

January 12, 2014

## Lesson 14: Wedding at Cana



**John 2:1-11**

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.



# Wedding at Cana

John 2:1-11

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**The Big Story Truth:** God is a God of abundance. Through Jesus we are given an abundance of gifts. As John says in the beginning part of the gospel, “through his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.”

**About This Scripture Passage:** This is the first of Jesus’ miracles in the Gospel of John. This is the first act of Jesus’ public ministry as a whole. The passage begins with Mary, Jesus’ mother, coming to him about the problem that the wedding has run out of wine. When Jesus says that his “hour” has not yet come, he means a number of things. “Hour” in John’s gospel means more than just a term relating to time. The “hour” for something can mean the time when something is supposed to happen, when it the fullness of time has come and it is the moment that God has prepared for a particular event. Jesus’ “hour” specifically referred to his death and resurrection. Jesus talking about his “hour” now reveals that

everything in his ministry is connected. Jesus turning water into wine now is a part of what will lead to his eventual suffering and to his glory. The water into wine miracle, though, shows us something more. The steward goes to the groom assuming that this good wine has come from him. But we as readers know that the good wine comes from God. This is a story about Jesus, all of his gifts and his glory.





**Making the Connection:** Our God gives good gifts. In this first miracle of Jesus, we see the character of God. God is all about abundance. In this passage the water jars were huge... much larger than normal. The miracle has abundance written all over it- both in the amount of wine and the quality. This is how God gives to us. God gives in abundance. The gift of Jesus is a gift of abundance. Not only in this story about wine for one wedding, but in the whole of Scripture we see that what God gives us through Jesus is an abundance...

abundant life,  
abundant grace. This story is an opportunity for us to help our kids experience the abundant gifts of God and to realize that God's abundance is poured out for them too!

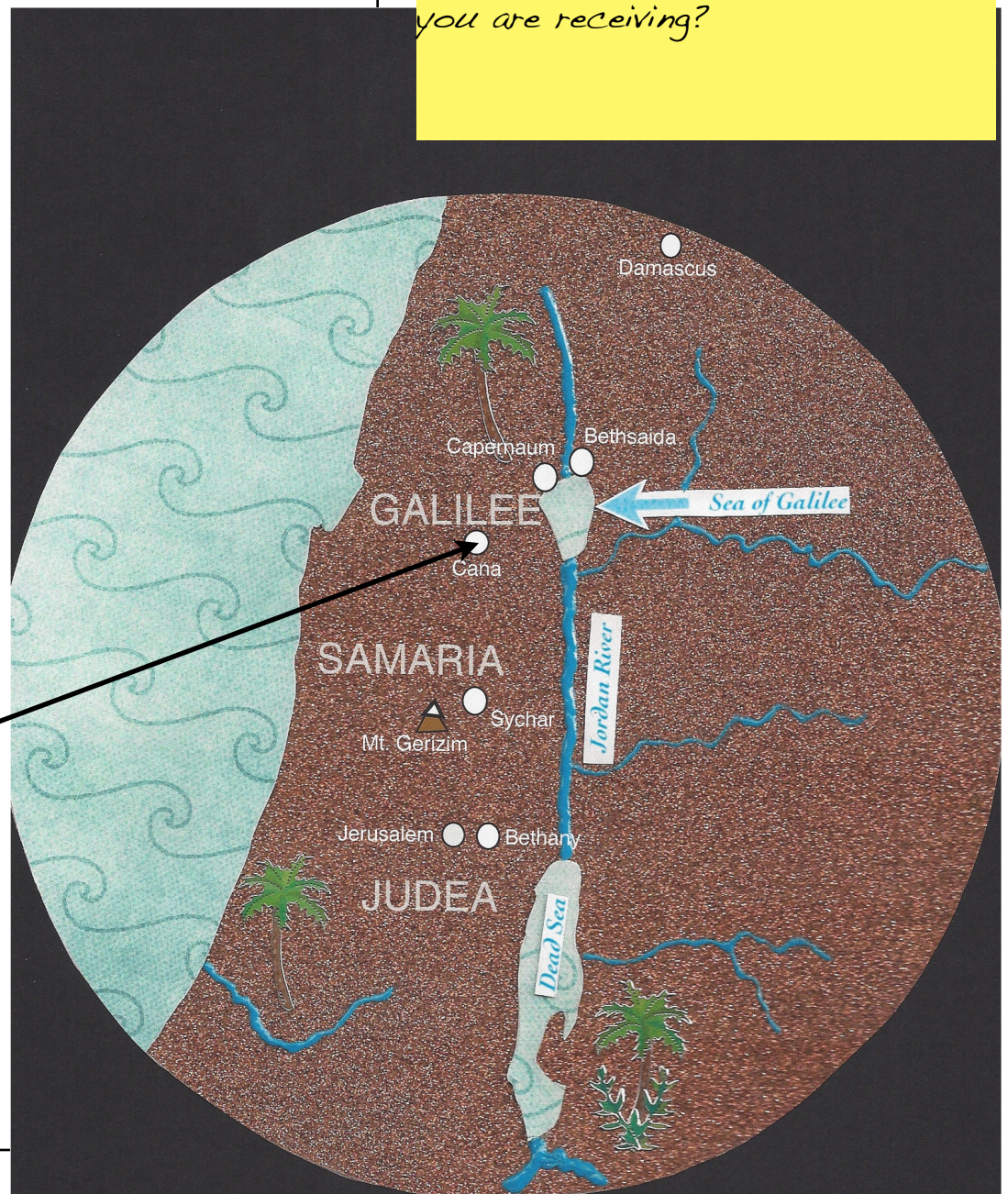
### Where in the World Are We?

The wedding where this miracle took place was in Cana.

### For Your Reflection:

*When have you experienced abundance? What did it look like? What was your reaction?*

*How is God providing for you abundantly this week? How might you respond to the abundant gifts you are receiving?*



# *Large Group Gathering & Lesson*

Note: Today you will need all the time that you have for this special lesson. Invite adults to stay if they would like to for the whole lesson. Otherwise, let them know that Family Faith 5 will resume next week.

## **Materials Needed:**

- 180 empty, cleaned out gallon milk jugs
- Powdered grape Kool-Aid
- Tables and chairs
- Fancy table cloth
- Plastic goblet glasses
- Seating name cards (optional)
- Mints, peanuts, other wedding snack items
- Other decorations/foods
- Clock (could be a plastic teaching clock, a paper plate one you've made yourself, or a wall clock you borrow from a SS room.)
- NRSV Bible
- Pitcher full of water
- Access to sink or hose
- Copies of Coloring Page(s)
- Squishy Baff (preferably red, available in toy section of most stores)
- Large bowl/tub
- Paper towels
- Table cloth or painting tarp

## **Before the Children Arrive:**

In a large gathering space, set a table with enough chairs for all your students, teachers, and any other anticipated adults who may choose to stay for the lesson. The idea is to make this table look like the kind of banquet table that we would find at a modern day wedding reception. Covering the table with a table cloth, setting out plastic goblet glasses, serving mints, cake, etc. all will help add to the feel of a wedding banquet.

We will be using a huge number of milk cartons for this lesson (180 to be exact!) so be sure to arrange for this ahead of time. If you want to add a color change



effect to the lesson today, be sure to put a small amount of grape Kool-Aid powder in the bottom of each milk carton ahead of time. Have the milk cartons stored somewhere out of sight when the kids arrive, but make sure that you can access them easily and quickly during the lesson.

### **Experiencing the Story:**

As students come to the regular gathering space, direct them to wherever it is that you have your banquet table set up. Invite students to take a seat and munch on the party snacks you have set out while you wait for all the children to arrive.

When everyone has arrived say: **I'm so glad you all came! We have a very special lesson to talk about today! As you can see, this is a special occasion! Do you know where we are today? Where might you see a table set up like this one? (At a wedding!) Today our story is going to be about a time that Jesus was attending a wedding banquet and something very special happened. Before we read our story though, there is something that I need to teach you about so that you can understanding the story better.**

**I have something here in my hand to help us talk about this. (Hold up the clock). Preschool class, do you know what this is? Yes, you're right. It's a clock. What does a clock help us do? You're right! A clock helps us know what time it is! Now, early elementary class, I'm wondering if you know about these two pieces on the clock. We call them hands. This big hand we call the minute hand. Do you know what the little hand is called? It's the hour hand, right. In our lesson today, Jesus talks about "his hour." But it means something different than like the hour on a clock. When Jesus talks about his hour he is talking about the important time when it was time for him to die on the cross.**

**Sometimes we talk about time as time of day. But other times we talk about time like when it is the right time for something to happen and that kind of time you can't tell with a clock like this. It's kind of like this. Those of you who are in the upper elementary, middle school, high school classes... how many of you play some kind of sport? What sports do you play? Okay. So when you are playing basketball (for example) do you go into a game knowing that at say exactly 7:45 you are going to make a pass? No! That would be silly, right? You can't play that way. You watch what is going on**



around you, where everyone is positioned. You know how much time is left in the game, whose open, what your coach is saying, and then you know when the time is right to pass or to shoot. That's a little bit like the kind of time we are talking about. It's the kind of time when you know what comes next is just right. In this story, Jesus is talking about his hour (his death) and all the things that will lead up to it and what he's saying is that everything from this story on will happen at the right time so that what will be accomplished will be him dying and rising again in glory!

Okay, well... that's skipping ahead in the story a little bit. But let's back up and read the story now about the wedding! Who from the middle school or high school class would be willing to read for us today?

Ask your volunteer to read John 2:1-11.

After the story has been read, take out a milk carton with a little bit of the cool-aid powder in the bottom and pour some water from the pitcher into the milk carton. As you are doing so, say: **This is the first story in the Bible of Jesus doing a miracle. He listened to what his mother asked him to do and he turned water into wine for the wedding party!** At this point the Kool-Aid should be changing the water in your milk jug. **It was amazing! But it wasn't just a little bit of water Jesus turned into wine. It was A LOT of water that Jesus turned into wine. Do you know how much water Jesus turned into wine? If you still have that Bible open let's look back at how many jars of water. There were 6 stone jars. And each jar held up to how many gallons of water? 30! So those of you who are good at math... how much is 30 times 6? It's 180 gallons! That's A LOT! This is one gallon we have here. Can you imagine 180 gallons? Well, actually, guess what. You don't have to imagine. I brought 180 gallons for us today so we could see exactly how much water it was that Jesus turned into wine! And I'm going to need your help! We are going to fill up the jugs and take them up into the sanctuary so that everyone at church can see how much it is too! Let's do it!**

Have the kids help you fill and carry to the sanctuary the 180 milk jugs. This will take a while, but will be so impressive and memorable!

When you have finished, gather everyone back together and say: **Thank you so much for your help! Isn't it amazing to think of how much Jesus provided**



for that family! Mary knew that Jesus was able to provide even more than anyone could imagine. So she asked Jesus for what they needed. It turned out that even though it might not have been Jesus' first idea for the timing of things, he answered her request and it gave glory to God. That is kind of what prayer is like for us. We can pray big prayers, trusting that through Jesus, God will provide for what we need. And when the time is right, that God will be glorified through our situation too!

Let's pray before we head to worship! I can't wait to see everyone's reactions when they come in this morning!

Heavenly Father, we thank you for providing so much for us! Thank you for all your good gifts! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

#### **Additional Activity Option:**

It will be impressive and important for most kids to help with filling the milk jars and getting them in place in the sanctuary, but for some kids the excitement and lack of structure may be too much. Plan to have at least one teacher ready to work with kid who need something else to do.

#### **Miracle For Mom Coloring/Activity Page**

Use the coloring/activity page printed in your teachers book or download one from a google search for "wedding in Cana coloring page"

#### **It's a Miracle: Squishy Baff**

In a large plastic bowl or tub placed on top of a plastic table cloth or painting tarp, sprinkle Squishy Baff mixture over luke warm water. Have the kids help you mix the water and powder until the water has completely transformed! Talk about how amazing it is to watch the water change into something so different when we add the powder. This experiment uses science. Imagine how much even more amazed the servants must have been who knew that Jesus turning the water into wine was a real miracle!



