



"Wedding at Cana" from *The Life of Christ* by
Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834-90)

The Book of Signs: From Cana to Cana

John 1:19-4:54

First Sign: Water to Wine at the Wedding at Cana; Blood, Water, and the Incarnation; Jesus, Jerusalem, and the Cleansing of the Temple; Discourse on the New Birth; Dialogue with Nicodemus; Discourse on the Water of Life; Dialogue with the Samaritan Woman at the Well;
Second Sign: Healing the Nobleman's Son in Cana

Signs in John

- **Preferred Johannine term: *sēmeia* or "signs"**
 - John was very selective in the miracles or signs that he recorded, although he knew of many (20:30-31, 21:25)
 - John as narrator refers to them as *sēmeia*; Jesus usually refers to them as *erga*, or "works"
 - *These were selected for what they told about Jesus*
- **Seven Important "Signs"**
 - **1 - Water into Wine (2:1-11)**
 - **2 - Healing of Nobleman's Son (4:46-54)**
 - 3 - Healing of the Lame Man at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)
 - 4 - Feeding of the 5,000 (6:1-15)
 - 5 - Walking on Water (6:16-21)
 - 6 - Healing of the Man Born Blind (9:1-41)
 - 7 - Raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)
 - ***The greatest sign, the resurrection of Jesus!***
 - Also, an astonishing catch of 153 fish after the Resurrection (John 21:14-14)

Book of Signs (1:19–12:50)

- **Initial Days of the Divine Revelation** (1:19–2:11)
 - *Jesus the Lamb of God*
- **First to Second Cana Miracles** (2:1–4:54; overlaps with Initial Days, lecture 21)
 - *Inclusio* of references to Cana in 2:1 and 4:46 connect first and second signs
- **Jewish Feasts and Their Replacements by Christ** (5:1–10:42, lectures 22–23a)
 - **Anticipated by Jesus at Passover** (2:13–25, overlaps with first to second Cana miracles)
 - Jesus on the Sabbath (Shabbat, 5:1–47)
 - Jesus again at Passover (Pesach, 6:1–71)
 - Jesus at Tabernacles (Sukkot, 7:1–10:21)
 - Jesus at Dedication (Chanukah, 10:22–42)
- Raising of Lazarus and its Aftermath (11:1–54, lecture 20)
- Conclusion to the Book of Signs (11:55–12:50)
 - *Jesus Prepared for Passover*

18. From Cana to Cana (John 1:19–4:54)

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The Light and the Witness

Initial Days of the Divine Revelation (1:19–2:11)

- **John the Baptist as a witness of the Light**
 - The two prose “asides” in the *Logos* hymn (1:6–8 and 15) introduce **John as a prime witness of the Word**
 - “And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us.” (D&C 93:11)
 - *John the Baptist or John the Beloved sharing a testimony that he heard from or which started with his earlier mentor?*
- **John’s ministry**
 - **Contrast with the “repent and be baptized” of the Synoptics**
 - concerning his own mission (1:19–28)
 - **concerning Jesus (1:29–34)**
 - Jesus’ baptism is downplayed in John
 - “And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.” (D&C 93:15)
 - *Most likely John the Baptist, although possibly John the Beloved was present when this occurred*

18. From Cana to Cana (John 1:19–4:54)

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Early Disciples Called

Initial Days of the Divine Revelation (1:19–2:11)

- **John the Baptist's Disciples Come to Jesus (1:35–51)**
 - **Andrew** and **“another”** (1:35–40)
 - Significance of John the Beloved's earlier role as a disciple of John the Baptist
 - John the Baptist was a relative (first cousin once removed?) of Jesus
 - John the son of Zebedee's mother was probably Salome (Matt 27:56), perhaps the sister of Mary—cousin of Jesus?
 - **“Come and see . . .” (1:39) starts the chain of witnesses**
- **Simon Peter (1:41–42)**
 - Meaning of *Cephas* (*Petros*, “Rock”) as **a seer**: see John 1:42 JST
- **Philip and Nathanael (1:43–51)**
 - **Christ's supernatural knowledge of Nathanael, in Israelite “in whom there is not guile” (1:47)**
 - **Nathanael never appears in the list of the Twelve—traditionally he was associated with Bartholomew, but he may have been a non-apostolic disciple like Lazarus, Martha, and Mary**

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First to Second Cana Miracle

(2:1–4:54, overlaps with initial days)

- **First Sign: Water to Wine at the Wedding at Cana** (miracle story, 2:1–11)
 - Jesus Goes to Capernaum (narrative transition report, 2:12)
 - Jesus at the First Passover (2:13–25)
- **Discourse on the New Birth: Dialogue with Nicodemus** (3:1–21)
 - The Baptist's Final Witness (discourse, 3:22–36)
 - Jesus Leaves Judea (narrative transition report, 4:1–3)
- **Discourse on the Water of Life: Dialogue with the Samaritan Woman at the Well** (4:4–42)
 - Jesus Returns to Galilee (narrative transition report, 4:43–45)
- **Second Sign: Healing the Nobleman's Son in Cana** (miracle story, 4:46–54)

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The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1–11)

- **Jesus and his disciples called to the wedding**
- **Symbolism of a wedding feast**
 - YHWH and Israel people in a covenant relationship, but his people were most often unfaithful and left him
 - *Now as the Word Made Flesh, Jesus has come to live with his people*
- **The role of the Mother of Jesus (cf. John 19:25)**
 - “Woman” (or *gynē*) address (cf. Gen. 3:15, Rev. 12:1–17)
 - Her intercession with Jesus > Catholic belief in her role
 - *Her role as means of the Incarnation and as a witness of her son . . .*



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The First Sign: Water to Wine



- **Symbolism of 6 stone water pots**
 - Old law of Moses (6, imperfect) contrasted with *new law of Christ*
- **Sacramental imagery**
- **Creator symbolism**
 - YHWH creates/organizes, *Jesus re-creates/re-organizes*
- **Incarnational theology**
 - **Water:** divinity, spirit, eternal nature
 - **Blood/wine:** mortality, flesh, physical/fallen nature
 - *Presence of Mary—the means of Incarnation*



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Nicodemus and John the Baptist

Chapter 3 begins and ends with *anōthen*, “from above, anew” (KJV “again”)



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- **Jesus Goes to Capernaum** (narrative transition report, 2:12)
- **Jesus at Passover** (2:13–25, overlaps with first to second Cana miracles)
 - Cleansing of the temple *at the beginning of the ministry in John*
 - What sign is this? **Temple = Christ's body**
- **Discourse on the New Birth**: Dialogue with Nicodemus (3:1–21)
 - Nicodemus coming secretly and at night
 - *Being born again/anew/from above*
 - **water** and **spirit**—different interpretations of the new birth, including “watery-spirit”
 - **The Son “being lifted up”**
 - “**For God so loved the world . . .**”
- **The Baptist's Final Witness** (discourse, 3:22–36)
- **Jesus Leaves Judea** (narrative transition report, 4:1–3)

John La Farge, *Visit of Nicodemus to Christ* (1880)

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Discourse on the Water of Life (4:4–42)



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- **Setting the scene: Jesus wearied, apparently hungry, and acts thirsty**
 - *But the Incarnate Word never drinks or eats!*
- John 4:7–14, “There cometh **a woman of Samaria to draw water**:
 - 5 husbands (previous gods of Samaritans), living with a man but not in a covenant relationship (Samaritan devotion to YHWH?)
 - Samaritan view of Messiah: a teacher like Moses
- **Symbolism of Living Water** (cf. 1 Nephi 11:24–25)
 - **Living water**
 - For Jews: flowing, ritually pure water
 - In Greek: *hydōr to zōn* was water giving or characterized by life
 - Water must be drawn from a well or cistern, this water “**springs up to eternal life [zōēn aiōnion]**”

“Samaritan Woman at the Well” from *The Life of Christ* by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834–90)

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Cisterns vs. Living Water



Top: Water in a cistern at Maresha; upper right: water “from a rock” at Dan spring; lower right: head of Jordan at Dan

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The healing of the son of a nobleman by James Tissot

The Second Sign: Healing the Nobleman’s Son (miracle story, 4:46-54)

- **Jesus Returns to Galilee** (narrative transition report, 4:43-45)
 - “So Jesus came again into **Cana** of Galilee, where he made the water wine.
 - “**Cana**” reference completes the ring begun with chapter 2
 - **Water made wine = Word made flesh**
- **Second Sign: Healing the Nobleman’s Son in Cana** (miracle story, 4:46-54)
 - **Healing Power of the Incarnate Word provides segue to the healing of the lame man**

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