

John Chapter Two

Read **John 2:1-12** The Wedding at Cana:

v.1 “AND THE THIRD DAY THERE WAS A MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE; AND THE MOTHER OF JESUS WAS THERE:”

The Apostle records a marriage and the first miracle of Jesus. Cana is located in the central part of Galilee. Jesus has been baptized of John and has started to choose those to be his apostles. We are not told specifically from what point in time the Apostle John is counting three days. Jesus has been east of the Jordan at Bethabara. As we noted in the study of chapter one location of Bethabara could have been near the Sea of Galilee and the third day could have been counted from his baptism. If Bethabara is near the northern end of the Dead Sea then may be too far a journey to have been made in three days. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was in attendance at this wedding.

v.2 “AND BOTH JESUS WAS CALLED, AND HIS DISCIPLES, TO THE MARRIAGE.”

Jesus and his disciples were also in attendance at this wedding. David Lipscomb in his commentary on the book of John states that there is a tradition taught by some that this was actually the wedding of our writer John the Apostle. He also states that there is no basis for this tradition.

v.3 “AND WHEN THEY WANTED WINE, THE MOTHER OF JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, THEY HAVE NO WINE.”

This verse would indicate that Mary, the mother of Jesus, may have had some role in this wedding; perhaps helping to oversee the celebration feast. She comes to Jesus and tells him that they are out of wine. What kind of wine are we talking about? The Greek word used here is oinos, the general term used for wine, most often unfermented grape juice rather than fermented grape juice. It is not the Greek word used in:

Acts 2:13 “OTHERS MOCKING SAID, THESE MEN ARE FULL OF NEW WINE.”

Here where the apostles were accused of being drunk the word used is gleukos, designating “sweet wine” or “NEW WINE” or “must”, a drink that definitely alcoholic in nature. There are also other Greek words, not found in the New Testament, that were used to describe wine that was intoxicating.

John Chapter Two

Consequently there is nothing to indicate that the wine at the wedding feast was even slightly fermented. Many people assume that because they had no means of refrigeration that grape juice could not be store without it fermenting or eventually turning to vinegar. This just isn't true; there was a process where grape juice could be sealed in large jars and kept for as much as a year without it becoming fermented wine.

Mary came to Jesus, expecting her son to do something about their problem.

v.4 "JESUS SAITH UNTO HER, WOMAN, WHAT HAVE I TO DO WITH THEE? MINE HOUR IS NOT YET COME."

The context would indicate that Mary determined that Jesus had the power to do just what he eventually did. Perhaps she even wanted to prove him just as he "PROVED" Philip:

John 6:6 "AND THIS HE SAID TO PROVE HIM: FOR HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT HE WOULD DO."

This contention is further supported by the answer that Jesus gave her. "MINE HOUR IS NOT YET COME", it isn't time yet to reveal the power that Jesus possessed as the Son of God, endowed with the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism.

v.5 "HIS MOTHER SAITH UNTO THE SERVANTS, WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO *it*."

Mary is not only confident that Jesus has the power to solve their problem but also that he will do so. Mothers are sort of that way, aren't they? We protest that we can't do what they want but they are fully confident that he not only can but will. So she tells the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them to do.

v.6 . AND THERE WERE SET THERE SIX WATERPOTS OF STONE, AFTER THE MANNER OF THE PURIFYING OF THE JEWS, CONTAINING TWO TO THREE FIRKINS APIECE."

First of all, in this time in Middle Eastern culture it was a sign of hospitality to offer water for a visitor to wash his feet that were tired and dusty from his journey. Secondly this was a marriage feast and no Jew was allowed to sit down to eat without first purifying themselves by washing their hands.

John Chapter Two

This was part of the tradition that the Pharisees made a requirement in their additions to the Mosaic Law:

Mark 7:3 “FOR THE PHARISEES, AND ALL THE JEWS, EXCEPT THEY WASH *their* HANDS OFF, EAT NOT, HOLDING THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS.”

These stone water pots were provided for that purpose and there were six of them that held a little over 8 gallons each; or about 50 gallons of water. To have provided this much water for foot and hand washing, we can logically estimate that this wasn't just a small family wedding.

v7. “JESUS SAITH UNTO THEM, FILL THE WATERPOTS WITH WATER. AND THEY FILLED THEM UP TO THE BRIM.”

The water level in the pots was apparently low, as would be expected if a large number of guests and taken water from them to wash, so Jesus wanted them filled. And fill them they did, up to the very brim.

v8. “AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM, DRAW OUT NOW, AND BEAR UNTO THE GOVERNOR OF THE FEAST. AND THEY BARE *it*.”

David Lipscomb, who wrote the commentary in the Gospel Advocate series, copyrighted 1939, contends that only the water drawn from these vessels was changed to wine. So let's look at the next verse and see what is there.

v9. “WHEN THE RULER OF THE FEAST HAD TASTED THE WATER THAT WAS MADE WINE, AND KNEW NOT WHENCE IT WAS: (BUT THE SERVANTS WHICH DREW THE WATER KNEW,) THE GOVERNOR OF THE FEAST CALLED THE BRIDEGROOM.”

The Apostle includes a parenthetical statement, a statement of explanation regarding the source of this new wine. He states very plainly that the servants, following Jesus' instructions, “DREW” “WATER” from the stone jars rather than wine. So the logical conclusion would indeed be that the water was changed to wine when withdrawn from the stone jars.

The bridegroom was responsible for the feast, but he is also the host. So there was a governor or person in charge of the food and festivities; that directed it and was responsible for things being done properly.

John Chapter Two

v10. “AND SAITH UNTO HIM, EVERY MAN AT THE BEGINNING DOTHTH SET FORTH GOOD WINE; AND WHEN MEN HAVE WELL DRUNK [have drunk freely], THEN THAT WHICH IS WORSE: **but** THOU HAST KEPT THE GOOD WINE UNTIL NOW.”

The custom of the day was to bring out the best wine first. This makes good sense. As the feast would wear on, the peoples' taste buds would become satiated and dulled it is possible that the lower quality wine would not be noticed. This feast governor or ruler immediately starts to inquire of the bridegroom why he has done things in reverse order. As would be expected the wine that Jesus has provided is of much higher quality than that which was served earlier.

v11. “THIS BEGINNING OF MIRACLES DID JESUS IN CANA OF GALILEE, AND MANIFESTED FORTH HIS GLORY, AND HIS DISCIPLES BELIEVED ON HIM.”

This occurrence at Cana is stated by John as the beginning of Jesus miracles. It manifested the power and glory of Jesus as the Son of God, just as John stated in the earlier chapter.

John 1:14 “AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT AMONG US, (AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY, THE GLORY AS OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER,) FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.”

It's purpose and the purpose of John's record is simply to validate his deity and divinity. The basic purpose of this gospel being recorded as John tells us again in **John 20:31-32**.

Read **John 2:12-13** – Keeping the Passover

v12. “AFTER THIS HE WENT DOWN TO CAPERNAUM, HE, AND HIS MOTHER, AND HIS BRETHREN, AND HIS DISCIPLES: AND THEY CONTINUED THERE NOT MANY DAYS.”

The city of Capernaum was not a large city. It is reported to have had a population of about 1500 in one source and was located on the Sea of Galilee on the border between the tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali. We're told that his mother and his brethren (family) and his disciples were included in those whom went to this city.

John Chapter Two

Even though He did not remain in Capernaum for very long, Jesus made this city his home or at least his operating base to which he returned periodically (**Matthew 4:13**). Perhaps it was because most, if not all of Jesus apostles came from this area and the area surrounding the Sea of Galilee.

v13. “AND THE JEWS’ PASSOVER WAS AT HAND, AND JESUS WENT UP TO JERUSALEM.”

As the children of Israel were made ready to leave their time of bondage in Egypt God gave them a memorial feast to help their future generation remember their time of slavery and God’s deliverance.

Exodus 12:14 “AND THIS DAY SHALL BE UNTO YOU FOR A MEMORIAL; AND YE SHALL KEEP IT A FEAST TO THE **LORD** THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS; HE SHALL KEEP IT A FEAST BY AN ORDINANCE FOR EVER.”

This feast was celebrated on the fifteenth of the month Abib, the first month of the Jewish calendar.

Deuteronomy 16:1 “OBSERVE THE MONTH OF ABIB, AND KEEP THE PASSOVER UNTO THE **LORD** THY GOD: FOR IN THE MONTH OF ABIB THE **LORD** THY GOD BROUGHT THEE FORTH OUT OF EGYPT BY NIGHT.”

It was one of the three feasts that under Mosaic Law each Jew was mandated to keep and is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread in:

Exodus 23:14-15 “THREE TIMES THOU SHALT KEEP A FEAST UNTO ME IN THE YEAR. THOU SHALT KEEP THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD: (THOU SHALT EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD SEVEN DAYS, AS I COMMANDED THEE, IN THE TIME APPOINTED OF THE MONTH ABIB; FOR IN IT THOU CAMEST OUT FROM EGYPT: AND NONE SHALL APPEAR BEFORE ME EMPTY:;)”

Exodus 23:16-17 “AND THE FEAST OF HARVEST, THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THY LABOURS, WHICH THOU HAST SOWN IN THE FIELD: AND THE FEAST OF INGATHERING, *which is* IN THE END OF THE YEAR, WHEN THOU HAST GATHERED IN THY LABOURS OUT OF THE FIELD. THREE TIMES IN THE YEAR ALL THY MALES SHALL APPEAR BEFORE THE **LORD** GOD.”

John Chapter Two

Read **John 2:14-18** – Purging the Temple

v14. “AND FOUND IN THE TEMPLE THOSE THAT SOLD OXEN AND SHEEP AND DOVES, AND THE CHANGERS OF MONEY SITTING.”

The Jewish people had been scattered throughout the known world by captivity, by seeking after commerce, by fleeing persecution, etc. But they still had the admonition to keep the memorial given under the Mosaic Law. In traveling from Asia Minor, Crete, Greece, or where ever they came from; it would not be convenient to bring the required sacrifice with them. Also those who were in Jerusalem, being enterprising people, endeavored to provide the animals needed for these sacrifices. They would also exchange the foreign money that these travelers normally used for the half shekel contribution required at the temple.

Exodus 30:13 “THIS THEY SHALL GIVE, EVERY ONE THAT PASSETH AMONG THEM THAT ARE NUMBERED, HALF A SHEKEL AFTER THE SHEKEL OF THE SANCTUARY: (A SHEKEL IS TWENTY GERAHS:) AN HALF SHEKEL *shall be* THE OFFERING OF THE **LORD**.”

Not only does the currency exchange provide the opportunity for abuse and unscrupulous behavior, they had turned a part of the temple into your basic city marketplace. While in the church of Christ we are the sanctuary and not any building or location; under the Mosaic law the temple was the house of God. As we remember that within the “MOST HOLY PLACE” was the “MERCY SEAT” the location where God met His high priest each year on the Day of Atonement. It was to be a house of prayer:

Isaiah 56:7 “EVEN THEM WILL I BRING TO MY HOLY MOUNTAIN, AND MAKE THEM JOYFUL IN MY HOUSE OF PRAYER: THEIR BURNT OFFERINGS AND THEIR SACRIFICES SHALL BE ACCEPTED UPON MINE ALTAR; FOR MINE HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED AN HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE.”

v15. “AND WHEN HE HAD MADE A SCOURGE OF SMALL CORDS, HE DROVE THEM ALL OUT OF THE TEMPLE, AND THE SHEEP, AND THE OXEN; AND Poured OUT THE CHANGER’S MONEY, AND OVERTHREW THE TABLES;”

When Jesus found these commercial enterprises within sacred sanctuary of the temple itself he made a whip or scourge of small cords and drove them out.

John Chapter Two

v16. “AND SAID UNTO THEM THAT SOLD DOVES, TAKE THESE THINGS HENCE; MAKE NOT MY FATHER’S HOUSE AN HOUSE OF MERCHANDISE.”

The condition of the temple that Jesus found on this visit was used by the prophet Jeremiah as a example of how far the Israelite nation had fallen. Even their worship had become an abomination:

Jeremiah 7:11 “IS THIS HOUSE, WHICH IS CALLED BY MY NAME, BECOME A DEN OF ROBBERS IN YOUR EYES? BEHOLD, EVEN I HAVE SEEN *it*, SAITH THE **LORD**.”

v17. “AND HIS DISCIPLES REMEMBER THAT IT WAS WRITTEN, THE ZEAL OF THINE HOUSE HATH EATEN ME UP.”

The “IT IS WRITTEN” in this verse and the quote refers to:

Psalms 69:9 “FOR THE ZEAL OF THINE HOUSE HATH EATEN ME UP; AND THE REPROACHES OF THEM THAT REPROACHED THEE ARE FALLEN UPON ME.”

Jesus’ desire was that the house of God should be kept pure and holy. Do we ever think about what Jesus’ reaction is today when he sees men abuse their bodies with tobacco, drugs, alcohol, etc. today and still claim to be the “TEMPLE OF GOD (I **Corinthian 3:16-17**).”

Read **John 2:18-22** – Jesus’ Authority Questioned

v18. “THEN ANSWERED THE JEWS AND SAID UNTO HIM, WHAT SIGN SHOWEST THOU UNTO US, SEEING THAT THOU DOEST THESE THINGS?”

This wasn’t the only time that they asked Jesus for a sign. Another time at Capernaum near the Sea of Galilee:

John 6:30 “THEY SAID THEREFORE UNTO HIM, WHAT SIGN SHOWEST THOU THEN, THAT WE MAY SEE, AND BELIEVE THEE? WHAT DOST THOU WORK?”

Matthew 12:38 “THEN CERTAIN OF THE SCRIBES AND OF THE PHARISEES ANSWERED, MASTER, WE WOULD SEE A SIGN FROM THEE.”

John Chapter Two

Jesus had acted with some measure of authority. The chief rulers of the temple had undoubtedly given their approval to what was being done; otherwise it would not have happened. Knowing the ways of men they also probably profited from the buying and selling that was being allowed. So these men come asking, in effect, something that we might hear in the vernacular today “Just who do you think you are?” Just who was he to come into their temple and disrupt their business?

v19. “JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO THEM, DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, AND IN THREE DAYS I WILL RAISE IT UP.”

They didn't understand the purpose of his words; they didn't understand that he spoke of his body. Neither did they accept the fact that he was the Son of God and could, in fact, speak this temple out of existence and then back into existence again in the blink of an eye. The phrase that he uttered was used at various times and in various places to mock Jesus. Especially at his “trial”:

Matthew 26:61 ‘AND SAID, THIS *fellow* SAID, I AM ABLE TO DESTROY THE TEMPLE OF GOD, AND TO BUILD IT IN THREE DAYS.’

Matthew 27:40 “AND SAYING, THOU THAT DESTROYEST THE TEMPLE, AND BUILDEST *it* IN THREE DAYS, SAVE THYSELF. IF THOU BE THE SON OF GOD, COME DOWN FROM THE CROSS.”

v20. “THEN SAID THE JEWS, FORTY AND SIX YEARS WAS THIS TEMPLE IN BUILDING, AND WILT THOU REAR IT UP IN THREE DAYS?”

The Jews, of course, applied his comment regarding the temple to the physical temple in or near which they were standing. Just as we studied in our segment “Between the Testaments” Herod, even with the authority behind him as Roman governor, had spent 46 years and didn't really finish it until about 60 AD, another 30 years after Jesus spoke. So they mocked him.

v21. “BUT HE SPAKE OF THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY.”

John explains here in his writing that Jesus was talking about his own body. We can also understand by the commentary of the Holy Spirit through the apostles that he was talking about his physical body as being the temple, just as our bodies are temples of God today.

John Chapter Two

I Corinthians 6:19-20 “WHAT? KNOW YE NOT THAT YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST WHICH IS IN YOU, WHICH YE HAVE OF GOD, AND YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN? FOR YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE: THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY, AND IN YOUR SPIRIT, WHICH ARE GOD’S.”

Peter uses the same kind of terminology, speaking about the physical house or tabernacle in which we live daily.

II Peter 1:14 “KNOWING THAT SHORTLY I MUST PUT OFF THIS MY TABERNACLE, EVEN AS OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST HATH SHOWED ME.”

v22. “WHEN THEREFORE HE WAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, HIS DISCIPLES REMEMBERED THAT HE HAD SAID THIS UNTO THEM; AND THEY BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURE, AND THE WORD WHICH JESUS HAD SAID.”

Later when Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day his disciples remembered what he had said and it strengthened their faith.

Read **John 2:23-25** – Jesus’ Miracles

v23. “NOW WHEN HE WAS IN JERUSALEM AT THE PASSOVER, IN THE FEAST *day*, MANY BELIEVED IN HIS NAME, WHEN THEY SAW THE MIRACLES WHICH HE DID.”

We’re not told what miracles that Jesus performed during this, the first Passover after he has begun his ministry; but we’re told that many believed as a result.

v24-25. “BUT JESUS DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF UNTO THEM, BECAUSE HE KNEW ALL *men*, AND NEEDED NOT THAT ANY SHOULD TESTIFY OF MAN: FOR HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN.”

We’re told here that Jesus knew that they believed on him. But at the same time he knew their hearts and the weakness of their faith. The time was not ready yet to make the kind of commitment that would come later after another two to three years of teaching and performing miracles. It wasn’t that long before many of his disciples abandoned him:

John Chapter Two

John 6:64-66 “BUT THERE ARE SOME OF YOU THAT BELIEVE NOT. FOR JESUS KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING WHO THEY WERE THAT BELIEVED NOT, AND WHO SHOULD BETRAY HIM. AND HE SAID, THEREFORE SAID I UNTO YOU, THAT NO MAN CAN COME UNTO ME, EXCEPT IT WERE GIVEN UNTO HIM OF MY FATHER. FROM THAT *time* MANY OF HIS DISCIPLES WENT BACK, AND WALKED NO MORE WITH HIM.”

Frequently we, and all mankind, have a tendency to be impulsive, to jump into something before all the preparations are made and before we have counted the cost. After all; most of the seed in the parable of the soils did not fall on good ground but places where it did not grow. (**Matthew 13:2-23**) About half of it fell either on stony places where it soon withered or among thorns and weeds where it was soon choked out.

Generally when we do jump into something without counting the cost or making a real commitment we make fools of ourselves. Jesus, having the wisdom of God to guide him, knew the nature of mankind, understood this and waited to make his purpose and mission plainly known in God's own good time.