

CREATOR AND PROVIDER: John 2:1-12

How beautiful the hands that served The wine and the bread
And the sons of the earth
How beautiful the feet that walked The long dusty roads
And the hill to the cross
How beautiful, How beautiful is the body of Christ
How beautiful the heart that bled
That took all my sin and bore it instead How beautiful the tender eyes
That choose to forgive and never despise How beautiful, how beautiful
How beautiful is the body of Christ
And as He lay down His life We offer this sacrifice
That we will live just as He died Willing to pay the price
How beautiful the radiant bride Who waits for her Groom
With His light in her eyes How beautiful when humble hearts give
The fruit of pure lives so that others may live How beautiful, how beautiful
How beautiful is the body of Christ

Keywords for our Worshippers in Training: Creator, Provider, Miracle

“The constant workings of his divine power and energy, by which He [Jesus] is essentially, as God, always working with the Father, were indeed concealed; but, at times, before the people at large, and more frequently before his disciples, the divinity shone through the veil which ordinarily concealed it, and testified that he was as truly God as he was also man.” ~JP Boyce

The New Testament uses several words to denote what we call ‘miracles’: mighty works, portents and wonders. John prefers the simple word signs. Jesus’ miracles are never simply naked displays of power, still less neat conjuring tricks to impress the masses, but *signs*, significant displays of power that point beyond themselves to the deeper realities that could be perceived with the eyes of faith.

Like His Word, His signs challenges the witnesses to respond in either faith or unbelief throughout the Gospels

Signs-faith is less valuable than faith that merely responds to the Spirit’s witness; it is nevertheless a better place to begin than no faith at all. In this text, disciples who have already begun to believe Jesus come to a new level of faith through Jesus’ first sign

Jesus sets aside the purificatory purpose of water pots that embody traditional religious practices. A major theme in His proclamation of the Gospel is the need to turn from the impotence of external rituals without the internal transformation of the heart. The water motif throughout the Gospels consistently represents Jesus and the Spirit as superseding Jewish traditions.

This sign will initiate His conflict with the Jews: This cost is clear in Jesus' response that this sign will move him toward the hour of his death. This initiates the distinction between Jesus' and Judaism.

This particular miracle signifies that there is a transforming power associated with Jesus. He is the Creator! He is Provider!

TEXT:

And on the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. (John 2:1-2)

Verse 1

Weddings in the Bible-

Genesis and the Creation account

Isaac gets a Bride

Jacob Leah-Rachel

Ruth

Song of Solomon

Hosea

The image of a wedding feast is used with reference to the kingdom of God (Matt. 22:1–14; 25:1–13; Luke 12:36),

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

Marriage feasts were a necessary part of a legitimate marriage; such a feast could be used in court to prove that a legal marriage (rather than merely cohabitation) had taken place

~A reasonable walk from Nazareth and explain why Jesus' family would have known the family of the groom

~The disciples in the presence of Christ are likened to wedding guests rejoicing with the bridegroom.

And when the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” (John 2:3)

Verse 3: More on wine, Social disaster, Mary’s reliance on Jesus

According to the custom, wedding celebrations ideally lasted seven days, and many associates of the bride and groom would remain for the full period, abstaining from work to share the joy of the new family

The wine running out may indicate that they were poor and had made the minimum provision, hoping for the best. It is also possible that the lack of wine involved another embarrassment, in that it signaled the groom’s inability to provide. The financial responsibility lay with the groom. To run out of supplies would be a dreadful embarrassment in a ‘shame’ culture; What is more certain is that the groom was facing a potential social stigma that could make him the talk of his guests for years to come.

Wine in the ancient world was diluted with water to between one-third and one-tenth of its fermented strength, *i.e.* something less strong than American beer. Undiluted wine, about the strength of wine today, was viewed as ‘strong drink’, and earned strong disapproval.

Wine was not merely unfermented “grape juice,” as some popular modern North American apologists for abstinence have contended.

It was not only drunk to purify the water, as some have also claimed;

Judaism (OT Scripture) viewed drunkenness unfavorably. The NT reminds us that drunkenness is a sin a habitual drunkards will not inherit the Kingdom

Wine was a standard part of daily life in the ancient Mediterranean world, and Palestine was no exception. Seven or more Galilean cities and villages were heavily engaged in wine production, which constituted one of Galilee’s primary industries. Jewish texts assumed the importance (and necessity) of wine for festive occasions, including in the blessing for Sabbath meals and at weddings.

It is likely that Mary turned to Jesus because she had learned to rely upon his resourcefulness.

Most believe she is widowed by this period.

Joseph does not appear on the scene after the episode in the temple when Jesus was twelve years of age.

Jesus himself was known not only as the carpenter’s son but as the carpenter.

The family fortunes more than likely depended on Jesus' manual labour. Like any widow, Mary had leaned hard on her firstborn son.

And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what do I have to do with you? My hour has not yet come.” (John 2:4)

Verse 4: Jesus separation to His call, His Hour

That Jesus calls Mary “Woman” and not “Mother” probably indicates that there is a new relationship between them as he enters his public ministry.

Jesus in his public ministry was not only or primarily the son of Mary, but “the Son of Man” who was to bring the realities of heaven to people on earth

The question itself, *is literally* ‘what to me and to you?’

We must not avoid the conclusion that Jesus by rebuking his mother, however courteously, declares, at the beginning of his ministry, his utter freedom from any kind of human advice, agenda or manipulation. He has embarked on his ministry, the purpose of his coming is his heavenly Father's will.

But now that he had entered into the purpose of his coming, everything, even family ties, had to be subordinated to his divine mission.

My time has not yet come, he says: the word ‘time’, literally ‘hour’, constantly refers to his death on the cross and the exaltation bound up with it

The prophets characterized the messianic age as a time when wine would flow liberally

“They will come and sing for joy on the height of Zion,
And they will be radiant over the goodness of Yahweh—
Over the grain and the new wine and the oil,
And over the young of the flock and the herd;
And their soul will be like a watered garden,
And they will never waste away again. **(Jeremiah 31:12)**

Those who live in his shadow
Will again raise grain,
And they will flourish like the vine.
His *name of remembrance will be* like the wine of Lebanon. **(Hosea 14:7)**

“Behold, days are coming,” declares Yahweh,
“When the plowman will overtake the reaper
And the treader of grapes him who sows seed;
When the mountains will drip sweet wine
And all the hills will melt.

“Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel,
And they will rebuild the desolated cities and live *in them*;
They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine
And make gardens and eat their fruit.
“I will also plant them on their land,
And they will not again be uprooted from their land
Which I have given them,”
Says Yahweh your God. **(Amos 9:13-15)**

His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.” (John 2:5)

Clearly Mary did not understand Jesus’ words as a sharp rebuke. His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.”

V. 5 *Do whatever he tells you*, Jesus’ mother shakes off the gentle rebuke and exemplifies the best kind of persevering faith, a faith that is perfectly content to leave the matter in Jesus’ hands

Although Jesus makes clear that his mother cannot command Jesus’ favor simply by virtue of her relation to him, her faith becomes a catalyst for his action

Now there were six stone water jars set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing two or three measures each. (John 2:6)

These water pots embody traditional religious practices

Their purpose provides a clue to one of the meanings of the story: the water represents the old order of Jewish law and custom, which Jesus was to replace with something better

Jesus said to them, “Fill the water jars with water.” So they filled them up to the brim. (John 2:7)

V.7 Jesus tells the servants, to fill the pots. This they do, “to the brim.” This is possibly to indicate that there could be no addition to the contents. These pots at the time of the miracle contained nothing but water.

The pots together held, roughly, between one hundred and one hundred and fifty gallons

The sheer quantity of water turned into wine then becomes symbolic of the lavish provision of the new age.

And He said to them, “Draw *some* out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it *to him*. (John 2:8)

V.8 The master of the banquet

Now when the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, (John 2:9)

John’s point is simply that the wine Jesus provides is unqualifiedly superior, as must everything be that is tied to the new, messianic age Jesus is introducing.

Jesus was making a bountiful wedding gift to the couple, who were probably poor. Not only did he rescue them from what might well have been a crippling liability, but he provided that they began their married life with an unexpected asset. There will be spiritual significance also, for the “sign” points to the truth that Christ abundantly supplies all the need of his people. It also points us to the reality of His Creative power. He is our Creator and Provider.

And my God will fulfill all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. **(Philippians 4:19).**

And said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first, and when *the people* have drunk freely, *then* the inferior *wine*; *but* you have kept the good wine until now.” (John 2:10)

People universally put out the better wine at the beginning of a feast, while palates are still sensitive. It is only when their guests are somewhat affected (the verb rendered “have had too much to drink” means “are drunken”) that they produce the worse wine. This bridegroom, however, has kept the good wine until the end. We are thus left in no doubt as to the quality of the wine that resulted from the miracle.

Jesus did this in Cana of Galilee as the beginning of *His* signs, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11)

It is important to realize not only that His signs arouse wonder, they hard to explain, and that they are demonstrations of the divine power, but also that they point us to something beyond themselves. They show us God at work.

John says nothing at all of the effect of the “sign” on the master of the banquet or on the guests generally or on the servants who certainly knew what had happened.

He does tell us His disciples saw “his glory” and they “put their faith in him”

The glory of the Messiah was revealed to some and hidden from others.

By this first sign, Jesus *revealed his glory*. His glory would be revealed in greatest measure in his cross, resurrection and exaltation, but every step along the course of his ministry was a foreshadowing of that glory. The glory was not visible to all who had seen the miracle; the glory cannot be identified solely with the miraculous display but in the witnessing through faith. The servants saw the sign, but not the glory; the disciples by faith perceived Jesus' glory behind the sign, and they *put their faith in him*.

First, this is the first of the *signs* John relates, and John himself insists that his purpose in recording these signs was to convince people that the Christ, the Son of God, is Jesus (**John 20:30–31**).

Therefore many other signs Jesus also did in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. (**John 20:30-31**)