

THE FIRST MIRACLE

John 2:1-12



SYNOPSIS

John states the purpose of his book very clearly: "that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (20:31) Why would he include this water-to-wine "parlor trick"?

John was deliberate in his description of Jesus's first miracle. He remembers it being significant because "what Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him." (2:11) The glory Jesus revealed had everything to do with the wedding context, joy/celebration, and reinforcing the bridal paradigm he intended for his disciples' relationship with him.



OUTLINE

1

ANCIENT JEWISH MARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS

1. The two fathers draw up a marriage contract.
2. The groom's father offers a bride price. (**Crucifixion**)
3. The bride and groom separately undergo a water purification ritual (mikvah). (**Jesus's baptism**)
4. The betrothal ceremony legally binds the couple and occurs under a canopy. The couple exchange vows and share a cup of wine. (**Wine of new covenant, Last Supper**)
5. The groom departs (~1 yr) to prepare a place for his bride, (**Ascension**) usually by adding a wing to his father's house (**John 14:2-4**). The bride makes herself ready for her groom's return. (**Matt 24:36**)
6. The groom returns to retrieve his bride in a bridal procession and is announced by a shofar blast. (**1 Thess 4:16-17**)
7. The wedding is celebrated as a 7-day feast. (**Rev 19:7**)

2

SYMBOLISM & THE BRIDAL PARADIGM

Wine represents...

- The joy of the marriage feast
- The blood of Jesus (cf. Last Supper)

Stone jars and water represent...

- Purification, OT purity laws
- Old covenant that pointed to a Messiah

Wedding represents...

- Our union with Jesus (Rev 21:2-4; Eph 5:25-27)

Jesus now begins to behave as the bridegroom to his Church. (See parallels in **red**.)

In describing the first miracle, John wanted to emphasize the primary weightiness of a "with God" life. He foreshadows the new covenant and introduces the bridal paradigm: Jesus's love and blood cleanse us from the stain of sin so that we can be eternally with him in joyful, celebratory union.

We are invited to come, taste and see the Good Wine that never runs dry (vs the cheap stuff of this world).



kairos
church

?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What are your thoughts about the bridal paradigm? How much does this paradigm affect your relationship with God?

2

What's keeping you from "tasting and seeing" (Ps 34:8) the Good Wine that Jesus has to offer? (e.g. belief, idolatry, practice)

3

What are your feelings as you contemplate Jesus's return? How often do you think about his return?

4

Are you prepared for Jesus's return? What does being prepared look like?

5

When was the last time you experienced God's bridegroom-intensity love for you? In you for others?



BIG IDEA

The bridal paradigm of our relationship with God (love/longing/passion) is more compelling than the legal paradigm (fear/guilt). Come taste and see the Good Wine that never runs dry. Christianity is about the "with God" life that we were always intended to experience.

