

MIRACLES OF JESUS

THE WEDDING AT CANA, JOHN 2:1-11

- A. Jesus attended a wedding (1-2), ***On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.***
1. Jesus, His Mother and His disciples were invited to a wedding feast.
 - a. The wedding was in Cana in Galilee, in northern Israel, about nine miles north of Nazareth.
 - b. It was three days after Jesus was baptized by John and identified by the Holy Spirit as God the Son, John 1:32-34, *And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."*
 2. Weddings were important events in the Middle East at the time of Christ.
 - a. Jewish marriages took places in two stages.
 - 1) The betrothal period was like the engagement period now but they were considered husband and wife.
 - 2) The actual union took place one year later.
 - a) The groom went to the home of the bride with his friends and took her to their new home.
 - b) The celebration could continue for a week.
 - b. Jesus gave approval to marriage by his attendance.
 - 1) He showed concern for people and their daily lives.
 - 2) Larry Richards, *For perhaps the only time in what was a difficult life, the bride and groom were treated as queen and king. Married life in first-century Palestine began with joy, but for most couples it was marked by toil as the couple struggled just to survive.*
 - c. Jesus' attendance was probably prophetic.
 - 1) His earthly ministry began at a wedding.
 - 2) Human history will end with a wedding.
 - a) It is called the *marriage supper of the Lamb*, Revelation 19:9, *And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."*
 - b) It is a time of celebration for those who have placed faith alone in Jesus Christ.
 - c) Larry Richards, *For Jesus, many trials lay between the beginning of his ministry at that wedding in Cana and the fulfillment of his ministry at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Trials are also a reality for us between our discovery of Christ and the fulfillment of faith's promise. But for Jesus and for us, the beginning and the end are set aside for joy!*
- B. A problem at the wedding (3-5)
1. Jesus' mother told Him that the wine had run out (3), ***When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."***
 - a. A wedding feast lasted from several days to a whole week and the groom was responsible for providing wine during the wedding.
 - 1) Wine was an essential part of the diet in the ancient world.
 - a) It symbolized peace and prosperity, Psalm 104:15, *and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart.*
 - b) Excessive drinking and drunkenness were condemned, Proverbs 20:1, *Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.*
 - 2) Running out of wine would have brought shame on the groom and bride.
 - a) Merrill Tenney, *To fail to provide adequately for the guests would involve social disgrace. In the closely knit communities of Jesus' day, such an error would never be forgotten and would haunt the newly married couple all their lives.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *The loss would not only have been social disgrace, however, but also financial since grooms had a legal responsibility in that culture to provide a suitable feast for their guests.*
 - c) Larry Richards, *The exhaustion of the supply of wine at the wedding in no way suggests the guests had drunk to excess.*

- b. Did Mary expect Jesus to do something?
 - 1) Based on verse 5, the answer is yes.
 - 2) Mary knew Jesus was the Messiah but did she think he could perform a miracle? He had lived in Nazareth for 30 years and had never performed a miracle.
 - 3) Possibly, it was because she knew Jesus was compassionate and would do whatever He could to solve the problem.
 - 4) Maybe, she hoped Jesus would contribute toward the purchase of additional wine which was not unusual.
2. Jesus responds in a seemingly harsh manner (4), *And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."*
- a. What is my relation to you concerning responsibilities?
 - 1) *Woman*, a simple, informal means of address which was not considered inappropriate when used for one's mother, Leon Morris, *That Jesus calls Mary 'woman' and not 'mother' probably indicates that there is a new relationship between them as He enters his public ministry.*
 - 2) *what does this have to do with me?*
 - a) The phrase is possible best understood to mean, *what do we have in common?*
 - b) R. V. G. Tasker, *Your concern and mine are not the same.*
 - b. What I do is based on the purposes set by My Father.
 - 1) *My hour has not yet come*, refers to His glorification beginning at the crucifixion to His coming reign on earth.
 - a) His time to meet the needs of the world had not come, yet.
 - b) Jesus was on a schedule controlled by His Father.
 - 2) Once Jesus starting performing miracles, His identification as Messiah and journey to the cross would begin.
 - a) This miracle revealed His glory to those who witnessed the miracle and deepened His disciples faith in Him.
 - b) Larry Richards, *With this miracle, performed to protect his hosts from the embarrassment of running out of wine, Jesus took the first step along a path which would bring healing to many, the agony of the cross for him, and salvation to us.*
 - 3) The start of Jesus' public ministry revealed a separation taking place.
 - a) Between Jesus and His mother: His ministry took precedence over the interests of His family, Mark 3:32-34. *And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"*
 - b) Between Jesus and all people: Is Jesus the Savior or a misguided fool?
3. Jesus' mother tells the servants to follow Jesus' instructions (5), *His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."*
- a. Mary did not take Jesus' response as a rebuke or refusal to help.
 - b. She knew Jesus could meet the need, T. Constable, *She did not understand what He would do or when, but she had confidence in His compassion and ability. She demonstrated admirable submission and faith toward Jesus. She allowed Jesus to take charge and solve the problem, and she pointed others to Jesus, not to herself.*
 - c. Mary's words ring true today, do whatever Jesus tells you and point others to Jesus, not to yourself.
- C. The problem resolved by Jesus (6-10)
1. He instructed the servants to fill the water pots with water and take a sample to the headwaiter. (6-8), *Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it.*
 - a. The water pots were used for ritual purification and were about 25 gallons each.
 - 1) It would be for cleaning of hands before and after meals and for ritual baths.
 - 2) The cleansing was primarily to rid themselves from the defilement of Gentiles, separation to God from the world.
 - 3) Normally, the water needed to be *living water*, running water, but in Galilee, rain water would do.
 - 4) People did not drink water from such jars.

- b. Jesus instructed the servants to fill the jars with water.
 - 1) They filled them to the top as directed by Jesus.
 - 2) They took a sample to the master of the feast for him to taste and give his approval.
 - 3) The master did not know that the sample of wine came from the pots which were probably outside the house.
- 2. Jesus met the need of the bridegroom (9-10)
 - a. He turned water into wine (9), *When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom*
 - 1) Only Jesus' mother, His disciples and the servants who drew the wine knew what had happened.
 - 2) This allowed Jesus to honor His mother's request without identifying Himself before His time.
 - 3) Larry Richards, *Jesus' power to perform miracles did not lie in his mastery of magic but within his own person.*
 - b. The wine was excellent (10), *and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now."*
 - 1) The miracle was an act of creation which did not require grapes, sun or time.
 - 2) The common custom was to serve the best first and lesser after people had been drinking. Over the course of a feast, diluting wine with water was a common practice to make it go further.
 - 3) Unknown, *Jesus did much more than simply fill a need: He turned embarrassment into blessing...Instead of having to endure shame the groom was publicly honored for...saving the good wine for last. This reveals Jesus' deep concern for meeting people at their point of need, no matter how inconsequential that need may seem.*
 - 4) Whatever Jesus does, He does it best.
- D. The first sign of Jesus (11), *This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*
 - 1. He manifested His glory.
 - a. This miracle showed that Jesus has the same power to create (wine) that God demonstrated in creation.
 - b. John 1:14, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
 - 2. His disciples' faith increased.
 - a. This miracle confirmed Jesus' disciples faith in Him, L. Richards, *What the miracle at Cana did for them was to deepen their existing faith rather than create a non-existent faith.*
 - b. Jesus was not only a great teacher but Messiah, Savior of the world.

CONCLUSION

- A. Jesus takes time for physical needs but He always goes beyond the physical to the spiritual.
- B. Jesus performed a good deed that was much more: it was a sign, proclaiming the beginning of His ministry as Messiah, the Savior of the world.
- C. A miracle is a supernatural act that teaches supernatural truths.