

Gospel of John III John the Baptist & Water to Wine

(John 1 & 2)
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We left off part two in John 1:28 where it was talking about John the Baptist. Let's understand something concerning John the Baptist that we can kind of fill in the whole mission of John the Baptist. Last time we covered Isa. 40 showing that John the Baptist was the one sent as one to 'cry in the desert and make straight the way of the Lord.'

John the Baptist:

Malachi 3:1: "Behold, I will send My messenger..." We know that has to be John the Baptist. That's what he said he was: 'I am a messenger sent to prepare the way.' So, he fulfills this prophecy.

"...and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple..." (v 1). We're going to see in John 2 that Jesus *suddenly* came to the temple, and in a very dramatic way.

"...even the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight. Behold, He comes,' says the LORD of hosts" (v 1). Then it goes right into Christ's second coming. Many, many times when you're reading the prophecies concerning Christ in the old Testament it goes right from the first coming right on into the second coming, as though there is no space in between, but there is!

Remember that the scribes, Pharisees and the Levites came and asked John, 'Who are you? Are you *that* Prophet? Are you the Christ? If you aren't, why are you baptizing? Are you Elijah?' Here's the verse that shows what they were referring to:

Malachi 4:5: "Behold, I *will* send you Elijah the prophet... [it goes right into the second coming of Christ] ...before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the LORD." That's obviously talking about the second coming.

Let's see what Jesus Himself said about John the Baptist, and this is right after the vision of the Transfiguration: Matthew 17:9: "Now, as they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, 'Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man has risen from *the* dead.' Then His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Elijah shall indeed

come first and restore all things. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him; but they did to him whatever they desired. In like manner also, the Son of man is about to suffer from them'" (vs 9-12). In other words, what did they do with John the Baptist? *They arrested him, put him in jail, and then, at the demand of the daughter of Herod, had John the Baptist beheaded!*

Verse 13: "Then the disciples understood that He was speaking to them about John the Baptist." Here we have an important principle in prophecy, in fulfillment and understanding. There is the type and there is the antitype. The type would be like the first coming. The antitype is the second coming. We had John the Baptist prepare the way for the first coming of Christ. Obviously, the Scriptures show us that at the second coming of Christ, there's going to be another Elijah who is going to prepare the way for His coming.

Some have supposed that John the Baptist and Jesus Christ grew up together and were friends. That is not true! They did not grow up together, nor were they friends. I'll prove it to you.

Luke 1:80—this is talking about John the Baptist: "And the little child grew and was strengthened in spirit; and he was in the wilderness until *the* day of his appearing to Israel." Jesus Christ did not know him; they didn't grow up as friends; they didn't play together.

John 1:29: "On the next day, John sees Jesus coming to him, and he says, 'Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world. He is the One concerning Whom I said, "After me comes a Man Who has precedence over me... [He actually existed before John] ...because He was before me." And I did not know Him..." (vs 29-31). John the Baptist didn't know Jesus.

"...but that He might be manifested to Israel, therefore, I came baptizing with water.' And John testified, saying, 'I myself beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon Him. And I did not know Him *before*; but He Who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, He is the one Who baptizes with *the* Holy Spirit." And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God'" (vs 31-34).

Quite contrary to what some people have thought or taught. John the Baptist did not know Jesus. I'm sure that Jesus knew John the Baptist, with some of the powers that He had. But I'm sure that John the Baptist did not know Jesus!

"...I myself beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon Him. And I did not know Him *before...*" and "Behold the Lamb of God..." This tells us that John obviously had some kind of instruction from God to tell him the purpose of Jesus Christ. Why He was coming, and that He would truly be the Lamb of God.

Immediately, we can think of some Scriptures that tie right into this. I think it's interesting that the second chapter involves the Passover, and the Passover Lamb was that sacrifice that Jesus Christ typified.

Talking about the redemption through Jesus Christ, 1-Peter 1:18: "Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things..."

I saw something on television that really shocked me, and I don't think many people picked it up. At the funeral of Martin Luther King Sr. Jesse Jackson stood up and said, 'in the name of Martin Luther King Sr., you have redemption.' *NO!* That just sailed right over the head of a lot of people. That's not the first time in history that another man was put up before the *true God*.

Here shows the redemption; we're "...not redeemed by corruptible things... [of a man or a physical thing]: ...by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from your forefathers; **but by the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (vs 18-19). John the Baptist had the instruction and the knowledge as to Who and what Christ was, and what He was going to do.

Verse 20: "Who truly was foreknown before *the* foundation of *the* world, but was manifested in *these* last times for your sakes."

We have something that ties right in with this that we cover every Passover. I don't remember a single Passover season where we didn't read this. 1-Corinthians 5:7: "...For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." We know that He was crucified and slaughtered on the Passover Day.

At this point John recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God. Why was it that later he didn't recognize Who Christ was? *Because you read through all of the Gospels and you will find one central theme that everyone wanted: Would He be king? In other words, take over the rulership of the nation of Israel? That was one of the signs they*

looked to.

When you read all these things about His second coming, coming to rule the world, that's why John asked: 'Are You really the One?'

Matthew 11:1: "And it came to pass *that*, when Jesus had finished commanding His twelve disciples, He left there to teach and to preach in their cities. Now John, having heard in prison *of* the works of Christ, sent two of his disciples, saying to Him, 'Are You the One Who is coming, or are we to look for another?'" (vs 1-3). They were expecting Him to take over the reins of government.

Verse 4: "Jesus answered and said to them... [notice that He didn't answer the question directly]: ...'Go and report to John what you hear and see: *The* blind receive sight, and *the* lame walk; *the* lepers are cleansed, and *the* deaf hear; *the* dead are raised, and *the* poor are evangelized. And blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me.' And as they were leaving, Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by *the* wind?'" (vs 4-7).

Verse 14: "'And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who was to come.' The one who has ears to hear, let him hear" (vs 14-15). That's why later John the Baptist had a question in his mind. I'm sure he hadn't repudiated Christ or rejected Him, but he had a question in mind because only part of the Scriptures were being fulfilled; not all of them. That's the only explanation I can give. But at the beginning of Jesus' ministry John knew that He was the Lamb of God, so John had some understanding of it at that particular time.

John 1:35: "On the next day, John was again standing *there*, and two of his disciples *with him*. And as he gazed upon Jesus walking, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God!' And the two disciples heard him say *this*, and they followed Jesus. Now, when Jesus turned and saw them following, He said to them, 'What are you seeking?' And they said to Him, 'Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, "Teacher"), where do You dwell?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They went and saw where He was dwelling, and they remained with Him that day. Now it was about *the* tenth hour" (vs 35-40)—about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Or, it could be that if He was following the timing that John apparently was, then the 10th hour would be at 10 o'clock in the morning. John apparently used the Roman time of midnight to midnight.

Verse 41: "Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard *this* from John and followed Him. First, he found his own brother

Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is, being interpreted, “the Christ”)” (vs 41-42). That’s something! What does it tell you? *It tells you that they were looking for the Messiah!* We’ve seen this concerning the birth of Jesus. They knew what city He was to be born in. They knew approximately when He was to be born, etc. Here we have the same thing. “...‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is, being interpreted, “the Christ”).” Obviously then, John had to teach them something.

Verse 43: “And he led him to Jesus. And when He saw him, Jesus said, ‘You are Simon, the son of Jona. You shall be called Cephas’ (which is, being interpreted, ‘a stone’ [petros]).”

- Upon which ‘rock’ did Jesus build His Church?
- Did He build His Church upon Peter?
- *If he built His Church upon Peter, then it’s built upon a man!*

Matthew 16:13: “Now, after coming into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus questioned His disciples, saying, ‘Whom do men declare Me, the Son of man, to be?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist...’” (vs 13-14). That’s kind of funny. Why would they say John the Baptist? *Remember, John the Baptist was killed!* Even Herod thought that Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead.

“...and others Elijah; and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets” (v 14). This tells us that people were talking about Jesus; talking about what He was doing.

Verse 15: “He said to them, ‘But you, whom do you declare Me to be?’ Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, ‘You are the Christ... [‘ho Christios’—*the Savior*] ...**the** Son of **the living** God.’ And Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona... [son of Jona] ...**for flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but My Father, Who is in heaven**’” (vs 15-17).

Whatever they understood, even if John the Baptist had taught them, those are only so many words falling on ears. God has to open the mind. The Father revealed it to him.

Verse 18: “And I say also to you, that you are Peter...” — ‘petros’ — *a stone* (John 1:42). Peter is masculine; ‘petros’ is masculine.

“...but upon **this** Rock...” (v 18). Notice the change in the word. Instead of ‘petros’ — a stone — it is ‘ha Petra’ — *the Rock* — meaning *huge, massive, cliff-like!* If you have a little stone in your hand, it’s ‘petros’; but if you go out and see a huge cliff and it’s one big massive rock, that is a ‘petra.’ There’s a city in Jordan called Petra, and that city is the *City of*

Stone. That whole area is stone, one big massive stone.

Let’s get a Bible interpretation about ‘petra’; 1-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And **that Rock**... [‘ha Petra’] ...**was Christ**” (vs 1-4). He didn’t say that Rock was ‘petros’ — Simon Peter — He said, “**...that Rock was Christ.**”

Matthew 16:18: “And I say also to you, that you are Peter; but **upon this Rock I will build My Church...**” Whose church is it? *It is Christ’s Church!* Who is the Head of the Church? *Christ is the Head of the Church!* (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22). He is the Head of the Church! He said that *He* would build *His Church!*

We can prove—which I will right from the context—that Jesus Christ had no intention of building it on Peter. Peter was a fallible man.

“...and *the* gates of the grave [hades] shall not prevail against it” (v 18). The mouth of the grave would never prevail against the Church of God. It would always be somewhere, sometime, someplace with some people, and it would never die out. That’s always my favorite one to use against the Mormons, because they always claim that the church died out and God revealed it to Joseph Smith. I always bring them to this part of the Bible.

When I was up in Salt Lake, they would have missionaries come out and they would be there to argue with me when I arrived. I would go through this and say, ‘I’m stuck with a problem: either I believe the words of Jesus Christ—which I do; *or* I believe what Joseph Smith said—which I don’t; and the Bible says that Jesus is true and every man is a liar. So, I’m confronted with either accepting Joseph Smith’s testimony and rejecting Christ as a liar, *or* accepting Christ’s testimony and rejecting Joseph Smith as a liar. I prefer the latter and reject Joseph Smith. The Church would not die out!

Verse 19: “And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatever you may bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven; and whatever you may loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven.’ Then He charged His disciples not to tell anyone that He was Jesus the Christ. From that time Jesus began to explain to His disciples that it was necessary... [obligatory] ...for Him to go to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to

be killed, and to be raised the third day. But after taking *Him* aside, Peter personally began to rebuke Him, saying, ‘*God will be favorable to you, Lord...* [don’t come and tell us that this is going to happen] ...In no way shall this *happen to You*’” (vs 19-22). In other words, Peter was saying, ‘I’m going to rescue You, Christ.’ What did Jesus say?

Verse 23: “Then He turned and said to Peter, **‘Get behind Me, Satan!** You are an offense to Me, because your thoughts are not *in accord* with the things of God, but the things of men.” That ought to show that, obviously, Christ was not going to build *His Church* on Peter, who is a fallible man! ***Christ was going to be building it on Himself!***

Let’s think of some other Scriptures that we can tie into that. Jesus said:

- I am the Good Shepherd
- I am the Door of the sheepfold
- If any come any other way, but through Me, the same is a thief and a robber
- I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

This proves conclusively that Jesus Christ did not build His Church on Peter, and this also proves conclusively that Peter was *not* the first pope, regardless of what people would say.

John 1:44: “On the next day, Jesus desired to go into Galilee; and He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ Now, Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found *Him* of Whom Moses wrote in the Law, and *also* the prophets, Jesus, the son of Joseph; He *is* from Nazareth’” (vs 44-46). What does that tell you?

- they were studying the Law
- they were studying the Prophets
- they were looking for Christ

Who put it in their hearts and minds to do it? *Obviously, God did!*

Verse 47: “And Nathanael said to him, ‘Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see.’ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said concerning him, ‘Behold, truly an Israelite in whom *there* is no guile.’” Here was an Israelite Who was not deceitful.

Verse 49: “Nathanael said to Him [Jesus], ‘How did you know me?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Before Philip called you, *when you* were under the fig tree, I saw you.’” That’s something! You think about those kinds of powers, that He saw Nathanael sitting under the fig tree. In other words, Jesus could project wherever He wanted to find out whatever He wanted.

Verse 50: “Nathanael answered and said to

Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.’” That’s what they were looking for, the King of Israel.

Verse 51: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Because I told you, “I saw you under the fig tree,” do you believe? Greater things than these shall you see.’ And He said to him, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God descending to and ascending from the Son of man’” (vs 51-52). That would really be astonishing!

What was it that the disciples saw and did, other things that aren’t recorded here? *We don’t know*, but this is obviously one of them. We pick a few hints as we go along into the first part of John 2, which we will get into. There are quite a few things that are implied by some of these statements.

We know that John said that if everything that Jesus did were written in books, the world itself could not contain all the books. We also know that Jesus—after He was resurrected—appeared to His disciples 40 days and 40 nights, showing ***by many infallible proofs and signs***, that He was resurrected from the dead. Apparently, this was one of the things that the disciples could look forward to seeing: angels ascending and descending on the Son of man.

John 2—Water into Wine

I’ve often wondered about this next account beginning in John 2. Why is that there? I can understand the wine part, but why is that there? I think after studying and studying, and really praying and thinking about it, and mulling it over in my mind, I think I can come up with a fairly good reason why it is there.

This is not recorded in any of the other Gospels. As a matter of fact, a lot of the things in the Gospel of John is just not recorded in the other Gospels. Here’s one of them:

John 2:1: “Now on the third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. And Jesus and His disciples were also invited to the marriage *feast*. And *when* there was a shortage of wine, Jesus’ mother said to Him, ‘They have no wine’” (vs 1-3).

Notice Jesus’ answer. I’ve often thought: Was this a smart remark? Was this a sarcastic remark? I’ve often heard it portrayed that way, but it really isn’t.

Verse 4: “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what *do you desire to have Me do?* My time has not yet come.’” Then his mother just ignored Him; just ignored what He said.

Verse 5: “*Then His mother said to the servants, ‘Whatever He says to you, do.’* Now, there were six water vessels of stone standing there, in accordance with the *traditional* purification of the Jews, each one *having* a capacity of two or three firkins” (vs 5-6). A firkin is 10 gallons. So, each would hold 20-30 gallons! This is a huge production of wine! This is a minimum of 120 gallons, and a maximum of 180 gallons.

I don’t care if you have a thousand guests, you can give them a pretty good amount of wine out of that. Remember, they had wine that they had already drunk. Why is this put this way? *It shows that this occurred before Jesus’ temptation with Satan—His time had not yet come—but it also implies a whole lot more than that!* I want to ask each of you women who have had children:

- Do you remember each pregnancy? *Yes!*
- Do you remember the things that happened? *Yes!*
- Do you remember the peculiarities about the birth? *Yes!*
- Don’t you think that Mary knew, remembered, how she became pregnant with Jesus? *Sure she did!*

I am sure she did not run around with tape over her mouth and never discuss it with Jesus. Otherwise, why should she tell the servants, ‘Whatever He says, you do.’

She obviously remembered that the angel came to her. If an angel appeared to you, wouldn’t you remember that? *You would never forget it!* None of us have had angels appear to us—have we? Once in a while I’ve picked up a few hitchhikers if they look like they wouldn’t bludgeon me in and they really need some help. I give them a ride once in a while. But it says in Heb. 13 about entertaining strangers: ‘For some have entertained angels unawares.’ But if an angel came, and here’s Gabriel—the angel in charge of all the prophecies of Christ—who came to Mary and said that ‘You’re going to have a Son and you shall call His name Jesus, and He is going to be the Savior of the world’—just to summarize what He said.

Then what happened? *Mary went over to see her relative Elizabeth!* She stayed there with her three months. What do you think they talked about? *How that Mary became pregnant!* Then we have the blessing that Elizabeth gave to Mary and then Mary’s salutation. Then we have the account where Mary goes back home.

In Matt. 1 Mary has a little explaining to do to Joseph. There was something that happened, she told Joseph: ‘An angel spoke to me.’ Do you think that Joseph would have believed that just on his

own? That would be an ingenious excuse for fornication and being pregnant. ‘Well, I really had nothing to do with it; there was an angel standing there.’ *Yeah, yeah, tell me more about it.* What happened to Joseph?

Matthew 1:18: “And the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: Now, His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph; *but* before they came together... [sexually] ...she was found to be with child of *the* Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous *man*, and not willing to expose her publicly, was planning to divorce her secretly. But as he pondered these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying...” (vs 18-20). Don’t you think that Joseph would remember that dream? *Yes, sure he would remember that!*

“... ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to *be* your wife, because that which has been begotten in her is of *the* Holy Spirit. And she shall give birth to a Son, and **you** shall call His name Jesus...” (vs 20-21). Not only did Gabriel tell Mary to call His name *Jesus*, but the angel who appeared here in the dream told Joseph to call His name *Jesus*.

“...for He shall save His people from their sins. Now, all this came to pass that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall give birth to a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel’; which is, being interpreted, ‘God with us.’ And when Joseph was awakened from his sleep, he did as the angel of *the* Lord had commanded, and took his wife to *wed*; but he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her Son, the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus” (vs 21-25).

Do you suppose that Mary and Joseph talked about that? *Sure they did!* What was one of the first things that Joseph probably told her? *You said this angel came and told you you were to be impregnated by God, well an angel came and told me the same thing!* Must be right! Sure they would discuss it together.

Then what about when Jesus was born? *They ended up in Bethlehem just at the right time!* What happened? *Jesus was born and they laid Him in a manger!* The angels in heaven were singing and the shepherds came and found Jesus and said, ‘This is the Savior of the world.’

- Don’t you think they would remember that?
- Don’t you think Mary would remember that? *Sure she would!*

Then we find the blessing to Jesus by Simon

and Anna. Mary would remember that—right? Then you come to when there was the slaughter of the children at Bethlehem; all those two-years-old and under. What happened? *An angel appeared unto Joseph again, and said, 'You take the mother and child and go into Egypt.'* So, they went into Egypt. When Herod died, the angel appeared and said, 'Now you can go back home; the ones who sought the child's life are dead.'

Then, on the way home the angel appeared to Joseph again and said, 'No, go down to Nazareth, because there are those who seek His life here in Jerusalem.' So, he went on to Nazareth.

(go to the next track)

After they got to Nazareth, Luke 2:40: "And the little Child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and *the* grace of God was upon Him."

- here was a Son Who was perfect
- here was a Son Who was never rebellious
- here was a Son Who never told a lie

Wouldn't you enjoy children who never gave you any problems; children who always did things that were right and true, honest and good? *Yes!* Don't you think that Mary knew, when Jesus was growing up, what was going on?

Verse 41: "Now, His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years *old*, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the Feast" (vs 41-42).

You know the rest of the story, Jesus stayed back and they looked for Him and they were astonished that He didn't go with them, and they couldn't find Him. They were astonished when they heard Him give answers, and so forth.

Then when they found Him, v 48: "But when they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have you dealt with us in this manner? Look, Your father and I have been *very* distressed *while* searching for You.'" This was probably the first time that it looked like He had ever done anything wrong.

Verse 49: "And He said to them, 'Why *is* it that you were looking for Me? Don't you realize that I must be about My Father's *business*?' But they did not understand the words that He spoke to them" (vs 49-50). But they heard it, and I'm sure they remembered it.

Verse 51: "Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He was subject to them. But His mother kept all these things in her heart."

So, she remember all of these things.

Now when we come to the incident of the wine, maybe this will give us a little understanding as to why she said, 'Whatever He says, do!' It makes you wonder. Were there some things that He did at home? *Could be!* It doesn't say. The only thing it says about Jesus' childhood is right here: that He grew (v 40), and at 12-years-old he was at the Passover. Then when they went home "...He was subject to them. But His mother kept all these things in her heart."

That's all that is said of His childhood. But when Mary says, John 2:5: "... 'Whatever He says to you, do,'" it shows that she understood at least something at that point.

Remember, we can also add to this that Jesus' mother was there at the crucifixion. She stayed until the end. She saw Him die. Where was Mary after that? *She was with the disciples, with the 120 (Acts 1)!* Apparently she believed! But imagine *how* she believed, having carried Him, given birth to Him, watched Him grow up. Whatever He did—no telling what He did at home, and we can't speculate—but needless to say, she said to the servants, "... 'Whatever He says to you, do.'"

Verse 6: "Now, there were six water vessels of stone standing there, in accordance with the *traditional* purification of the Jews, each one *having* a capacity of two or three firkins. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the water vessels with water.' And they filled them to *the* brim. Then He said to them, 'Now draw *some* out and bring *it* to the master of the feast.' And they brought *it to him*. Now, when the master of the Feast tasted the water that had become wine, not knowing from where it had come (but the servants who had drawn the water knew)..." (vs 6-9). Imagine what you would be if you were one of the servants.

What if you're the one who helped put the water in—they didn't have a faucet to turn on—they had to go out to the well and bring it. Can you imagine what that servant thought? Just put yourself in that position. Imagine if you put the water in there and this man told you to draw it out and take it to "...the master of the feast..." (v 9). And when you're carrying it, it turns into wine! You get it there and:

"...the master of the feast called the bridegroom, and said to him, 'Every man serves the good wine first; and when the *guests* have drunk freely, then *he serves* the inferior wine. *But* you have kept the good wine until now.' This beginning of the miracles *that* Jesus did *took place* in Cana of Galilee, and revealed His glory; and His disciples believed in

Him” (vs 9-11).

One of the reasons that Jesus did this is because there were disciples there who could see that it was done. Another reason was that He did honor His mother in this particular case. He was not sarcastic to her. But it also shows us that Jesus’ mother knew quite a bit more than what we may suspect as far as what was in her own mind and the things that Jesus could do.

Verse 12: “After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they remained there not many days.” We will see that there’s a difference between the brothers of Jesus—He had physical brothers; Mary had other children—and the disciples. Some scholars say that there isn’t any difference, that when He’s talking about ‘His brethren’ that He’s talking about His disciples, but that isn’t so.

Verse 13: “Now the Passover of the Jews was near...” We see all the way through that all of the Feasts are called either:

- the Feast of the Jews
- the Passover of the Jews
- the Feast of Tabernacles of the Jews was at hand

As I mentioned at the beginning of the background, one of the reasons why John writes it this way is:

1. salvation is of the Jews
2. he who is a Jew is one *inwardly* of the heart
3. there was a tremendous movement by the Gentiles to get rid of anything that had to do with being *Jewish*

That’s one of the main reasons why the book of John was written and was put in this particular way.

“...and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money exchangers sitting *there*; and after making a scourge of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, *with* both the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money exchangers, and overturned the tables” (vs 13-15).

This is rather drastic, coming in and doing this. Obviously, it would be what we would call a misdemeanor of disturbing the peace as far as the way they would look at it at that particular occasion.

Verse 16: “And to those who were selling the doves, He said, ‘Take these things out of here! **Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise.**” Yet, in ‘religion’ that has been done more than anything else: to merchandize religion, to sell salvation, and all the corruption that goes on.

Merchandize ‘religion.’ Then it get into when you merchandize it, then you merchandize the people and they become abused, oppressed and put down.

Even today at the Wailing Wall they collect an offering before they go up there. I imagine for some of them, they have rentals of these little beanie caps, because the men are not to pray without the beanie cap and shawl on. Also, at the Wailing Wall they have separation where the women go to one side of the wall and the men go to the other side of the wall; it’s separate. But since they don’t have the sacrifices that they’re offering there, it’s not quite exactly the same situation that we have today. I mean, just the basic principle of what this teaches here in the very beginning of the ministry of Christ He’s showing:

1. He is not going to merchandize salvation
2. He said to His disciples to ‘freely give,’ because you have *freely received*

We do have our obligations to God that we need to honor with the firstfruits of what we have; honor with the tithes and offerings that we have. But that is not to be merchandized. I think we’ve come out of a system where that’s all they did; just merchandized the people, and to use that as a club and fear, and just put people in such horrible straits.

I remember people that were having such hard times, and yet, they were told to give even though their teeth were falling out and their cars were falling down, and their homes were caving in. How many of these ‘religionists’ say—so many of these sects—sell all you have and come and stand on a rock. *NO!* That isn’t what God wants. Obviously, something like buying a Bible or something like that, that’s okay. But to merchandize it... And they were actually making money on the exchange that they should not have made.

What was one of the things that was one of the sins of Satan the devil? *His merchandizing!* So, there’s a proper kind of merchandizing and there is a improper kind of merchandizing. No one is to take the Word of God and use it for personal profit. That is merchandizing in the house of God.

Verse 17: “Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘The zeal of Your house has eaten Me up.’” In other words, the very attitude that Jesus had toward doing the Work of God, toward doing the things that He should.

Verse 18: “As a result, the Jews answered and said to Him, ‘What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up’” (vs 18-19).

Jesus in many cases never gave them a straight answer. Did He lie? *No! He was talking at a different level!* They couldn't understand it.

Verse 20: "Then the Jews said, 'This temple was forty-six years in building, and You will raise it up in three days?' But He spoke concerning the temple of His body. Therefore, when He was raised from *the* dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word that Jesus had spoken. Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast..." (vs 20-23). We know that there is the Passover and then the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

"...**many believed** on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing" (v 23). When you see someone doing signs and miracles you would believe what he said; you would believe that person—wouldn't you? *Sure you would!* It doesn't say what He was doing, but apparently He was healing, serving the people, casting out the demons, and many were believing.

Verse 24: "But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all *men*; and He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man" (vs 24-25).

When we get down to these things, when we put it all together, like Peter was going to save Jesus from being crucified, and Jesus said, 'Get behind Me, Satan.' Jesus said here, 'Don't make My Father's house a house of merchandize. Where we see that Jesus

- *knew* what was in man
- *knew* the human nature
- *knew* the evil that was there

It makes you wonder that in doing the things that God wants us to do, I think the message is that God doesn't need someone to stand up and tell Him what He's going to do, and who is going to do what. God will raise up the people in the way that *He* wants, in the time that *He* wants, at the time *He* wants! How much vanity can be involved in all of these things?

I remember, when we look back, that we were sure we knew the two men who were going to be the two witnesses, who they were; *but they aren't!* They made the same mistake of following through, and they didn't tell the people not to.

I don't think that in this that God is telling us that any man needs to set himself up to save God, if you know what I mean. Christ is going to come and save the world! Christ knows what's in every human being. I think this helps us get down to the level that we need to be, and not be lifted up one

against the other. In too much 'religion' is one being lifted up against the other. I guess that's why we have peace, happiness and understanding—we don't have that.

Question: What was the first miracle that Jesus did be wine? The only way I can answer that is this way: John said of Jesus, 'Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world.'

Then we find this first account of Jesus going to the Passover, which symbolizes Jesus' sacrifice. We also know that at the last Passover that Jesus took, He took the wine and said, 'This is My blood, drink of it.' So, there may be some symbolism in that, showing why His first miracle was changing the water into wine.

However, that doesn't follow through in a clear way, that that is absolutely so, because this was at a wedding feast, it was not at a Passover ceremony. So, there is a little difference there. It could also be symbolizing the type of the goodness of the wedding feast between Christ and the Church as a prophetic symbolism of it. I'm sure there are things there for us to learn, even as many years as we've been in the Church; there are still some things that we're never going to learn, and the full meaning of it I couldn't say precisely. But those are some things where you have a parallelism of things that we know.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Malachi 3:1
- 2) Malachi 4:5
- 3) Matthew 17:9-13
- 4) Luke 1:80
- 5) John 1:29-34
- 6) 1 Peter 1:18-20
- 7) 1 Corinthians 5:7
- 8) Matthew 11:1-7, 14-15
- 9) John 1:35-43
- 10) Matthew 16:13-18
- 11) 1 Corinthians 10:1-4
- 12) Matthew 16:18-23
- 13) John 1:44-52
- 14) John 2:1-6
- 15) Matthew 1:18-25
- 16) Luke 2:40-42, 48-51
- 17) John 2:5-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 1:28
- Isaiah 40
- Colossians 1:18
- Ephesians 1:22
- Hebrews 13

- Acts 1

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