

## IN HIS FOOTSTEPS

### The Towns and Cities of Jesus’ Day

In our Christian church year, Epiphany is the season that follows Christmas. Epiphany means *revealing*. At Christmas we celebrated the gift of God’s Son Jesus to mankind. During Epiphany, the gift is ‘unwrapped’ and ‘revealed’ to us. We learn more about who the Christ is and what He came to do for our salvation. The event that took place at Cana in Galilee is important because it revealed the glory of Jesus to all people.

### Cana in Galilee

**Location** There is some dispute as to the exact location of the ancient village of Cana in Galilee. The traditional site has been *Kafr Kana* which is located five miles northeast of Nazareth between Nazareth and Tiberias. The village numbers about 600 and has a mixed Muslim and Christian population. In excavations as recent as 1997, a Christian church was discovered there dating from the sixth century AD. The town is surrounded by plantations of olive and other fruit trees. There is a large spring in the neighborhood enclosed by a wall, which, if this is the Cana of the New Testament, could well be the place from which water was drawn at Jesus’ visit.

According to other Biblical historians, the place where Jesus performed His first miracle is actually *Khirbet Kana*, a small mound of ruins about eight miles north of Nazareth. Pottery shards that have been found at this site date from the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Many caves and cisterns are to be found around the site. On the top of the mound is a large building site measuring 197 x 230 feet. It is possible that these ruins mark the where the wedding feast was once held.



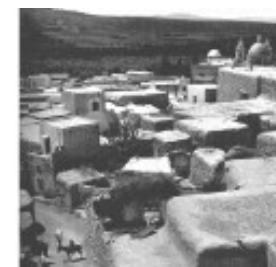
### The Wedding at Cana

John writes (2:1-2) *On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.* Apparently Jesus, His mother, and His disciples knew the couple that was getting married at Cana. All of them were invited and attended the wedding together.

According to the customs of the day, a wedding feast would begin on the third day (Tuesday) and last for seven days. Guests reclined on floor mats to eat and much food and wine was spend for the celebration.

At this particular wedding, however, even more wine had been used than was originally planned and trouble arose. *When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine”* (Jn 2:3). It would have been quite an embarrassing situation for those whose job it was to provide for the guests. Jesus seems to give His mother a rather sharp answer saying, *“Dear woman, why do you involve me? My time has not yet come”* (Jn 2:4). Perhaps He was only seeing if His mother would continue to trust in Him. She did, ignoring His remark and saying to the servants, *“Do whatever he tells you.”*

Jn 2:7-10 *Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water”; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.”*



*Kafr Kana*

By miracle, Jesus had produced the best tasting wine of the entire wedding feast from a few large jars of water.

## The Miracle at Cana Reveals Important Things About Jesus

Although we know Jesus was the Son of God when He was born in the manger at Bethlehem, He did not *appear* very divine. He looked like an ordinary baby, His surroundings were humble and plain, and His mother and step-father were not exactly influential citizens holding places of high honor. Even as Jesus grew, there was little to alert people to the fact that He was more than a mere human being. When Jesus was twelve years old He astonished the temple leaders in Jerusalem with His knowledge of the Scriptures and He made a comment about taking care of “His Father’s business,” but apart from that, indications are that Jesus lived a very normal, average childhood and His divine nature was not revealed to the general public.

Here at Cana, however, Jesus’ disciples witnessed something special. To them at the wedding feast, Jesus showed a bit of His true power and glory by performing a miracle before their very eyes. They could see beyond any shadow of a doubt that this Jesus was indeed the Messiah. He was not only a human being, but He shared in the godhead with His Father. He was God in the flesh. This strengthened the disciples’ faith, for now they knew that they could trust every word that came from Jesus’ mouth. He was their God.

*This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him (Jn 2:11).*

- # What things does this lesson teach you (reveal to you) about your Savior?
- # Why is it important to you that Jesus is true God?
- # Can you think of other times that Jesus revealed His glory?
- # What do you we mean when we refer to the *humiliation* of Jesus?
- # During His state of humiliation, did Jesus give up His divine power or simply choose not to use it?
- # Why don’t you need miracles today to reveal to you who Jesus is?



site of natural spring at *Kafr Kana*



ruins at *Khirbet Kana*, another possible site for the Biblical Cana of Galilee

Manifest at Jordan' s stream, Prophet, Priest, and King supreme,  
And at Cana, Wedding-guest, In Thy Godhead manifest;  
Manifest in power divine, Changing water into wine.  
Anthems be to Thee addressed God in man made manifest.  
(*Lutheran Hymnal* 134:2)

### Resources

<http://holylandphotos.org/browse.asp?s=1,2,5,36,134>  
<http://www.biblepicturegallery.com/Pictures/Other-af.htm>  
<http://www.ourfatherlutheran.net/biblehomelands/galilee/kefar%20kana/kafarcana.htm>  
*The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia* Samuel Fallows, ed.