 4:36-54; 21:2) and nowhere else in Scripture. It was in the highlands of Galilee, as one had to go down from there to Capernaum; but opinions differ as to its exact location. It may have been at 'Kefr Kenna' about five miles NE of Nazareth, or at 'Kana-el-Jellil' a little further N. Here Jesus performed His first miracle, graciously relieving the embarrassment caused by the shortage of wine at a marriage feast. It was here too (John 4:46) that he announced to the nobleman from Capernaum the healing of his apparently dying son; and Nathanael was of Cana (John 21:2)" (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 143). The trip from Nazareth to "Kefr Kenna" is only a half a day journey by foot, while the trip from Nazareth to Kana-el-Jellil is closer to a full day's journey.



KANA EL-JELIL

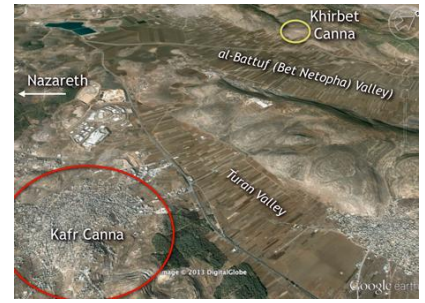


KEFR KENNA



Most tourists are taken to the traditional site of Cana (Kefr Kenna) near Nazareth on the road to Tiberius. This is the site preferred by the Franciscans. It is the closest to Nazareth, and commonly believed to be ancient Cana. The problem is this location has no Roman period ruins and most certainly is not the place mentioned in the New Testament. It has become the traditional site because it was identified and maintained as the site during the Middle Ages, prior to any real archeology work or investigation. An alternative site, Khirbet Qana, also known as Kana-el-Jelil, is 14 miles north of Nazareth (9 miles as the crow flies) and 12 miles west of the Sea of Galilee. It is high on a hill overlooking the Bet Netofa valley. This location has much more evidence in its favor. Brigham Young University professors wrote, "The traditional site of Cana is along the Nazareth-Tiberius highway, a town now called in Arabic Kfar Kanna, literally the 'village of Cana'. Archaeology and toponymy (the study of place-names) tells us, on the other hand, that Cana was located about eight miles north of Nazareth across the Bet Netofa Valley. There is a hill (inaccessible by automobile) with ancient ruins called in Arabic Kana el-Jalil (Cana of Galilee)." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 108).

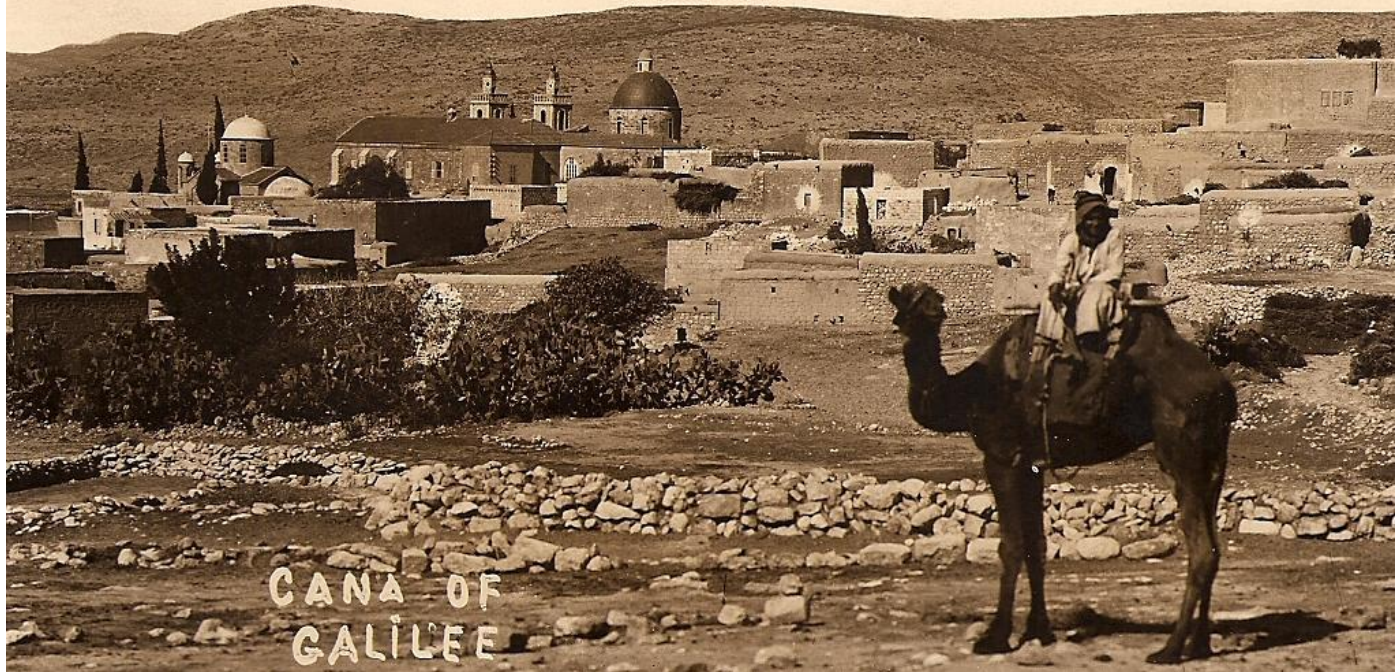
SITE OF KANA EL-JELIL



Part of the problem in identifying the location of ancient Cana today is the fact that it has almost no place in history. Elder McConkie summarizes this fact well when he wrote, "But in March of A.D. 27 in Cana, an obscure village of Galilee that would not even be known today, had not this event occurred there...." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 300). The marriage in Cana really placed this small village on the map. Without the Bible record, history may have forgotten the city altogether. In fact, only two of the gospel writers seem familiar with Cana. Matthew and Mark make no mention of the village. Luke doesn't mention the marriage, but does speak of a subsequent visit made by Jesus to Cana. Brown wrote, "In the NT this town is mentioned only by John; Josephus mentions it in his life. The site pointed out to pilgrims since the middle ages, Kefr Kenna, 3½ miles northeast of Nazareth, is probably wrong (etymologically from the Greek we would expect the Semitic name to be preserved as Qana, not Kenna). Khirbet Qana, 9 miles north of Nazareth, is better etymologically and seems to fit Josephus' localization. Only John and Luke (iv 14-16) know of activity by Jesus in the Galilean hill country near Nazareth immediately after the baptism; Mark-Matthew begin the ministry at the Sea of Galilee." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 98).

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PICTURE OF KAFR Canna in the early 1900'S

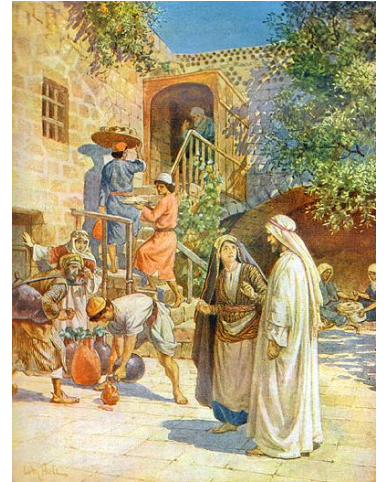


- 4- **the mother** – The word "mother" is translated from the Greek word "μήτηρ" or "mētēr". It means mother. The term 'mother of Jesus' seems odd in such a patriarchal society. The common assumption would be that Mary would be connected to the husband, who was head of the family. This assumption would not be correct. A woman's role was to produce offspring, and the great desire was to produce a son. "Among Arabs today the 'mother of X' is an honorable title for a woman who has been fortunate enough to bear a son. John never calls her Mary." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 98). The term "mother of Jesus" was a title of respect.

Another insight that might be gained from the phrase "mother of Jesus" might lie in the lack of reference to her husband, Joseph. He had been a vital figure in her life. He protected her from judgment when she was pregnant out of wedlock. Joseph took the family to Egypt when Herod sought their young sons life. Joseph was a provider and source of strength. Why then is there no mention of him during the marriage at Cana? Why did Mary not come to Joseph when there were problems. "There is no mention of Joseph. The explanation most probably is that by this time Joseph was dead. It would seem that Joseph died quite soon, and that the reason why Jesus spent eighteen long years in Nazareth was that he had to take upon himself the support of his mother and his family. It was only when his younger brothers and sisters were able to look after themselves that he left home." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 96). Supporting this theory is the fact that Joseph is not mentioned in any event after the childhood of Jesus. "The last mention of Joseph is at the Passover in Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years of age. At the wedding feast at Cana, when Jesus was about thirty, specific mention is made that Mary and Jesus were present, but no mention is made of Joseph (see John 2:1-10). Finally at the time of the Crucifixion, Mary is said to have stood at the cross with other women, but again no mention is made of Joseph. At this time Jesus gave his mother to the care of his

beloved disciple, John (see John 19:25–27). The record of these events suggests that Mary was widowed sometime after Jesus was twelve years old and before he began his ministry" (Robert J. Matthews, Selected Writings, 233).

That brings us to another point of inquiry. Women are rarely mentioned in scripture, and when they are it is usually because they played a key role in a story about a male. That sounds so chauvinistic; however, that was the culture of the time. Why was Mary's name mentioned in the marriage at Cana? If she was just present as a guest, then it is hardly worth mentioning her name. Elder McConkie suggests that Mary's role was far more than another invited guest. "The Blessed Mary seems to be in charge of the festive portions of the wedding celebration..." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 299). Elder Talmage comes to the same conclusion, "Soon after the arrival of Jesus in Galilee we find Him and His little company of disciples at a marriage party in Cana, a neighboring town to Nazareth. The mother of Jesus was at the feast; and for some reason not explained in John's narrative, she manifested concern and personal responsibility in the matter of providing for the guests. Evidently her position was different from that of one present by ordinary invitation. Whether this circumstance indicates the marriage to have been that of one of her own immediate family, or some more distant relative, we are not informed." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 126). According to the cultural rules of the time, the Mother of the Bridegroom was responsible for the marriage feast. She was in charge of all the goings on. It would appear that Mary was fulfilling this role. If this were the case, that would mean that one of Mary's sons was being married. That sound like a bold assumption to make, but it is shared by many scholars. Elder McConkie wrote, "Mary seemed to be the hostess at the marriage party, the one in charge, the one responsible for the entertainment of the guests. It was she who recognized the need for more wine, who sought to replenish the supply, who directed the servants to follow whatever instructions Jesus gave. Considering the customs of the day, it is virtual certainty that one of Mary's children was being married...Jesus also had a close personal interest in and connection with the marriage and the subsequent festivities, which attended it. He and apparently five of his disciples (John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael) were 'called' to attend. Since the short age of wine occurred near the close of the festivities, and since these commonly lasted from seven to fourteen days, it is apparent that Jesus' party was remaining for the entire celebration. Seemingly, also, he had some personal responsibility for entertaining the guests and felt an obligation to supply them with added refreshments." (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 135). At this point, it is safe to say that Mary was the mother of the bridegroom, and either Jesus or one of his half brothers was being married.

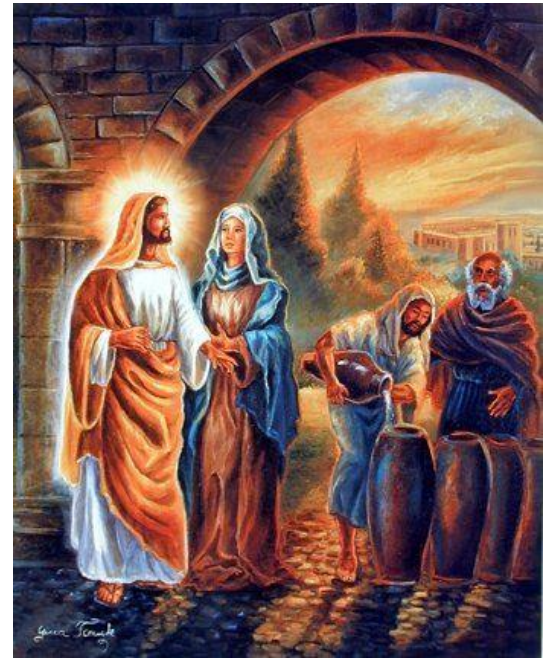


- 5- **was there** – The word "there" was translated from the Greek word "ἐκεῖ" or "ekei". It means there, in, or to that place. The story is somewhat fragmented. We have no record of the procession. We do not have record of the brides arrival, or the finalizing of the marriage contract. The consummation is also left out. The whole story starts with the marriage feast, which is one of the last steps of the wedding. Jesus was there. Where? Well, He was at the feast. This may have been held at a large courtyard in a home belonging to the family of the bridegroom. It may have been a rented room, or even a large Bedouin tent. Undoubtedly, it would have been as nice as the bridegrooms family could afford. It would have been an honor to attend. All would be dressed in their best attire. They would be washed clean, not only physically, but ceremonially before partaking of the food offered at such a feast. Jesus attended at the very least, as an invited guest. Many speculate if there were other reasons for his attendance. "There is an apocryphal tradition that Mary was the aunt of the bridegroom, whom an early 3rd-century Latin Preface identifies as John son of Zebedee. This is to be associated with the tradition that Salome, wife of Zebedee and mother of John, was Mary's sister, a relationship which makes John the cousin of Jesus. The presence of Jesus makes it not implausible that a relative was involved in the wedding, unless the invitation came through Nathanael, who was from Cana." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 98).



INTERESTING, BUT CULTURALLY INACCURATE PAINTING OF THE MARRIAGE AT CANA

- 6- **called** – The word "called" is translated from the Greek word "καλέω" or "kaleō". It means to call, or to invite. The entire marriage process of the ancient Jews was symbolic of our relationship with God and Jesus. We are all being called to the marriage. The call represents God's pleadings with His children to come unto Him. He is constantly calling us to eat at His table. That is a great metaphor when one considers the fact that we have the opportunity to come and feast at His table every Sunday when we partake of the Sacrament. The sacrament renews the covenant we made with Him at Baptism. Like marriage, baptism is a new and everlasting covenant. Like the ancient marriage customs, authority is crucial in the process. Those called to the wedding feasts are called by one having authority. Similarly, the call to come unto Christ is only legitimately made by one who has the proper priesthood authority. **"John's account says the disciples were called, without indicating by whom or on what authority. Shall we not say - since Jesus' ministry has now begun and nothing must be permitted to interfere with it - that their presence was required, that one or more of them was an essential part of the proceedings that ever thereafter would be remembered for the miracle that was then to occur. Scholars generally feel that some member of the Holy Family was being married, and that Mary was supervising and guiding what went on."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 299).



It can also be deduced, by Jesus' attendance at the wedding, that **"Jesus was no recluse, no hermit, no ascetic."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). Jesus was a social man, and enjoyed interaction with people. It can also be deduced that Jesus was an advocate of marriage. **"Participation by Jesus and his disciples in the marriage customs of that day places an endorsing stamp of divine approval upon the system of matrimony itself and also upon reasonable and modest display attending its solemnization."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136).

- 7- **his disciples** – The word "disciple" is translated from the Greek word "μαθητής" or "mathētēs". It means a learner, pupil or disciple. We know that John the Baptist had born testimony to his disciples or followers that Jesus was the Lamb of God. The Jews would have recognized that phrase as a reference to the promised Messiah. John's disciples are suspected to be in the range of 100's. I was suspect that there were significant numbers of John's followers that then followed Jesus. How many would be just speculation. Even so, we know that at least 5 men followed Jesus as a result of John, either directly or indirectly. Elder McConkie taught, **"He and apparently at least five of his disciples (John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael) were 'called' to attend. Since the shortage of wine occurred near the close of the festivities, and since these commonly lasted from seven to fourteen days, it is apparent that Jesus' party was remaining for the entire celebration. Seemingly, also, he had some personal responsibility for entertaining the guests and felt an obligation to supply them with added refreshments."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). There may have been many more than that followed Jesus to the wedding. This poses another question. If the wedding were for someone other than Jesus, wouldn't the disciples be uninvited guests without invitations or authorized calls? Wouldn't they have been turned away? If it were Jesus' wedding, they would have been friends of the bridegroom, and consequently He would have had authority to invite them into the wedding feast. Another point of speculation would be that Jesus brought so many last minute disciples that the wine was adequate for the guests. This is, however, highly speculative.

- 8- **When they wanted** – The phrase "when they wanted" is translated from a single Greek word; "ὑστερέω" or "hystereō". The word means behind, to come late or too tardy. It can also mean to fail, to be wanting, to be in want of, or lack. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase, "And when they wanted wine" as "And they had no wine because the wine of the marriage feast had failed". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:3, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). For whatever reason, the marriage feast lacked enough wine. They either drank more than anticipated, or the wine had spoiled or was otherwise unusable. Apparently, they started with wine of relative good quality, as we read in verse 10, but at some point ran out. Wine at a wedding feast was essential. To not have enough wine for the guests would have been a failure of hospitality in a culture that maintained that hospitality was a foundation to one's character. It would have been a social shame and embarrassment to run out of wine, and that is exactly what they did.

- 9- **wine** – The word "wine" is translated from the Greek word "οἶνος" or "oinos". The Greek word means wine. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, uses "oinos" as a translation for the Hebrew word "yayin" in Isaiah 16:10 and "tirosh" in Proverbs 3:10. Both of these passages refer to grape juice rather than fermented wine in the Old Testament. The fact is, there are several words used for "wine" in both the Hebrew and Greek scriptures and none of them are exclusively used for wine or grape juice. The various words are used interchangeably for the same drink, whether alcoholic and nonalcoholic. A quick glance in The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible shows around two hundred times that the English word "wine" is used in the Old Testament. About ten different Hebrew words make up this list. The most common word is "yayin". This word is the generic use of the term "wine." William Patton's book, "Bible Wines or The Laws of Fermentation", quotes several professors and books which demonstrate the fact that "yayin" can refer to either fermented wine or unfermented grape juice, both are simply "yayin". In Genesis 9:21, Noah drinks "yayin" and becomes inebriated, clearly indicating it can refer to an alcoholic wine. Isaiah 16:10, on the other hand, says that **"the treaders shall tread out no wine [yayin] in their presses."** Since wine cannot become fermented while still in the grape, it only makes sense that the wine tread out of the grapes is unfermented. "Yayin," as unfermented wine in particular contexts, gains credence from rabbinic writings of the past. Encyclopædia Judaica mentions **"newly pressed wine, prior to fermentation"** as being called **"yayin mi-gat."** (Encyclopædia Judaica, Volume 1, Cecil Reoth, Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1971, page 538). Already, evidence can be seen supporting the belief that not all wine referred to in the Bible is alcoholic. We are left to question what kind of wine was served at the marriage at Cana. **"The wine Jesus created for the wedding guests was likely new, fresh wine rather than something strong that would cause drunkenness, which was contrary to the Jews' own laws of physical health."** (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 111).



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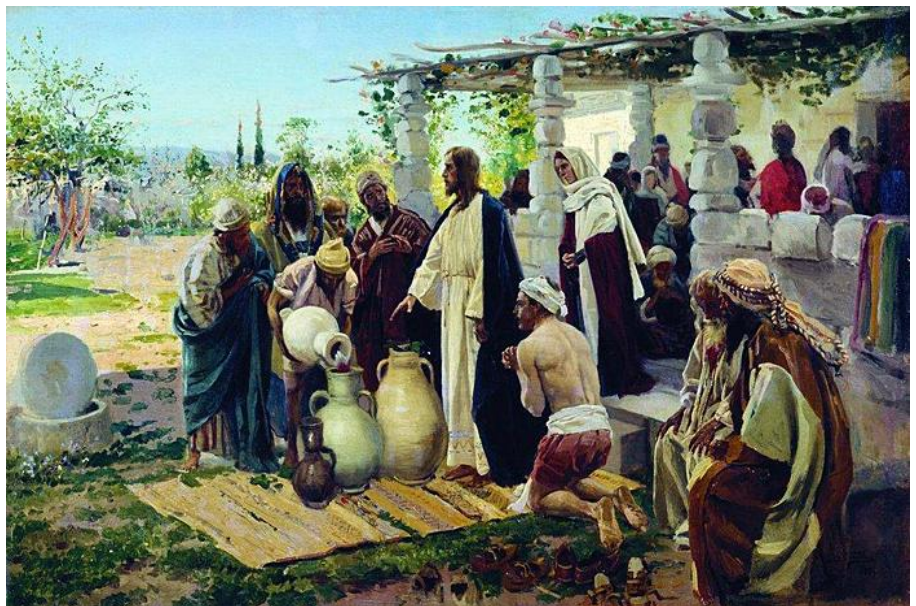
One might argue that the people of Jesus' time had no refrigeration and therefore all wine quickly fermented. Contrary to modern belief, the ancient Jews employed other methods to preserve their food and drinks. There are four main means used by the ancients Jews for preserving wine in an unfermented state: boiling, filtration, subsidence, and fumigation. Perhaps the most common was boiling. By boiling grape juice, **"the water is evaporated, thus leaving so large a portion of sugar as to prevent fermentation."** People have boiled grape juice into syrup since before the birth of Jesus Christ. The resulting syrup could be stored for months until ready for use. At that time, water would be added to turn the concentrate syrup back into a drinkable juice, unfermented. This is probably why Barclay records that wine was drunk after it was mixed two parts wine and three parts water. He wrote, **"For a Jewish feast wine was essential. 'Without wine,' said the Rabbis, 'there is no joy'. It was not that people were drunken, but in the East wine was an essential. Drunkenness was in fact a great disgrace, and they actually drank wine in a mixture composed of two parts of wine to three parts of water, And any time the failure of provisions would have been a problem, for hospitality in the East is a sacred duty; but for the provisions to fail at a wedding would be a terrible humiliation for the bride and the bridegroom."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 97).

The likelihood that ancient Jewish wine was exclusively alcoholic is highly unlikely because it was a staple of the Jewish diet. Elder McConkie wrote, **"'Fruit of the vine' (Matt. 26:29), a light, sweet wine (normally unfermented); eaten with bread it was one of the staple foods of the day."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). This means that it was served like we drink water, coffee or soda. Wine was **"... the pure though weak product of the local vineyards, which was the ordinary table beverage of the time."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 126).

Scientifically, we do not understand how water could be turned into wine. That being said, our lack of understanding does not mean that the transformation is not scientifically possible. In fact, there is so much in this world that we do not fully understand, and yet it exists. **"Every hour of every day somewhere on earth the Lord turns water into wine. By his power, pursuant to the laws he has ordained, men prepare the soil and plant the vine; from the good earth, from the rain that falls, and from the light of the sun, the vine takes nutrient, grows, and bears fruit; men dug it and dig about it and prune it, and the fruit matures and ripens; they harvest the crop and process it in the wine vat; and it comes out as wine on the less well refined. It is a miracle. He who has given a law unto all things provides the way and the means; the water and the elements that could turn into raisins become wine instead. Life in all its forms is a miracle, and the transmutation, as it were, of one substance into another is a part and portion of earthly existence."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 300).

There is one more aspect of wine that needs to be looked at. Wine carried with it significant Jewish symbolism. Wine symbolizes revelation, truth, sacrifice, and blood. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 192-193). **"Because of its power to overwhelm the senses and the will, wine is sometimes a symbol of God's anger, which is also described as 'grapes of wrath'."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 194). Wine symbolizes the atonement, **"Because its red color suggests blood and thus sacrifice and death."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 194). It is therefore no surprise that a cup of wine was consumed at the close of the marriage covenant. As Christ is our advocate before the Father, and marriage was to be bound by the powers of heaven, the symbolism is very fitting. All feast days, Sabbaths, and marriages are ushered out with a cup of wine. (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 176).

10 - saith unto him – The word "saith" is translated from the Greek word "λέγω" or "legō". It means to say or to speak. When Mary identified a problem with the wine, she was compelled to find a solution. Most believe that she was in charge of the wedding, which would make her the mother of the bridegroom. If this were true, following Jewish custom, Mary would have been prompted to approach the bridegroom himself. One of the Jewish customs for a wedding feast was that the bridegroom provided the wine for his guests and assured that there was enough. Mary approached Jesus for the wine, which draws interesting conclusions. Whether Jesus was the bridegroom or not, **"Instinctively Mary turned to Jesus whenever something went wrong. She knew her son. It was not till he was thirty years old that Jesus left home; and all these years Mary lived with him."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, pages 101-102). She undoubtedly knew that He was capable of bringing down the powers of heaven. She knew that with Him, all things were possible. Bridegroom or not, Jesus could solve any problem she faced. No wonder she ran to Him. **"Of all this we are certain. And we cannot avoid the conclusion that between Jesus' twelfth years there were many marvelous and miraculous things of which Mary knew. There is no reason to believe there was a spiritual drought of eighteen years, a period when all that was divine and heaven-guided should be obscured. Nor can we avoid believing that Mary was made aware of the mission and testimony of John - her first cousin once removed, the son of her confidante and counselor Elisabeth, the one whose birth Gabriel had also heralded."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 301).



11 - They have no – The word "no" is translated from the Greek word "οὐ" or "ou". It means no, or not. **"Many commentators (Lagrange, Braun, Bultmann, Boismard) prefer the longer reading of the original hand of Sinaiticus and of the OL: 'Now they had no wine for the wine provided for the feast had been used up'."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 98).

12 - Woman – The word "Woman" is translated from the Greek word "γυνή" or "gynē". The word means a woman of any age, whether a virgin, married or a widow. It is sometimes used to refer to a wife or a betrothed woman. A better translation for this passage is **"Woman, what wilt thou have me to do for thee? that will I do; for mine hour is not yet come."** (Joseph Smith Translation of John 2:4). In our culture, calling a female "Woman" is demeaning and disrespectful. It carries an implied connotation that she is subservient. We must be careful not to read this passage through the eyes of our culture, but rather the Jewish culture of Jesus' age. **"The noun of address, 'Woman,' as applied by a son to his mother may sound to our ears somewhat harsh, if not disrespectful; but its use was really an expression of opposite import. To every son, the mother ought to be preeminently the woman of women; she is the one woman in the world to whom the son owes his earthly existence; and though the title 'Mother' belongs to every woman who has earned the honors of maternity, yet to no child is there more than one woman whom by natural right he can address by that title of respectful acknowledgment. When, in the last dread scenes of His mortal experience, Christ hung in dying agony upon the cross, He looked, down upon the weeping Mary, His mother, and commended her to the care of the beloved apostle John, with the words: 'Woman, behold thy son!' Can it be thought that in this supreme moment, our Lord's concern for the mother from whom He was about to be separated by death was associated with any emotion other than that of honor, tenderness and love?"** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 126). The term "Woman" appears to be a term of endearment. **"This is not a rebuke, nor an impolite term, nor an indication of a lack of affection. It was Jesus' normal, polite way of addressing women (Matt xv 28; Luke xiii12; John iv 21, viii 10, xx 13); and as such it is attested in Greek writing**

also. What is peculiar if the use of 'Woman' alone (without an accompanying title or a qualifying adjective) by a son in addressing his mother - there is no precedent for this in Hebrew nor, to the best of our knowledge, in Greek. Certainly it is not an attempt to reject or devalue the mother-son relationship, for Mary is called the 'mother of Jesus' four times in vs. 1-12 (twice after Jesus has addressed her as 'Woman'). All of this leads us to suspect that there is symbolic import in the title, 'Woman'. To translate it as 'Mother' would both obscure this possibility and cloak the peculiarity of the address." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 99).



- 13 - **what have I to do with thee** – This phrase, like the term "Woman", seems sarcastic and insulting in our culture; however, it is a Semitic phrase that doesn't translate very well. "Literally 'What to me and to you?' - A Semitism. In the OT the Hebrew expression has two shades of meaning: (a) when one party is unjustly bothering another, the injured party may say, 'What to me and to you?' i.e., 'What have I done to you that you should do this to me? What subject of discord is there between us?; (b) when someone is asked to get involved in a matter which he feels is no business of his, he may say to the petitioner, 'What to me and to you?' i.e. That is your business; how am I involved?" (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 99). Unfortunately, what we lack in the passage is Jesus' tone and demeanor. The phrase takes on a totally different meaning depending on how it is delivered. Barclay explains, "When it was uttered angrily and sharply it did indicate complete disagreement and reproach, but when it was spoken gently it indicated no so much reproach but misunderstanding. It means: 'Don't worry; you don't quite understand what is going on; leave things to me, and I will settle them in my own way'. Jesus was simply telling Mary to leave things to him, that he would have his own way of dealing with the situation." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 98). Talmage taught that Jesus spoke with the latter tone. He was reassuring His mother that He was take care of things. He wrote, " 'What have I to do with thee?' He asked; and added: 'Mine hour is not yet come.' Here we find no disclaimer of the ability to do what she apparently wanted Him to do, but the plain implication that He would act only when the time was right for the purpose, and that He, not she, must decide when that time had come." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 126).
- 14 - **mine hour** – The word "hour" is translated from the Greek word "ὥρα" or "hōra". The word means a certain definite time or season fixed by natural law and returning with the revolving year. It can be used for any definite time, point of time, or moment. What should be understood here is Jesus' awareness that He was sent to earth to fulfill His Father's work. The reference to 'mine hour' expresses the fact that Jesus would not act until it meet with His Father's will. Brown said, "Especially, the suggestion must be rejected that the hour of miracles was advanced by Jesus at Mary's request, for in Johannine thought the hour is not in Jesus' control but in that of the Father." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 100).
- 15 - **not yet come** – The word "come" is translated from the Greek word "ἦκω" or "hēkō". The word means to have come, have arrived or be present. Jesus was perfect. His perfection magnified His Priesthood so that he could command the very elements. His perfection required that He followed the laws of mortality as well as the laws of heaven. Part of the Jewish law of the time required that men mature to 30 years of age before they ministered in any religious role. Jesus respected and followed this law. He would not turn 30 for another month, and so his hour had not yet come. Elder Talmage explained, "Thirty Years of Age.--According to Luke (3:23) Jesus was about thirty years of age at the time of His baptism, and we find that soon thereafter, He entered publicly upon the work of His ministry. The law provided that at the age of thirty years the Levites were required to enter upon their special service (Numb. 4:3). Clarke, Bible Commentary, treating the passage in Luke 3:23, says: 'This was the age required by the law to which the priests must arrive before they could be installed in their office.' Jesus may possibly have had regard for what had become a custom of the time, in waiting until He had attained that age before entering publicly on the labors of a Teacher among the people. Not being of Levitical descent He was not eligible to priestly ordination in the Aaronic order, and therefore, certainly did not wait for such before beginning His ministry. To have taught in public at an earlier age would have been to arouse criticism, and objection, which might have resulted in serious handicap or hindrance at the outset." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 138)
- 16 - **servants** – The word "servants" is translated from the Greek word "δῆρακονος" or "diakonos". It means one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, a servant, attendant, or minister. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "servants" as "waiters". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:5, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). It was not uncommon for large feasts to include hired help, or slaves. It is unsure who was employed at this feast.
- 17 - **Whatsoever he saith** – The word "whatsoever" is translated from the Greek word "ὅστις" or "hostis". The word means whoever, whatever or who. Mary knew that Jesus would not let her down. He had compassion towards his mother. "We have already seen that in the East hospitality was always a sacred duty. It would have brought embarrassed shame to that home that day if the wine had run done. It was to save a humble Galilaean family from hurt that Jesus put forth his power. It was in sympathy, in kindness, in understanding for simple folk that Jesus acted." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 101). Mary had perfect faith in Him. "His mother, understanding, knowing him and his ways, aware of their relationship, and receiving his gentle reproof, yet having perfect confidence in him and knowing her request was right and would be granted said to the servants: 'Whatsoever he saith unto you do it'." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 301).
- 18 - **do it** – The phrase "do it" is translated from the Greek word "ποιέω" or "poieō". It means to make, or to do.
- 19 - **set there** – The word "set" is translated from the Greek word "κέιμαι" or "keimai". The word means to lie, put or set in any place, or to stand.
- 20 - **six** – The word "six" is translated from the Greek word "ἕξ" or "hex". It means six. "There were six stone waterpots; and at the command of Jesus the water in them turned to wine. According to the Jews seven is the number which is complete and perfect; and six is the number which is unfinished and imperfect. The six stone waterpots stand for all the imperfections of the Jewish law." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 103). Water represents the law, while wine represents the blood of the Lamb. While the law has the ability to bring us closer to God, but it will never have the power to save us. Jesus came to earth to fulfill the law, atone for our sins, and offer salvation to all mankind. The changing of the water to wine has much deeper meaning that just creating beverages for the guests at a wedding.
- 21 - **waterpots** – The word "waterpots" is translated from the Greek word "ὕδρια" or "hydria". It means a



vessel for holding water, a water jar or a water pot. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "waterpots" as "water vessels". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:6, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). Water was essential to life in the desert climate of Judea, and therefore became a focus of life. The Jews had large earthen jars use to store water, as well as large cisterns carved into the earth for the purpose of storing water.

This passage specifically makes reference to the "Earthen jars for carrying or holding water, either for drinking or for purifying purposes. The latter were large, holding 18 to 20 gallons each." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 887). Such jars were a common items found in Judean homes. They were generally earthen rather than clay for sanitary purposes. Non or less porous materials were less likely to hold bacteria.



Though water jars came in all shapes and sizes, there were larger jars used specifically for purification. These jars were 2 to 3 feet tall and 12 to 18 inches in diameter. The water in these pots was not necessarily sanitary, but was ceremonially clean. The Jews used these jars or pots to perform the ordinances of washing the hands and the feet.

In the story of the marriage at Cana, Jesus used the stone jars used for purification rituals. One might imagine, "In the gallery the servants move about, and there the 'water-pots' are ranged 'after the manner of the Jews' for purification - for the washing not only of hands before and after eating, but also of the vessels used. How

detailed Rabbinic ordinances were in these respects, will be shown in another connection. 'Purification' was one of the main points in Rabbinic sanctity. By far the largest and most exclusively devoted to this subject." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 357).

22 - of stone – The word "stone" is translated from the Greek word "λίθινος" or "lithinos". It means a stone. Stone was a symbol for immortality, durability, strength and perfection. "Though pots were often made of clay, they were also made of stone. A pot made from porous clay or limestone allowed for evaporation, which cooled the liquid contents. Several stone pots from the Roman period are on permanent display in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Vessels made from native stone were ceremonially clean and were used for holding water that was likewise ritually clean for use in washing and purifying (for example, of hands and feet of guests). In fact, according to Jewish purification laws, stone vessels had special status because they could not become ritually impure." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 110).



within the Franciscan wedding church in cana - an old wine jar

Stone or rock is a symbol of the Messiah. Ritual purifications in stone vessels has a figurative message which states that we must come unto the Messiah to be fully washed from our sins. Stones are also a symbol for revelation. Divine revelation is connected to personal worthiness. It makes sense that one would approach or request revelation with a clean heart and pure hands. The ancient Jews would have recognized all of these symbols and signs. The washing in stone vessels was for a spiritual purpose, and was not intended to be a physical washing. It is true that "Frequent bathing was necessary in the warm climate of the East. In Egypt, Syria, and Palestine people washed the dust from their feet when they entered a house. Ceremonial defilement was removed by bathing the body and washing the raiment. The priests washed their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary or offering a sacrifice. In the time of Christ the Jews did much ceremonial washing of hands before eating, and used public baths like the Greeks and Romans." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 886).

23 - after the manner – The phrase "after the manner of the purifying" is translated from a single Greek word; "καθαρισμός" or "katharismos". It means a cleansing, purification, a ritual purgation or washing. The Mishnah itself contains entire chapters devoted to the "manner" of purification. To be ritually or ceremonially clean was necessary prior to any ordinances and temple worship. The Jews practiced ceremonial washings as prescribed by the law. "It is customary, especially on Shabbat or festivals, to wash one's hands and recite a blessing (al netilat yadayim) as an act of spiritual preparation before eating, since the table is a symbolic substitute for the Temple Altar." (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 187).

Going back to the marriage at Cana, the processes of ritual washing was a part of every traditional Jewish wedding. If they followed the law, they had washings. Speaking specifically of the wedding in Cana, Elder Talmage records, "In the house at Cana there stood in a place specially reserved, six waterpots of stone "after the manner of the purifying of the Jews." Vessels of water were provided as a matter of prescribed order in Jewish homes, to facilitate the ceremonial washings enjoined by the law. From these pots or jars the water was drawn off as required; they were reservoirs holding the supply, not vessels used in the actual ablution." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 129). Since the washing was ceremonial and for spiritual cleansing, it was not performed as though one were just washing ones hands. The law required that it be done in a very specific fashion. "First the hand was held upright and the water was poured over it in such a way that it ran right to the wrists; then the hand was held pointing down and the water was poured in such a way that it ran from the wrists to the finger-tips. This was done with each hand in turn; and then each palm was cleansed by rubbing it with the fist of the other hand. The Jewish ceremonial law insisted that this should be done not only at the beginning of a meal but also between courses. If it was not done the hands were technically unclean. It was for this footwashing and handwashing that these great stone jars of water stood there." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, pages 98-99).



24 - purifying – ‘Purification’ was one of the main points in Rabbinic sanctity. "That the concept of purity was deep within the religio-social structure of the children of Israel since very early times will come as no surprise to the student of the Bible...Religious purity was both ceremonial and ethical." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 699). By far the largest and most elaborate of the six books into which the Mishnah is divided, is exclusively devoted to this subject of purifications ('Seder Tohoroth'), not to speak of references in other parts of the Talmud. There are two special tractates that instruct the Jews about the purification of 'Hands' (Yadayim) and of 'Vessels' (Kelim). The Mishnah consists of no less than thirty chapters that clarify the rites of purification. The reading of these passages proves, how out of touch the Jews really were with regards to spiritual cleanliness. They were more focused on ritual than worthiness. Their interpretations were examples of gross hypocrisy. This the more pronounced, when one considers that it was actually required as a special qualification for a seat in the Sanhedrin, to be acute and learned as to know how to prove the cleanliness of creeping things (which were declared unclean by the Law). [Sanh. 17 a.] While the lived sinful lives. And yet they judged the people with regard to neglect of the ordinances of purification as either gross ignorance, or tempting God.



25 - the Jews – The word "Jews" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰουδαῖος" or "Ioudaios". It means Jewish, whether belonging to the Jewish nation or being Jewish by birth, origin or religion. Here it is specifically referencing the laws and customs associated with the Jewish religion.

26 - containing two or three firkins – The word "containing" is translated from the Greek word "χωρέω" or "chōreō". It means to have space or room for receiving or holding something. The word "firkins" is translated from the Greek word "μετρητής" or "metrētēs". It is a measurer, the name of a utensil known as a amphora, which is a species of measure used for liquids and containing somewhat less the nine English gallons or about 40 liters. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "firkin" as "bath". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:6, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166).

I would love to calculate the exact number gallons of water that Jesus turned to wine, unfortunately, that it is not possible since we have varying measurements for a "firkin" and the water pots contained a vague 'two or three firkins apiece.' For, although we know that the term metretes, or 'firkin', was intended as an equivalent for the Hebrew 'bath' [Jos. Ant. viii. 2. 9.] yet three different kinds of 'bath' were at the time used in Palestine; the common Palestinian or 'wilderness' bath, that of Jerusalem, and that of Sepphoris. The common Palestinian 'bath' was equal to the Roman amphora, containing about 5¼ gallons, while the Sepphoris 'bath' corresponded to the Attic metretes, and would contain about 8½ gallons. In the former case, therefore, each of these pots might have held from 10 ½ to 15 ¾ gallons; in the latter, from 17 to 25 ½ gallons. Assuming that the so-called Sepphoris measurement was common in Galilee, the larger quantity seems the more likely, though by no means certain. It probably is not a significant fact, but many have argued and hypothesized over the gallons of water. For the sake of trivia a chart has been created showing the possible volumes of water that were turned into wine.

	1 Firkin or 1 bath	Pots Holding 2 Firkins	Pots Holding 3 Firkins	Total Volume of 6 pots
Palestinian/Wilderness Bath	5¼ US gallons	10½ US gallons	15¾ US gallons	between 63 and 94½ US gallons
Jerusalem/Hebrew Bath	8¾ US gallons	17¾ US gallons	26¾ US gallons	between 106½ and 159¾ US gallons
Sepphoris Bath	8½ US gallons	17 US gallons	25½ US gallons	between 102 and 153 US gallons

Many suppose that the larger volumes are most likely to be correct. They base this off the fact that it was customary, for such an occasion, that the family would produce or borrow the largest and most handsome stone-vessels that they could procure. It is not, however, necessary to suppose that they were filled to the brim, as it would be difficult to stop spillage with the first servings. There is also Talmudic rules or guidelines [Shabbat 77 b. So Lightfoot in loc.] that required the host to set apart some of these vessels exclusively for the use of the bride and the more distinguished guests, while the rest were used by the general company. With all this information, we are perhaps more unsure than when we began, and so are the various scholars. Here are four examples of their interpretations;

Examples 1: Elder McConkie writes "Firkins - About nine gallons. Thus each of the six waterpots contained between twelve and eighteen gallons of water, with the result that Jesus then created some one hundred and fifty gallons of wine - a miracle showing the wedding celebration was one of no small size." (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136).

Example 2: Barclay calculates, "At the door there were six great water jars. The word that the Authorized Version translates firkin represents the Hebrew measure called the bath which was a measure equivalent to between eight and nine gallons. The jars were very large; they would hold about twenty gallons of water apiece." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 98).

Example 3: Freeman says, "The metretes 'firkin', was the principle Greek liquid measure, and contained a little more than eight gallons and seven eighths. It corresponded to the Hebrew Bath." (Manner and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 423).

Example 4: Zondervan explains, "The bath was the standard liquid measure in OT times. Its value is a matter of dispute. At resent scholars regard it as equal to about six US gallons, rather than 10 gallons as formerly. The finding of fragments of large jars, inscribed 'bath of the king' (perhaps an attempt to



standardize the bath for use in tax payments) or simply 'bath' have helped to bring about the reduction in size...The liquid measurements of NT times are difficult to equate with those of the OT. The English 'measure' may equal a kor, as in Luke 16:7, or a bath, as in Luke 16:6. The firkin of John 2:6 (KJV) held about 10.3 US gallons." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 891).

The best we can conclude is there was anywhere from 63 to 153 gallons of water that Jesus turned to wine. Whether it was on the smaller end or not, the feat was no less miraculous. Given the fact that our best scientists today have not figured out how to change one drop of water into wine, Jesus' changing of even 1 gallon is still a miracle by today's standards.

- 27 - **a piece** – The word "piece" is translated from the Greek word "ἀνά" or "ana". It means into the midst, in the midst, amidst, among, each or between.
- 28 - **fill** – The word "fill" is translated from the Greek word "γεμίζω" or "gemizō". The word means to fill, or fill full. The Gospel writer conveys the idea that the water pots were full to excess. I would surmise that John was being very literal with this fact, though there are those that believe the term was used in a more figurative way. Barclay wrote, "There were six waterpots; each held between twenty and thirty gallons of water; Jesus turned the water into wine. That would give anything up to one hundred and eighty gallons of wine. Simply to state that fact is to show that John did not mean the story to be taken with crude literalness. What John did mean to say is that when the grace of Jesus comes to men there is enough and to spare for all. No wedding party on earth could drink one hundred and eighty gallons of wine. No need on earth can exhaust the grace of Christ; there is a glorious superabundance in it." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 103).

- 29 - **water** – The word "water" is translated from the Greek word "ὕδωρ" or "hydōr". It means water. Water symbolizes renewal, cleansing, purification, life sustaining force, the law, and blessings from heaven. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 188-189). "Among most ancient peoples, water was considered the source of life, the medium of birth, death, and immortality, the reservoir of wisdom. Fluids provide nourishment for life of earth: blood, milk, sap, rain, and dew. Water can sustain life as well as destroy it. legend claims that angels are composed of a mixture of fire and water. Water was the primordial form of the world before creation. The roar of might waters is the sound of God's voice." (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 186).



Water in ancient Judea was a precious commodity. "Because of the scarcity of water in Palestine, it is much appreciated there. For its people absence of water is very serious." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 887). I am sure when the laws of purification were presented, the people probably marveled that the such a valuable commodity would be used for ceremonial purposes. Of course, this increased the symbolic significance. Purification came at a price, and it does. "Water was used not only for refreshment, but for ceremonial washings before meals and in the Jewish Temple-ceremony. The Bible uses it as a symbol of the cleansing of the soul from sin." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 887). This cleansing was made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ. All the more significant is the fact that Jesus changed the precious water used for ceremonial cleansing to wine, a symbol of His precious blood, which atoned for our sins. Elder McConkie challenges us to figuratively take the waters of life, and through the power of the atonement purify our lives. He said, "Ought we not also to turn the ordinary water of life - the ritualistic and mundane washings and performances that go with mortality - into the wine of righteousness and joy that dwells in the hearts of those whose lives are purified?" (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 302).

In spite of all the symbolic associations with Jesus changing the water to wine, it was still a literal occurrence. Jesus quite literally made plain drinking water into grape juice. Brigham Young spoke of this miracle when he said, "I told the people when we settled here that we had all the facilities here that we could ask for, all we had to do was to go to work and organize the elements. How far Jesus went to get the wine that was put into the pots which we read about in the account of the marriage at Cana of Galilee I do not know; but I know that he had power to call the elements that enter into the grape into those pots of water, unperceived by anybody in the room. He had power to pass through a congregation unseen by them; he had power to step through a wall and no person be able to see him; he had power to walk on the water, and none of those with whom he associated could tell how; he had power to call the elements together and they were made into bread, but it was done by invisible hands." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 14, Brigham Young, Address delivered in the New tabernacle, April 9, 1871, page 80). Another President of the Church, Howard W. Hunter, taught that the changing of water to wine is no more of

a miracle than what the Lord does every day on the vines themselves. He said, "For example, the first miracle by Jesus recorded in the New Testament was the turning of water into wine at the marriage at Cana. (See John 2:1-11.) But poor, indeed, was the making of the wine in the pots of stone, compared with its original making in the beauty of the vine and the abundance of the swelling grapes. No one could explain the onetime miracle at the wedding feast, but then neither could they explain the everyday miracle of the splendor of the vineyard itself." (General Conference, "That God That Doest Wonders", Howard W. Hunter, April 1989).

- 30 - **the brim** – The word "brim" is translated from the Greek word "ἄνω" or "anō". The word means up, upwards, above or on high. It would appear that John is conveying the fact that the water pots were filled to capacity. The translators took some liberty by using an English idiom, "filled to the brim".
- 31 - **Draw out** – The phrase "draw out" is translated from the Greek word "ἀντλήω" or "antlēō". It means to draw water. What is interesting here is John's choice of words. The word he used is actually a word that would not commonly be used for removing water from a jar, but rather a well. Brown explains, "This verb is used normally in reference to a well, and Westcott suggests that a well, and not the jars, is the source of the water. This suggestion seems to run against the obvious context; for it is unlikely that having made the servants fill the jars with some 120 gallons of water, Jesus now makes them draw more water from the well. The problem is that many feel uneasy with the implication that Jesus changed 120 gallons of water into wine. Another attempt to avoid this is Dacquino's suggestion that only the water drawn from the jars was turned to wine. This is possible, but it is not the obvious meaning of the account." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 100). I personally doubt that Jesus changed the entire well to wine, and John's only reference to this fact is the phrase "draw out". Even so, the word John chose causes one to question his actual intention.



- 32 - **bear** – The word "bear" is translated from the Greek word "φέρω" or "pherō". The word means to carry, to bear or to bring forward. One can picture a servant pouring the wine he drew from the jars into a cup and then delivering it to the table master for tasting. He carried the wine and served it to him.

33 - the governor – The phrase "unto the governor of the feast" is translated from a single Greek word; "ἀρχιτρίκλινος" or "architriklinos". The Greek word means the superintendent of the dining room, the toast master or a table master. It differs from toast-master, who was one of the guests selected by lot to prescribe to the rest the mode of drinking. The table master was to place in order the tables and the couches, arrange the courses, taste the food and wine beforehand, and so forth. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "governor" as "master". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:9, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). **"The word architriklinos has as its primary reference to the slave who was responsible for managing a banquet, hence, 'headwaiter, butler'. Actually Jewish literature offers us no exact parallel for the functionary envisaged in John; and it may well be that in the telling of the story, the functionary has taken on some of the aspects of the arbiter bibendi, well known in the Gentile world. Some see a parallel in the one who presides at the dinner in Sir xxxii 1; in this instance the one who presides is not a servant, nor the best man, but a guest chosen to run the affair because he is on familiar terms with the bridegroom."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Yale/Anchor Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 100). Since we don't really know what the Jewish "head waiter" did exactly, most scholars turn to neighboring cultures and try to associate the position. **"Among the Greeks, at all formal feast, there was a 'symposiarch' who was one of the guests, and was selected to take charge of the feast. It was his duty to preserve order, to maintain liveliness among the guests, to assign each one his proper place, to decide what proportion of water should be mingled with the wine, and how much each of the company was to drink. Among the Romans was a corresponding officer who was called rex convivii or arbiter bibendi. It is thought by many that the ἀρχιτρίκλινος, or 'governor of the feast' mentioned in the text, was an officer of the same kind. This, however, is denied by other authorities, who assert that the ἀρχιτρίκλινος was not a guest, but a servant hired for the purpose, whose business it was to take charge of the other servants and see that they properly perform their work. He had some duties in common with the symposiarch, among which was that of tasting the wine before it was offered to the guests. Thus when Jesus had miraculously changed the water into wine, he directed the servants to take some of it to 'the governor of the feast'."** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 423).

In other cultures, the ruler or governor of the feast, would taste the wine and food before it was served. The ancient world did not have refrigeration, and so the chances of spoilage was higher than today. Serving bad food would be an embarrassment to the hosts. Prior to any shame, the ruler would reject any items not worthy of the guests. After Jesus changed the water to wine, the true test came. Did it taste like wine? Was it good enough to serve to the guests. They carried the wine to the ruler or governor of the feast. **"When he tasted the water which had become wine he was astonished. He called the bridegroom - it was the bridegroom's parents who were responsible for the feast - and spoke jestingly. 'Most people,' he said, 'serve the good wine first; and then, when the guests have drunk a good deal, and their palates are dulled and they are not in much of a condition to appreciate what they are drinking, they serve the inferior wine, but you have kept the best until now'."** (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, William Barclay, page 99).

34 - the feast – The feast is also known as the marriage supper. The marriage supper was often lengthy, sometimes more than one day. In some cases it lasted up to 7 days. Every guest sought to contribute to the general enjoyment, till at last "the friends of the bridegroom" led the bridal pair to the Cheder and the Chuppah, or the bridal chamber and bed. Here it ought to be specially noticed, as evidence that the writer of the fourth Gospel was not only a Hebrew, but intimately acquainted with the varying customs prevailing in Galilee and in Judaea. The marriage of Cana mentions no "friend of the bridegroom," or "groomsman" (Shoshebhayna), while they are referred to in St. John 3:29. The words of John 3:29 are spoken outside the boundaries of Galilee. The simpler and purer Galileans did not practice having "friends of the bridegroom," which they believed must so led to gross impropriety. Instead, all the invited guests bore the general name of "children of the bridechamber" (bene Chuppah). Since the marriage in Cana was in Galilee, it follows that there would be no "friend of the bridegroom" or "groomsman". This simple observation shows us that the recorded account of the marriage followed local tradition.

It is worth mentioning that the Galileans had a custom that an invitation was extended to a stranger Rabbi. There are some that think Jesus filled this role. I personally find this theory to be lacking. Jesus grew up in the area and surely would not have been a stranger. Mary had a significant role at the wedding, reinforcing that the family was well known. Additionally, a Rabbi was required to be at least 30 years old and married to claim such a title. Jesus would not turn 30 until April 6, 27CE, and the wedding was in March.



When speaking of a Jewish feast, it should be understood that they were usually associated with sacred religious events. **"The feast, or sacred festivals held an important place in Jewish religion."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 280). The feasts were generally celebrations of God's goodness and blessings. The hosts provided the best they could provide for those that attended. To have a better understanding of an ancient Jewish feasts, we need to understand what the Jews ate. Here are some common ancient Jewish foods;

- Stews made of lentils or beans were common and they were cooked with onion, garlic and leeks for flavor.
- Ground roasted lentils pressed and fried in oil and called ashishim
- Vegetables that were commonly eaten included squash, leeks, garlic and onions, black radishes, net or muskmelons (sometimes misidentified as the cucumber) and watermelons.
- Certain fruits were plentiful. **"In Palestine and Syria, fresh fruit can be obtained throughout the year. Oranges last in the spring till the very short season of apricots arrives. After the apricots come the plums, figs, pomegranates, etc. which last until the oranges and lemons are again in season."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 287). Other common fruits were olives, grapes, avocados, and raisins.
- Bitter herbs were common, and required for the Passover feast. Some of the common bitter herbs were chicory or endive (ulshin), horehound (tamcha), reichardia or eryngo (charchavina) and wormwood (maror).
- Meats were eaten, but not as common as we have it. **"The preparation of food differs from Western custom. Generally meat is eaten not in steaks and roasts, but cut up and served with rice, and often imbedded in 'coosa' (a kind of squash) or wrapped in cabbage or grape leaves. The bread is not as white and fine as is ours, but is far more healthful....Food is a figure of spiritual sustenance."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 287).
- Fruit syrup called "dvas" served as the primary sweetener and was most often made from dates. It was not until Talmudic times that the word "dvas", now translated as "honey", generally meant bee honey.
- Herbs and spices included capers, coriander, cumin and black cumin, dill, dwarf chicory, hyssop, marjoram, mint, black mustard, reichardia, saffron and thyme. Some seasonings were imported, such as myrrh, galbanum, saffron and cinnamon, but their high cost limited their widespread use.
- The Israelites usually drank water drawn from wells, cisterns or rivers.
- They also drank milk (for example, as mentioned in the Bible in Judges 5:25), often in the form of sour milk, thin yoghurt or whey, when it was available in the spring and summer.
- They drank fresh juices from fruits in season as well.
- Breads were made both leavened and unleavened from various grains.
- The most strongly preferred beverage was wine, although some beer may have also been produced and wine was an important part of the diet and a source of calories, sugar, and iron. Making wine was also a practical way to preserve fruit juices for long-term storage. Usually, wine was made from grapes for everyday use, as well as for rituals, such as sacrificial libations. Less often, wine was made from pomegranates and dates.

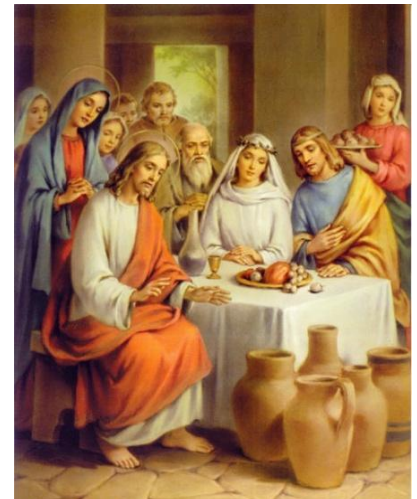


35 - the ruler – The phrase "ruler of the feast" is translated from the same word used to translate footnote #33, "unto the governor of the feast". The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "ruler" as "master". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:9, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166).

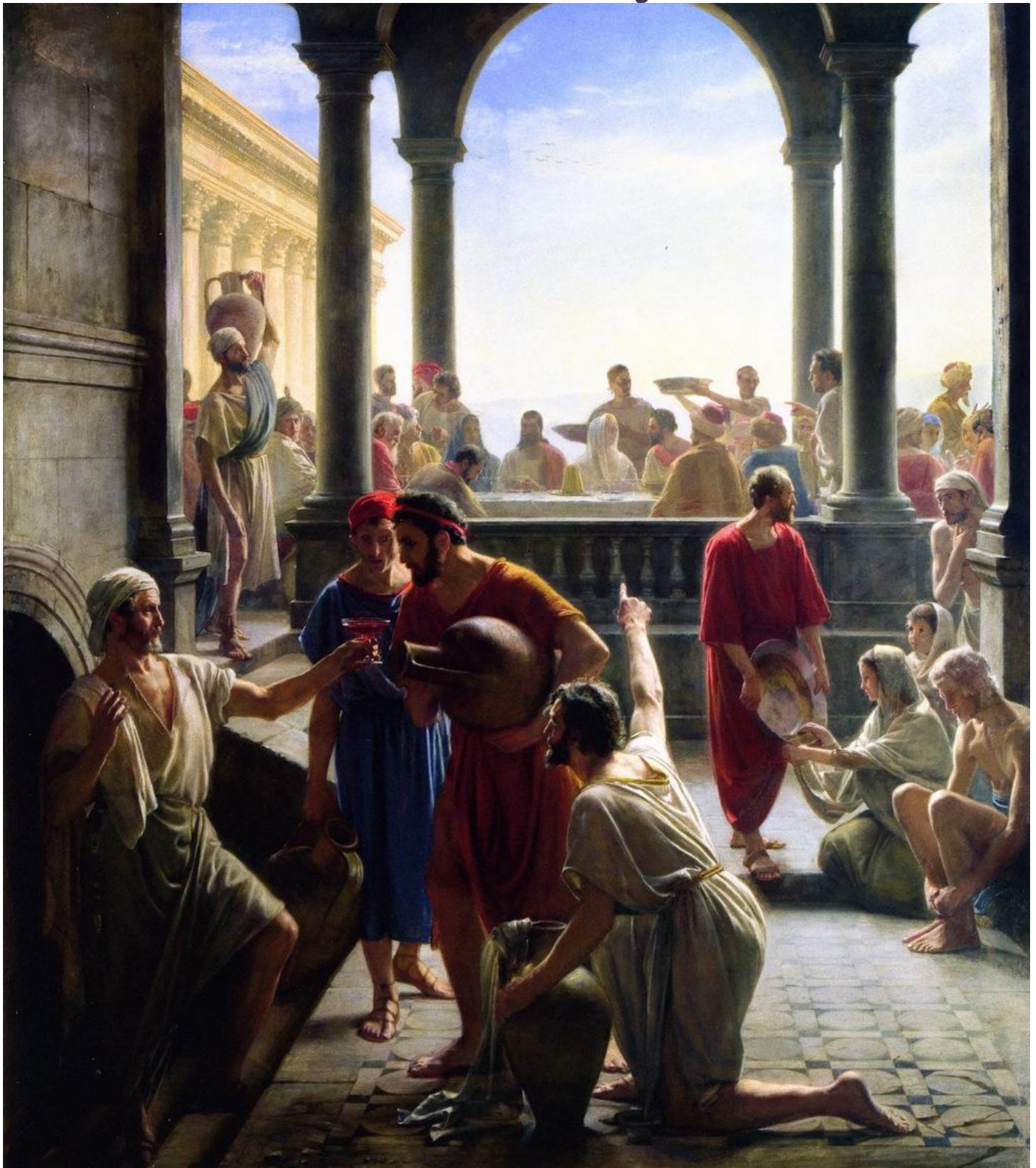
36 - tasted – The word "tasted" is translated from the Greek word "γεύομαι" or "geuomai". It means to taste, or to try the flavor of. The water that was turned to wine by Jesus was the real deal. The ruler or governor of the feast tasted it, and sure enough, it was good wine. **"By turning water into wine, he manifest during the early days of his ministry that he had power over temporal, physical matters."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 136). Jesus was more than a prophet or a man of spiritual wisdom. He is the creator of heaven and earth. He created the sun, the moon, the oceans and the mountains. Water to wine might seem like an incredible feat, but relatively speaking it was a small thing for the great Jehovah. Brigham Young, speaking of Jesus miracle with the wine on Cana, said, **"This, in my own mind, is argued out perfectly, upon natural principles. It is natural for me to believe that, if I plough the ground and sow wheat, in the proper season I shall reap a crop of wheat; this is the natural result. It was precisely so with the miracles that Jesus wrought upon the earth? At the wedding in Cana of Galilee, when they had drunk all the wine they went to the Savior and asked him what they should do. He ordered them to fill up their pots with water, and after having done so they drew forth of that water and found that it was wine. I believe that was real wine; I do not believe that it was done on the principles that such things are done in these days by wicked men, who, by means of what they term psychology, electro-biology, mesmerism, &c., influence men and make them believe that water is wine, and other things of a similar character. The Savior converted the water into wine. He knew how to call the necessary elements together in order to fill the water with the properties of wine. The elements are all around us; we eat, drink and breathe them, and Jesus, understanding the process of calling them together, performed no miracle except to those who were ignorant of that process."** (Journal of Discourses, Volume 13, "The Lord's Supper - Miracles and Manifestations of the Power of God - The Gospel and the Gifts and Blessings Thereof", Brigham Young, Delivered in the New Tabernacle, July 11, 1869, pages 141-142).

37 - knew not whence – The word "whence" is translated from the Greek word "πόθεν" or "pothen". It means from where or from what condition. In other words, the ruler or governor of the feast had no idea where the wine came from. They were out of wine. There was none to be had, and yet he had been served up wine with excellent flavor.

38 - called – The word "called" is translated from the Greek word "φωνέω" or "phōneō". It means to send for, or to summon. It can mean to invite, or to call out. See footnote #6 of this chapter.



The marriage at Cana by Carl Bloch



39 - **bridegroom** – The word "bridegroom" is translated from the Greek word "νυμφίος" or "nymphios". It means "a bridegroom". Today, we usually drop the first part of the word and just used the word "groom". It is the husband to be or the man to be married. The big question, with regard to the marriage in Cana, is who is getting married? Who is the groom? and who is his wife?

Somewhere in the dark ages, it was determined that sexual relations between a man and woman was a carnal act and unbefitting a priest or man of the cloth. Priests became celibate. It was determined that Mary could not have been born by such carnal means, and the doctrine of immaculate conception was born. Mary was said to have been born of a virgin mother, like Jesus was. These false doctrines were part of the Great Apostasy, and cloud the truths of eternity. With these false doctrines in place, it was considered blasphemous to even consider the idea that Jesus was married or had children. Even today such a concept is met with in trepidation and often fear.

Recently an archeological find has shaken the belief that Jesus was not married. A small fragment of faded papyrus was found containing a suggestion that Jesus may have been married. The fragment, with just eight lines of text on the front and six lines on the back, is from a fourth-century dialogue, written in the Coptic language, between Jesus and his disciples. In it, Jesus speaks of "my wife," according to Harvard professor Karen L. King, who discovered the fragment.

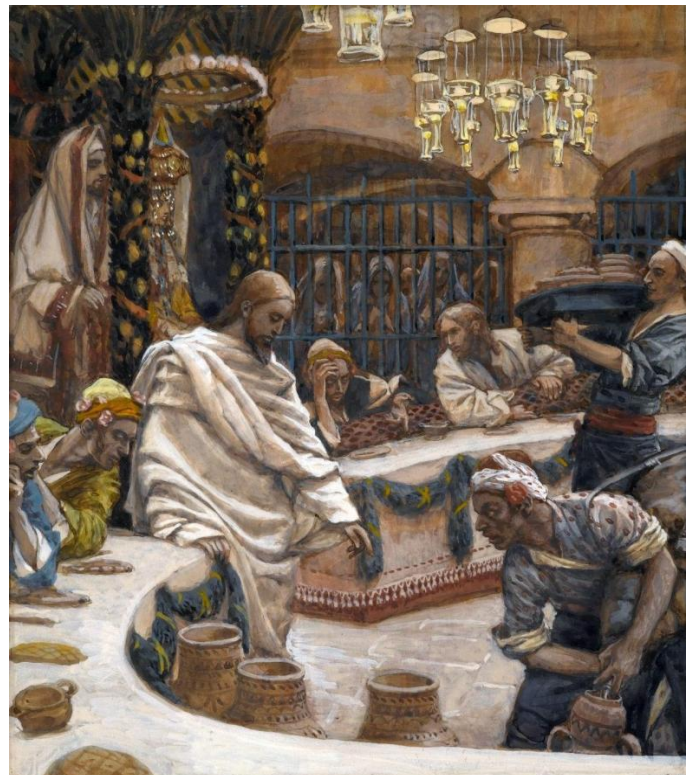


While speaking in General Conference in 1854, President Orson Hyde (President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) taught, speaking of the marriage in Cana, "**Gentlemen, that is as plain as the translators, or different councils over this Scripture, dare allow it to go to the world, but the thing is there; it is told; Jesus was the bridegroom at the marriage of Cana of Galilee, and he told them what to do.**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "The Marriage Relations", President Orson Hyde, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, page 82). President Hyde is also quoted in the Journal of Discourses saying, "**It will be borne in mind that once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and on a careful reading of that transaction, it will be discovered that no less a person than Jesus Christ was married on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha, and the other Mary also whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper to say the best of it.**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 4, "Man the Head of Woman, etc.", A Sermon, by President Orson Hyde, Delivered in Great Salt Lake City, date not recorded, page 259).

Apparently, the teachers and scholars of the apostate world responded as they had for centuries. President Hydes responded, "**I discover that some of the Eastern papers represent me as a great blasphemer, because I said, in my lecture on Marriage, at our last Conference, that Jesus Christ was married at Cana of Galilee, that Mary, Martha, and others were his wives, and that he begat children. All that I have to say in reply to that charge is this—they worship a Savior that is too pure and holy to fulfil the commands of his Father. I worship one that is just pure and holy enough "to fulfil all righteousness;" not only the righteous law of baptism, but the still more righteous and important law "to multiply and replenish the earth." Startle not at this! for even the Father himself honored that law by coming down to Mary, without a natural body, and begetting a son; and if Jesus begat children, he only "did that which he had seen his Father do."**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "Judgments on the United States", A Sermon by President Orson Hyde, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, March 18, 1855, page 210). Not only did he confirm that Jesus was married, but he added insult to injury and testified that he had children.

In General Conference, a year later, in 1855, President Hyde reaffirmed the doctrine that Jesus was married saying, "**How was it with Mary and Martha, and other women that followed him? In old times, and it is common in this day, the women, even as Sarah, called their husbands Lord; the word Lord is tantamount to husband in some languages, master, lord, husband, are about synonymous. In England we frequently hear the wife say, "Where is my master?" She does not mean a tyrant, but as Sarah called her husband Lord, she designates hers by the word master. When Mary of old came to the sepulchre on the first day of the week, instead of finding Jesus she saw two angels in white. "And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord," or husband, "and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." Is there not here manifested the affections of a wife. These words speak the kindred ties and sympathies that are common to that relation of husband and wife. Where will you find a family so nearly allied by the ties of common religion? "Well," you say, "that appears rather plausible, but I want a little more evidence, I want you to find where it says the Savior was actually married."**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "The Marriage Relations", President Orson Hyde, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, pages 81-82). We then learn that Jesus lived to see his own children. He experience mortality in every aspect. He experienced fatherhood, married life, and all the challenges therewith. President Hyde went on to say, "**Well, then, he shall see his seed, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off from the earth? I shall say here, that before the Savior died, he looked upon his own natural children, as we look upon ours; he saw his seed, and immediately afterwards he was cut off from the earth; but who shall declare his generation? They had no father to hold them in honorable remembrance; they passed into the shades of obscurity, never to be exposed to mortal eye as the seed of the blessed one. For no doubt had they been exposed to the eye of the world, those infants might have shared the same fate as the children of Jerusalem in the days of Herod, when all the children were ordered to be slain under such an age, with the hopes of slaying the infant Savior. They might have suffered by the hand of the assassin, as the sons of many kings have done who were heirs apparent to the thrones of their fathers."**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "The Marriage Relations", President Orson Hyde, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, page 83).

At the close of President Hyde's talk in General Conference, regarding the marriage of Jesus, the prophet Brigham Young added his testimony saying, "**I say to the congregation, treasure up in your hearts what you have heard to-night, and at other times. You will hear more with regard to the doctrine, that is, our "Marriage Relations." Elder Hyde says he has only just dipped into it, but, if it will not be displeasing to him, I will say he has not dipped into it yet; he has only run round the edge of the field. He has done so beautifully, and it will have its desired effect. But the whole subject of the marriage relation is not in my reach, nor in any other man's reach on this earth. It is without beginning of days or end of years; it is a hard matter to reach. We can tell some things with regard to it; it lays the foundation for worlds, for angels, and for the Gods; for intelligent beings to be crowned with glory, immortality, and eternal lives. In fact, it is the thread which runs from the beginning to the end of the holy Gospel of salvation – of the Gospel of the Son of God; it is from eternity to eternity. When the vision of the mind is opened, you can see a great portion of it, but you see it comparatively as a speaker sees the faces of a congregation. To look at, and talk to, each individual separately, and thinking to become fully acquainted with them, only to spend five minutes with each would consume too much time, it could not easily be done. So it is with the visions of eternity; we can see and understand, but it is difficult to tell. May God bless you. Amen."**" (Journal of Discourses, Volume 2, "Marriage Relations of Bishops and Deacons", President Brigham Young, General Conference, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, October 6, 1854, page 90).



The fact that Jesus was married, or had children is not discussed much. I would imagine that is because it is not a necessary fact relating to our salvation. Even so, it does leave us with much to ponder. Let's look at some of these points;

Points to Ponder

- Jewish rabbi's and teachers of the law were required to be married. A man would not have been allowed to assume the position Jesus did without a wife. **"Had Jesus not been married, we would undoubtedly read of accusation after accusation against him, because marriage number one of the commandments God had given from the beginning to the meridian of time. As we have no record of objections to his teaching, it would appear that he had already complied with this most important commandment."** (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 108-109).
- Mary Magdalene came in to anoint the body of Christ at the close of the Sabbath, following His crucifixion. According to Judaic Law, only a wife is allowed to perform this sacred part of the burial because of the presence of the naked body. If Mary were not Jesus' wife, she would not have been permitted to perform the burial rites, and the duty would have fallen to His mother. We know that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was alive and capable of performing the task, and yet the other Mary performed it. It was the labor of a loving wife. Elder Nelson taught, **"Marriage is the foundry for social order, the fountain of virtue, and the foundation for eternal exaltation. Marriage has been divinely designated as an eternal and everlasting covenant. Marriage is sanctified when it is cherished and honored in holiness. That union is not merely between husband and wife; it embraces a partnership with God."** (Ensign, "Nurturing Marriage", Russell M. Nelson, May 2006, page 36). There appears to have been this relationship between Mary and Jesus.
- At a Jewish Marriage, the bridegroom was responsible for the wine. Why did Mary go to Jesus and not to the bridegroom, unless Jesus was the Bridegroom? Why did Jesus fulfill this responsibility, if it was the responsibility of the bridegroom? Elder McConkie taught, **"Perhaps Jesus himself, at this particular marriage supper, had a personal obligation to look out for the well-being of the guests and see that they wanted for nothing. Eastern hospitality was of such a nature that it would be a matter of great embarrassment to those in charge of the festivities if the needs of the guests went unheeded."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 301).
- At a Jewish Wedding the mother of the bridegroom was in charge of all the festivities and care of the guests. Mary, the mother of Jesus, filled this role at the marriage at Cana. This would imply that one of her sons was being married.
- In speaking of His baptism, Christ said, **"...it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."** (Matthew 3:15). This is a standard that the Savior lived by. He performed every necessary ordinance and task required of the Father for eternal life and exaltation. Had He not done so, He could in no wise have qualified to be the Savior of mankind. That being said, it doesn't take much effort to make a list of requirements for celestial reward. Predominate in that list is eternal marriage. The Doctrine and Covenants says, **"In celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees; And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]; And if he does not, he cannot obtain it...and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory."** (D&C 131:1-3 & 132:4). After Jesus' death he entered the glory of His Father. The conclusion is somewhat obvious. **"Jesus kept every commandment of His Father; He held the Melchizedek Priesthood and observed every ordinance of the priesthood pertaining to mortality, including all ordinances of the temple."** (Jesus Christ - Son of God - Savior, Robert J. Matthews, page 316). He must have been married.

Scriptural text does not specifically state who was getting married that day in Cana. We are left to ask, what Jesus' role was, how many of Jesus' disciples were with Him, or if there was any real biblical significance to the marriage at all. Any speculation beyond what is given as scripture should be considered just that and not taught as doctrine. Even so, it does make you wonder.

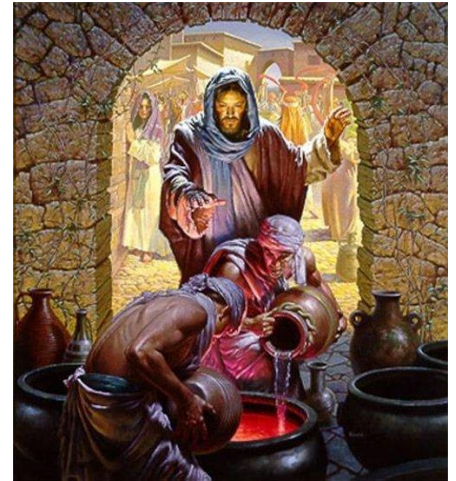


- 40 - **Every man** – The word "man" is translated from the Greek word "άνθρωπος" or "anthrōpos". It means a human being, whether male or female.
- 41 - **beginning** – The word "beginning" is translated from the Greek word "πρῶτον" or "prōton". It means the first in time, place, or rank. This could not have been the first miracle He performed. Surely the Savior had honed His faith and spiritual power during the preceding 30 years. His mother seemed to know that He could perform this task, and could not have known so without prior experience. Evidently the marriage at Cana was the site of his first public miracle in association with Jesus as a Rabbi or Master Teacher. Elder McConkie wrote speaking of the miracle at Cana, **"First of the miraculous signs of his ministry, that is, the first of those intended for public knowledge, those designed as witnesses of the divine powers resident in him. He previously may well have performed other personal or private miracles. Indeed, Mary's appeal to him at the wedding celebration for aid carries an inference of her prior knowledge of his miraculous abilities."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137).
- 42 - **doth set forth** – The phrase "set forth" is translated from the Greek word "τίθημι" or "tithēmi". It means to set, put or place. It can also mean to make, set or establish.
- 43 - **good** – The word "good" is translated from the Greek word "καλός" or "kalos". It means beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, or admirable. The wine Jesus made was the best. There was nothing lacking in His miracle. There is something to be said for that. When we trust in Jesus, and develop faith in Him, we come to the knowledge that He is "mighty to save". There is nothing lacking in His atonement for us. It is complete, perfect, and fully adequate. It is good.
- 44 - **well drunk** – The phrase "men have well drunk" is translated from a single Greek word; "μεθύω" or "methyō". It means to be drunken. It does not mean that the guest were inebriated. It only means that they had consumed the initial wine provided at the feast.
- 45 - **worse** – The phrase "that which is worse" and is translated from the Greek word; "ἐλάσσων" or "elassōn". The word means less in age, rank, or excellence. It means lesser or worse. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "then that which is worse" as "the inferior". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:10, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). The initial wine served at the wedding was traditionally the best wine the host had to offer. Compared with what Jesus produced, the initial wine was classified by the ruler or governor of the feast as "inferior".

If the wine represents the atonement, or the ability to correct that which is wrong, then the initial wine served at the feast would represent the worlds ability to provide correction and forgiveness of sins. Such wine is inferior. It is not sufficient to save. It is lacking, and the guest, even after consuming all that the world has to offer is left with nothing. Jesus on the other hand, produces what the world cannot. It is a miracle to them. It is wine beyond their best effort. His wine is more than sufficient. There is plenty for all, and then some. There is more than enough for all the guests. Truly, His wine is infinite and eternal in nature.

- 46 - **hast kept** – The phrase "hast kept" is translated from the Greek word "τηρέω" or "tēroō". It means to attend to carefully, or to take care of. This phrase make reference to carefully holding back the good wine.
- 47 - **until now** – The word "now" is translated from the Greek word "ἄρτι" or "arti". It means just now, or in this moment. To the surprise of the ruler or governor of the feast, the good wine was held back, until now. That would have been an odd point to hold out for. The initial wine was gone, and the guests had all partaken.

48 - **miracles** – The word "miracles" is translated from the Greek word "σημεῖον" or "sēmeion". The word means a sign, a mark, or a token. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "miracles" as "signs". (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:11, translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). Miracles are simply things that defy our understanding. A hundred years ago a microwave oven would have been an absolute miracle. People would have marveled at the process, and the person cooking with it would either be seen as a witch or a prophet. Today, a microwave oven is no more than a modern convenience. In fact, I think it makes certain foods rubbery. **"Miracles defy full definitions; they are manifestations of the power of God in the lives of men. That which was a miracle yesterday may be commonplace today, and some of the most common events are the greatest miracles. Birth and life and existence - these are miracles, and yet few so consider them. Death is a miracle, as is resurrection, and what is a greater miracle than the cleansing of a sin-sick soul through repentance and the receipt of the Holy Ghost?"** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 298). The miracles performed by Jesus were simply Priesthood being exercised in its full capacity, commanding and organizing the elements through personal worthiness. Elder Talmage taught, **"Miracles cannot be in contravention of natural law, but are wrought through the operation of laws not universally or commonly recognized. Gravitation is everywhere operative, but the local and special application of other agencies may appear to nullify it--as by muscular effort or mechanical impulse a stone is lifted from the ground, poised aloft, or sent hurtling through space. At every stage of the process, however, gravity is in full play, though its effect is modified by that of other and locally superior energy. The human sense of the miraculous wanes as comprehension of the operative process increases. Achievements made possible by modern invention of telegraph and telephone with or without wires, the transmutation of mechanical power into electricity with its manifold present applications and yet future possibilities, the development of the gasoline motor, the present accomplishments in aerial navigation--these are no longer miracles in man's estimation, because they are all in some degree understood, are controlled by human agency, and, moreover, are continuous in their operation and not phenomenal. We arbitrarily classify as miracles only such phenomena as are unusual, special, transitory, and wrought by an agency beyond the power of man's control."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, pages 127-128).



Jesus performed the miracle of turning water to wine by the use of priesthood power. Even today, the act would still be classified as a miracle. The question might be asked, "Why do miracles happen?" and the follow-up question "Why are they then absent when we want or need one?" We need to understand that Jesus performed the miracle at Cana for specific reasons, and none of them were to glorify himself. Miracles occur when faith has been produced, not vice versa. **"In the gospel sense, miracles ... take place when the Lord on his own motion manifests his powers or when man by faith prevails upon Deity to perform supernatural events."** (Mormon Doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 459-461). It will be seen through the Savior's ministry that the faithful are strengthened by the miracles of Jesus while the faithless enjoy the miracles at times, but leave with no more faith than before the miracle. Elder McConkie taught, **"Miracles follow faith, and miracles strengthen faith."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 302). We learn here that the followers of Jesus, His disciples, were strengthened by the miracle in Cana. We also know that they had chosen to follow Him because of their faith. Faith preceded the miracle.

"The act of transmutation whereby water became wine was plainly a miracle, a phenomenon not susceptible of explanation, far less of demonstration, by what we consider the ordinary operation of natural law. This was the beginning of His miracles, or as expressed in the revized version of the New Testament, "his signs." In many scriptures miracles are called signs, as also wonders, powers, works, wonderful works, mighty works, etc." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 127). We cannot control miracles, or even decide when they will take place. We can however live worthy enough to allow the Savior to perform miracles within our lives. **"In the divine economy all things operate by law, but some laws are outside the pale of human experience and beyond the power of man to control."** (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1 - The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 137). All miracles occur under the direction of heaven.

- 49 - **manifested** – The phrase "manifested forth" is translated from the Greek word "φανερόω" or "phaneroō". It means to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way. **"We ordinarily think of miracles as those signs and wonders and marvels which God does for his people because they have faith in him, and which they cannot do for themselves. More often than not these performances seem to transcend natural laws, though in fact they are always in complete harmony with them, and are simply the manifestations of higher laws not generally known to mortal men."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 298).
- 50 - **forth** – The Savior's ministry was to go "forth" among the children of men, and do His Father's work. Such work is a miracle in itself. The work of salvation is a miracle. On a fundamental level, I understand the miracle of the atonement. I understand and know that Jesus atoned for my sins. How specifically He was able to do that is presently a mystery to my mind. I cannot comprehend at present the process of taking someone else's sins, grief, sorrow and pain and make them mine to the extent that I pay the price. This was His life. The closer we live to God, the more He will be able to manifest Godliness in us. Such manifestations are miracles.
- 51 - **his glory** – The word "glory" is translated from the Greek word "δόξα" or "doxa". The word means opinion, judgment, or a view. It can also mean splendor, brightness, majesty, a most glorious condition or a most exalted state. The glory of God is the perfection of His children. This is the work of the Father, and consequently, the work of the Son.
- 52 - **believed on him** – The word "believe" is translated from the Greek word "πιστεύω" or "pisteuō". The word means to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, or place confidence in. The Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase "his disciples believed on him" to **"the faith of his disciples was strengthened in him"**. (Joseph Smith Translation of John 2:11). **"Though miracles do not create faith, they can certainly help to increase it."** (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 112). His disciples left with greater understanding. They were given this understanding because they already believed that Jesus was the Christ.

