

## C. The Witness of the First Miracle (2:1-12)

The theme of Jesus' first signs is clearly that of 2 Cor. 5:17 - the old has gone and the new has come! Let us now take a look at the first sign that Jesus gave to those who have eyes to see. This is just the beginning of the greater things that Nathanael would see.

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

The scene is the joyous occasion of a wedding celebration. It seems that perhaps Mary was involved in the arrangements in some way, since in verse 3 she is aware that the wine was running out and the fact that she gave orders to the servants in v. 5.

**V. 3** *"And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.'"*

I am aware that Roman Catholic doctrine uses this to back up praying to Mary. For they say that Mary gets Jesus to listen. But what about all the others who ask Jesus to do something and he does it? Why not use them for a Mediator, too? Mary is the mother of Jesus - His humanity. She is not the mother of God! [See Isa. 9:6 ... a child is born; a Son is given] He was the Son of God long before He was born of Mary. [*In the beginning was the Word...*] Also, there could be no immaculate conception of Mary to make her sinless to protect the sinlessness of Jesus. For then her mother before her would have had to have been sinless and her mother before her and so on all the way back. Also clear passages like Mark 3:31-32 reveal the false teaching of Mary's perpetual virginity. Mary had to be redeemed as a sinner (Luke 1:46-47!).

Tradition says that Mary was widowed and leaned hard on her first born son and His resourcefulness. Thus, she turns to Him when she realizes they have run out of wine. So John has now given us the facts. However, even as there was more to Jacob's ladder than first met the eye of Nathanael, so too, a greater message than simply a "miracle" is being set up. The prophet Joel called Israel to mourning and repentance for their sin had left them empty in a dry and thirsty land. As a result their wine "dried up" and was "cut off" from their mouth (Joel 1:5-13). Israel was in the same plight as the bridegroom - no wine. But Joel calls repentant Israel to look to the promise of the Lord, for the Lord promises a new day of rejoicing with the coming of Messiah. In that day, the vine will yield its strength and *"the vats shall overflow with new wine!"* (See Joel 2:21-32) Following this, Joel says that the Lord will pour out His Spirit. This is the passage quoted by Peter at Pentecost in Acts 2 when he says that the fulfillment of Joel has come.

As we shall see, Jesus, through this sign, manifests that indeed He is the One *"of whom Moses in the law, and also, the prophets, wrote."* (John 1:46) This sign was *"written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."* (John 20:31)

**V. 4 *"Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.'"***

"Woman" - Ultimately, the only relationship to Jesus that counts is the one entered into through faith. Jesus does not just do miracles to meet the needs of His family or friends, but always to serve the purposes of God and the reason for which He came to earth. Mark 3:31-35 makes it clear that we have a relationship to Jesus closer than that which His own mother had with Him. We are His true family and He became one with us. Now as Jesus entered His mission, the prerogatives of motherhood no longer applied. She, like every other person, must come to Him as the promised Messiah - the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. That hour will come (see John 13:1 and 17:1).

Jesus' is focused on more than just a shortage of wine for the wedding feast. He sees the lack of wine in Israel. Mary is thinking of the wedding. Jesus' mind is on His Father's business, and He is thinking of the Messianic age of the Spirit when wine would flow liberally - the new covenant (see Jer. 31:12 and Amos 9:13-14). This is always the mind and focus of Jesus. (i.e. ch. 3 - you must be born again; ch. 4 - you would have asked Me for a drink and I have food to eat of which you do not know etc.) Thus, in our passage here, the new wine in the old purification pots has something to say.

It is as if Jesus is saying that it is not yet hour when the great wine will flow; but it will!

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

When Mary approaches Jesus as His mother, she is reproached. Now when she responds as a believer who trusts Him fully, her faith is honored. She still doesn't know what He will do, but she has committed the matter to Him and trusts Him! Oh, if we would trust Him so. If we would look to Him - for just consider what He is able to do! But He will not be manipulated. Trust Him. He is good.

**V. 6 *"Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece."***

Notice that these are old covenant cleansing jars, for ceremonial washings. This is significant. Their purpose provides a clue to the meaning of the sign. The water represents the old order - the law and the custom of Moses, which Jesus was to replace with something better when His hour came, on the cross. Jesus didn't have them throw the water out, but in the transformation, Christ shows the fulfillment of the shadows.

**V. 7-10 *"Jesus said to them, 'Fill the waterpots with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, 'Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.' And they took it."***

***When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!''***

Here wine is received without money and without price (see Isaiah 55:1-4)! What a picture of the abundance and all-satisfying provision of the new age. Jesus has not just provided a few bottles, but six huge waterpots. The wine of this world will end and leave you thirsty, but He who comes to Jesus will never hunger and he that believes in Him shall never thirst. In Christ is abundance of joy. Is there any doubt that He, who by an act of His will transformed, not only water into wine, but also has transformed our nature, is able to supply all your need according to His riches in glory? (Phil. 4:19)

The way of the world is to give you the best first and then slowly it gets worse and worse. For those of us in Christ's kingdom, it is going to get better. Jesus whets our appetite in this incident by graciously making good the deficiencies of the unknown bridegroom in anticipation of the perfect way He Himself will fill the role of the Messianic Bridegroom. Oh, a better Bridegroom has come. The theme of the new creation begun in the prologue, continues and builds in this first sign!

Wine makes the heart merry. Indeed the new wine of the new covenant should make your heart merry! We're not drunk with wine. No, we're filled with the Spirit. This is the age of the Spirit - the age of the new wine. Oh, our cup runneth over!

***V. 11-12 "This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days."***

Notice this is a sign, not just a display of power. A sign points beyond the powerful display to deeper realities, that can be perceived by eyes of faith. Chapter 2: 23-25 shows that many saw the power, but did not receive the Lord Jesus Christ for who He was.

We need to connect this sign with the purpose of the book as mentioned in John 20:30-31. Is this not a great foretaste of a greater and more glorious marriage feast to be held when Christ Himself will be the Bridegroom and believers will be the bride? Blessed will they be in that day who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!

Be assured, the feast of this world will come to an end. The world will run out of wine. Come to Jesus before it is too late. In His presence is fullness of joy. At His right hand are pleasures forevermore. You don't have to ration yourself with Christ. Drink all you can of Him! He's not just giving trickles of grace. Jesus is far better. His blessings are far superior to the fleeting and short-lived pleasures of this world.