

The Lord's Supper in Biblical Perspective
"The Lord's Supper and the Lord's Miracle at a Wedding Feast"
John 2:1-12
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We will be looking in John 2 and a few other Scriptures to guide us as we come to the Lord's Supper. Here is a feast in John 2 as well as the one we come to today. John 2:1-11 says [1] *On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. [3] When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." [5] His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."*

[6] Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification (or baptism), each holding twenty or thirty gallons. [7] Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. [8] And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. [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 [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." [11] This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

[12] After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers^[b] and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

The grass withers, the flower fades, God's Word abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

As I have prayed and prepared the Lord uses the Lord's Supper to renew, refresh and recalibrate us. It's so easy as a Christian to think my salvation depends on me and I try to live my Christian life as if I have the strength to do it without Him. This Table reminds us of two things. One is that you are who you are because of what He did on the cross, My blood and My body which bore your sin. You will be what you are as you grow in grace because of what He did on the cross as it recalibrates us and gets us back with refreshment and renewal with a hundred percent dependence on the Lord which is why we can bring total depraved because we are totally dependent on Him for our life.

Through this Table He reminds us that because of His shed blood from His body that bore our sins we are purified. What the Old Testament waters of baptism could not do but taught you that you needed to be, He says 'I will do it, I have done it.' You are washed with the blood, cleansed of your sins. Not only have you been purified but you have been made right with God. Because Jesus has fulfilled all those Old Testament promises, He has made you right with God and now in Him you have everlasting life.

He also reminds us that as great as this is the best is yet to come because we have another feast that's coming. That's the Wedding Feast. This is the one that we take and participate with Jesus, not by faith and the presence of His Spirit, but by sight and His glorified Incarnate presence. In Mark 14 Jesus is celebrating the Last Passover because He is the Lamb that fulfills all of those sacrifices. All those sacrifices from the Old Testament tells us over and over again we need a sacrifice for our sins but reminds us by their repetitions they can't do it but now we

have the Lamb. In John 1 John the Baptist says twice “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Here is the Passover Lamb who brings the final Sacrifice. Here is the Priest who brings it who doesn’t need a sacrifice and here the One who brings it is the Sacrifice. He fulfills it.

It is the Last Passover and the first Lord’s Supper which is to be practiced regularly, intentionally, to recalibrate, refresh and renew us in order that we might be pointed back. Just as that Passover pointed forward to Christ, this Lord’s Supper points us back to Christ. It tells us what He has done and reminds us that He is our life – come and eat with Me, the Lord says. Yet He in His Incarnate body will not be with us but He will eat this anew with us.

This was also a prophecy. Isaiah 25 said that at the end and at the consummation the Lord will set a feast for all the nations. Isaiah 25 gives the prophecy and Revelation 19 describes the feast He will set. We will sit with Him at this feast and He will sit with us. This feast is called a Wedding Feast. This meal described in Revelation 19 is the meal I believe He is referring to when He tells His Disciples that the next meal He will eat them will be in His glorified Incarnate body, in that day called the Wedding Feast.

Revelation 19:6–9 says *[6] Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. [7] Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; [8] it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.*

[9] And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”

Are you looking forward to that day? Will you be there that Day? It takes only a moment when you come to the Lord’s Supper as to why you are going to be there that Day and the only way you can be there that day. So why would I in coming to the Lord’s Supper take you to this place, the wedding feast at Cana? The key to this is given to us in John 2:11 which says *[11] This, **the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.***

Why would our God sovereignly choose this miracle in this event as the first miracle? Think about some of the miracles He did. He cast out demons, blind given sight, sick are healed, mutes speak, dead raised and this one was turning water into wine. Here a couple of teenagers are about to get embarrassed because they are about to run out of wine. His mother brings this news to Jesus and this becomes the first miracle. Is this just to solve a matter of embarrassment, a cultural faux pas? It certainly does that but is that really the main reason?

There is another clue. There is a deep disturbance in Jesus at this moment that is evident. This is the first week of Jesus’ public ministry after He has returned from His forty days in the wilderness. He has gathered six of the twelve Disciples to Himself at Bethany by the Jordan. John the Baptist has twice affirmed Him as the Lamb of God. He has come back into Galilee and just a few miles away from His hometown of Nazareth is a place called Cana. They have been invited to this wedding, probably a relative and in the middle of the festivities something happens that is a cultural no-no and would bring shame particularly to the bridegroom.

At a Hebrew wedding there would be this covenantal commitment for at least a year and then there would be this covenantal ceremony with the wedding feast and then the consummation of the covenant in the marriage night. At this point we are the wedding feast and there was no feast bigger in the life of an Israelite than this particular feast, other than the temple feast that

you would celebrate in Jerusalem. The bridegroom is to show in the ceremony that he has the commitment means to provide for the one who is being given to him. He is leaving his father and mother to cleave to this bride that is being given to him and this ceremony is the joy of the moment, the capability, commitment and competency of the bridegroom to take care of the bride. It is a festival time.

It is so important that they would hire someone to make sure it happened right and this John 2 passage they are referred to as the master of the feast. It is a hard word to translate but I think it is better translated as lord of the feast. He is to make sure everything is in order for this festival to be festive but the news comes out and somehow gets to Mary that they have run out of wine. Mary is moved by this and goes to her eldest Son who for 30 years has found out that He is Mr. Fix it. I don't accept the apocrypha of Jesus being a super boy when He was growing up. The Bible has already told us that this was the first miracle. I can imagine Joseph and Mary calling on Jesus to do a lot of things growing up, being their eldest and stayed until He was age 30 which was the appropriate age for Him to be baptized and ordained as a Priest, as He was by the John the Baptist.

When Mary tells Jesus they have run out of wine Jesus does two things that are troubling to us, at least they are to me when I read it. *[4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."* He doesn't address Mary as mother but as woman. The phrase 'My hour has not yet come' is repeated many times in the Gospel of John and each time it refers to his redeeming work on the cross where He becomes what He hates and that is sin. Our sin will be laid on Him and He will receive what we should receive which is the unmixed wrath of God against all the sins of all of His people for all of eternity. It's the cup that He asks to pass from Him but in that hour He would have to drink that cup to the bottom. Later Jesus will say 'My hour has come.'

So what does fixing a cultural faux pas, a social embarrassment have to do with the cross? Why would Jesus immediately associate this with the cross? Why would He be so troubled that the normal language He would use, 'mother,' is replaced by the evidence of the troubling of His soul and says 'woman'? He will also use 'woman' to refer to Mary, His mother, at the cross when He says to John, 'Woman behold your son, son behold your mother' (John 19:26-27). Notice there seems to be no issue with Mary when He does this. In fact, Mary realizes He has not refused her request and He is going to fix it. I don't think she knows how He is going to fix it but she does know He is going to fix it.

So she goes to the servants and says 'Whatever He tells you to do, do it.' He tells them to go to the six stone water pots which would not be clay. These were the prescribed water pots from the Old Testament for the rites of baptism that would continually be applied for purification. We are sinners and we need to be purified. Baptism in the Old Testament is a constant declaration of the need of purification yet it's repeated because the baptism can't purify you for it only reminds you that you need to be. So the servants fill these pots with what they are designed to be filled with, water, and the water becomes wine.

Then comes in another character in the story and that's the lord of the feast. The lord of the feast doesn't know how it happened. They know but as the lord of the feast tastes it he says 'My goodness this is better than the wine we had earlier. Boy most feasts bring the good stuff out first and the not so good stuff out later when you wouldn't even know it wasn't as good. You have saved the best for last.' Then they drink and the embarrassment is avoided. No one knows except Jesus, Mary and the servants what had happened yet in the midst of all of this we

are brought back to the reality that this is Jesus' first miracle to show the glory of the Lord and through which His Disciples will believe.

We are reminded that miracles are not pocketed for God's people to call upon at any time, for any reason and given at any time for any reason. Miracles are the act of a sovereign God whereby He performs something supernatural that creates wonder. As Jesus said it's a sign to teach something. So what does this miracle say? Whatever it says it has deeply troubled Jesus. I wish I had more time to share more of this with you but I do want to share this one thing that it says.

Jesus is looking beyond this wedding feast and the embarrassment and shame of these teenagers, to the Wedding Feast in eternity. It is there that He will be the Bridegroom. It is there that those He invited from all the nations will sit with Him as His bride, fully clothed through the righteous deeds provided by Him in them, to them and through them. On that Day He will sit at that feast with them to rejoice with them. It will be a Day in which we realize our shame is fully removed, our guilt is gone, there is joy, worship and praise to the Lamb who is our Bridegroom and we are His bride. He has left His Father, has come to save us at the cross, clothed us and brought us to be with Him. We will eat with Him, not by faith but by sight, in the fullness of joy in the new heavens and the new earth for all eternity.

He has given us another feast to have until that Day. In this feast, the Lord's Supper, we are not only reminded that He is the Bridegroom who gives the feast, but He is the true Lord of the feast and there is no lack of wine, joy, glory and majesty for He will provide everything at the cross. This lord of the feast (at the wedding at Cana) had faltered and people were about to be embarrassed and shamed. On our Day there will be no embarrassment, no shame, and no dishonor because the Lord of the feast is also the Groom and at the cross at that hour He removes all of our shame, dishonor and embarrassment because of all of our sins that are paid for at the shedding of His blood. Now we have joy abounding and we come to this Table to remind us until He comes again.

We hear that in the Lord's Supper. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death and that's the work of the Lord of the harvest, the Lord of feast, the Lord Jesus at the hour of our atonement. He is not only looking past this feast to that Wedding Feast but He is looking past this feast to that cross, the hour where He will redeem us and He becomes the fulfillment of all those promises in the Old Testament.

You can do away with the stone water pots and the baptismal waters of purification for He purifies you. Because of what He does at the cross you are pure, at the Wedding Feast there is no embarrassment, shame or guilt but there is joy upon joy because the Lord of the feast has gone to the cross to save us. He is the One who is the Bridegroom who will bring us to be with Him. This Table proclaims what He did. Come to Him today and remember your Savior did not call upon you for a blood sacrifice. He came and gave it at the right hour to save you. Our shame, guilt and embarrassment has been taken from us as far as the east is from the west. Now He has called us.

Do you know why we're not at that Wedding Feast yet? All the invitees are not here so as you go about your day remember that lifestyle of evangelism and discipleship. Go and invite people to the Wedding Feast because when the last one accepts He comes and when He comes we'll sit with Him. This Table reminds us that our shame and guilt are gone and we have been set free to follow Him.

Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments to be together in Your Word. Come and prepare our hearts as we come to this Table knowing that Jesus, the Lord of the Feast, who we will enjoy has paid it all so in this feast encourage, empower, convict, console Your people. Refresh us. Renew us. Recalibrate us to fix our minds and hearts upon our Savior, in Jesus' Name, Amen.