

JESUS BLESSES THE WEDDING

John 2:1-25

Key Verse: 2:11

"This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him."

There are two parts in 2:1-22. The first part, verses 1-11, is the account of Jesus' first miraculous sign at the wedding at Cana in Galilee. In this event, the main purpose of Jesus' coming to this world is well manifested: Jesus came to this world to transform men into holy children of God. Also, Jesus wants to bless all who believe in him. The second part, verses 12-22, is the account of Jesus cleansing the temple. This event reveals that Jesus is the holy God who does not condone those who make use of the temple, which is God's house.

I. Jesus changes water into wine (1-11)

First, marriage is [God's blessing](#) (1-2). It was the first week of Jesus' ministry. On the third day after he left Judea, Jesus and his new disciples were in Galilee. There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Jesus' mother was already there. Probably the people holding the wedding feast were some of Mary's relatives or friends. Jesus and his disciples also had been invited. The young disciples, who had vigorous appetites, must have been very happy thinking about eating delicious food at the wedding feast. Peter's stomach already made many noises when he thought about delicious food.

To the Jews, a wedding was a most blessed event in life. Customarily, the festivities began on a Wednesday, and lasted through the weekend. After the ceremony, many days of feast continued. The bride and groom were dressed in robes and wedding crowns, and treated like a prince and princess. They stayed at home and had open house for a few days. A wedding was always a joyful occasion for the whole community in a country where life was hard and full of toil. It was a bright spot in an otherwise hard life.

As Genesis chapters 1 and 2 tell us, after the creation God saw what he had created, and it was very good. Soon God planted the paradise in the Garden of Eden. Then he blessed the first marriage between Adam and Eve.

From God's point of view, marriage seems to be God's utmost blessing for mankind.

Second, Jesus' time and Mary's time (3-4). At the wedding at Cana in Galilee a serious problem arose. In the midst of the wedding feast the wine ran out. Wine was essential to a wedding feast, for it made the wedding guests delightful in the blessedness of the occasion. And offering good hospitality was traditionally very important in the East. So, it was embarrassing for the bridegroom and the bride that the wine ran out at their wedding. It was a breach of hospitality.

Jesus' mother saw the situation. She went to Jesus and said, "They

have no more wine." Jesus replied, "Dear woman, why do you involve me? My time has not yet come" (3,4). Jesus' reply sounds indecent, but it is not. Jesus used the same words, "Dear woman," when he spoke to her as she was crying beneath the cross (Jn 19:26).

When Jesus said, "My time has not yet come," it meant that he was living and acting on God's time schedule. All the gospel writers [speak](#) about Jesus' time. But the author of John's gospel repeatedly refers to Jesus' "time" or his "hour" (7:6,8; 12:23; 17:1). "My time" is a theme of John's gospel. Jesus was conscious of God's time schedule for himself. 12:23 says, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." "My time" or "my hour" refers ultimately to his death on the cross as the Lamb of God.

When John the Baptist said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" this crying is like the prelude solo of this gospel. The repetition of "my time" seems to be the development of the heavenly symphony of John's gospel. The symphony goes on to a quiet second movement as Jesus lays down his life on the cross as the Lamb of God. The symphony swells into a third movement with a mighty chorus when he is raised from the dead. Sometimes we idle away our time, thinking that we would live forever. But it is not true. As God had his definite time schedule for Jesus, so he has his own time schedule for each of us.

Third, Mary's prayer (3-5). When Jesus spoke of his time, Mary, the mother of Jesus, could have been upset about her son's response. But she was not. She decided to do what she could do. We learn from her the steps of prayer.

The first step of prayer: She brought the problem to Jesus. She knew that running out of wine at the wedding was no small problem for the family. However, she could not do anything with her own ability. Still, she felt that the problem was her own. Then God gave her wisdom to bring the problem to Jesus. From time to time we fail to pray because we only worry about the situation or give up when things appear too hard to bear or manage. We also fail to pray when we are too proud to bring our problem to Jesus. We must bring the problems as they are to Jesus and ask his help in prayer.

The second step of prayer: She simply waited on Jesus. In that desperate situation, she could have rebuked the family for not being sufficiently prepared. She could have nagged Jesus to do something immediately. But she did not do so. She was quiet. She waited on Jesus, believing that Jesus would deal with the problem in his own way. We must learn prayer that waits on the Lord patiently.

The third step of prayer: She did what she could. Mary did not sit down in an embarrassing situation. She quietly stepped out to where the servants were. She said, "Do whatever he tells you" (5). She helped the servants obey Jesus' words. In this way, she made an environment in which Jesus could do his work in his own way and in his own time.

Fourth, the servants' beautiful obedience (6-11). The servants were servants. They had to do all the work that had to be done. They were especially busy at the wedding feast, for they had to listen to many

masters and mistresses and treat all the people of the community for several days. But Jesus commanded them, "Fill the jars with water." Usually these jars contained water for the ceremonial washing of hands and feet. There were six jars. Altogether, they held about 180 gallons of water. So, filling them would be no small task. But the servants obeyed Jesus' word and filled the jars to the brim. "To the brim" tells us that their obedience was out of their willingness. Obedience is not blind submission. Obedience stems from willingness. Obedience is possible when we have Jesus in our hearts. Someone bought an Oldsmobile. But after several days, he received a recall notice which indicated there was some danger in the engine of the car. This happened because people in the assembly line worked half-heartedly. The sign of the children of God is filling the jars to the brim.

Look at verse 8. "Then he told them, 'Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.'" They had obeyed Jesus' word 120% when he gave them the task of filling the jars. But now Jesus was asking them to take foot-washing water to the master of the banquet to serve the guests. This was even harder to obey. But they obeyed anyway. When they obeyed, a miracle happened. The water turned into wine. The foot-washing water turned into sweet wine.

Look at verses 9 and 10. "...and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, 'Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.'" The guests really enjoyed the wine Jesus had made. The banquet master had no idea what had happened. He only knew the wine was better. On the other hand, the servants who obeyed Jesus and filled the jars to the brim knew what had happened: They experienced the changing power of God. When we trust and obey his word, Jesus changes each of us as he changed Simon to St. Peter. Through this first miraculous sign Jesus also manifested that he came to this world to change people into new creations. Jesus revealed his transforming power when he changed water into wine. No one can change another person. No one can change himself either, even if he really wants to. But Jesus can change us. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" This is the testimony of St. Paul. When he lived with his passion and pride, he was a disaster to others. But when he met the Risen Christ on the road to Damascus, he was changed from a servant of Satan to a servant of Jesus.

The servants' obedience is a glimpse of our Lord's own obedience. Our Lord Jesus came into this world to show people how to obey the will of God. He was God's King. But he became the Lamb of God. How could God's King humble himself until he became the Lamb of God as a ransom sacrifice? As Adam's disobedience brought forth curse on mankind, so Jesus' obedience became the fountain of salvation. Hebrews 5:8 says, "Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered...." Sinful human beings cannot obey naturally. We must learn how to obey the will of God; we must do our best to learn how to obey God's word.

Jesus performed the first miraculous sign at the wedding at Cana in Galilee. This event has spiritual meaning. The world was cursed by one

man's disobedience. But Jesus came to this world to bless mankind again as he blessed the wedding at Cana in Galilee.

II. Jesus clears the temple (12-25)

First, the temple is the house of God (12-16). In verses 12-22, Jesus cleansed the temple. John puts this event at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, while the other three gospel writers place this event at the end (Mt 21:12,13; Mk 11:15-17; Lk 19:45,46). John was more interested in teaching truth than in writing a chronological biography of Jesus. Making wine for the wedding feast reveals the grace of Jesus, and cleansing the temple reveals the truth of Jesus. He is the God of blessing, and at the same time he is the God of righteousness.

Look at verses 12-15. After a few days' retreat in Capernaum, Jesus and his disciples went up to Jerusalem. It was Passover time. When Jesus went into the temple courts, he saw many merchants selling the Passover crowds animals for sacrifices. Other people were busy exchanging money. Jesus was angry. He made a whip out of cords and drove them out of the temple area, along with their animals. He overturned the money changers' tables. He said to the dove sellers, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

Why did Jesus speak in this way? He is so different here from the Jesus who blessed the wedding at Cana in Galilee. We can see why he was angry in verse 16. He was angry because the Jewish leaders had made the house of God into a market. The temple was the house of God (2Ch 7:12-14). Biblically the temple was the place where God was present with his people (Ex 25:8). The temple was the place where the word of God was. The temple was the place where the atonement cover was. The temple was the place where God and people met (2Ch 5:7; Ex 25:22). The temple was also the center of Israel's spiritual life, and it was the center of their community life as well. Daniel, an alien in Babylon, went to his room and knelt before a window that faced the temple in Jerusalem and prayed three times a day. A Psalmist living in exile wrote of the temple, "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked" (Ps 84:10). The religious leaders in Jesus' day, however, had exchanged God for money. They were practical atheists. They were the root of all the evil in the land (cf. 1 Tim 6:10). They were incurably sick with sin. So Jesus drove them out of the temple.

Second, the temple is the house of prayer (17,22). Mark quoted Isaiah and said of the temple, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa 56:7b). God wanted even Gentiles to come to the temple for salvation. God

1 See 2 Chronicles 6:10b,11--Covenant is the same as the word of God.wanted Israel to pray and pray for the salvation of all nations.

But these privileged people did not pray about the salvation purpose of God. They only thought about their small profit. As a result, they made the house of God into a marketplace.

Did Jesus give them up? No. But it was not easy for Jesus to help them with gentle talk, because they were too corrupted to be healed by medicine; they needed surgical care. It was very hard for Jesus to cut open their corruption. But Jesus, the God of truth, truly wanted to help them with a broken shepherd heart. Jesus made a whip out of cords and drove them out of the temple. Jesus risked his own life to give them a chance to repent before God.

The disciples were shocked when Jesus infuriated the people of high authority. But they overcame their fear. How was it possible for them? In that situation, they overcame their human feelings and remembered the word of God. Look at verse 17. "His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'" This is a reference to Psalm 69:9, which says, "zeal for your house consumes me." As we know well, Jesus was charged with blasphemy by the religious leaders because of this event. When bad things happen when we calculate first. But the disciples tried to understand Jesus' actions by remembering the word of God. When Jesus' disciples did so, later they could understand the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection. Let's read verse 22. "After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken."

Third, Jesus is the temple (18-25). But how did the Jews respond? They demanded that Jesus perform more signs to prove his authority to do such a revolutionary act. What did Jesus say to them? Read verse 19. "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." In this verse, Jesus declares that he is the temple. People will no longer need a visible temple in order to worship God. Jesus is now the temple. People can meet God and solve their sin problem in Jesus. The visible temple is no more the center of the life of God's people; Jesus is the center of their lives. In Jesus we have salvation. Jesus also taught them through verse 19 the hidden secret of God's great salvation. The Son of God must die on the cross and rise on the third day. This is the good news of great joy for all the people, for Jesus' death and resurrection solve all men's sin problems and give them a living hope in the kingdom of God.

We learned that Jesus came to the world to change people from the servants of Satan to the servants of God. We also learned that the temple is the house of prayer for God's world salvation purpose. Ultimately, Jesus came to bless his people, as he blessed people at the wedding at Cana in Galilee.