

The Miracles Of Jesus

Water Into Grape Juice

(Jn 2:1-11)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on “The Miracles Of Jesus.”
 - a. Last week we looked at “Jesus’ First Miracle.”
 - i. **Jn 1:47-48** “Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, ‘Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!’ 48 Nathanael said to him, ‘How do you know me?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.’ ”¹
 - b. This week we will be examining “Water Into Grape Juice.”
 - i. **Jn 2:6-8** “Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, 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.”
3. As we look to the text on this miracle let us remember our goal in this study.
 - a. First, this miracle was recorded for the purpose of confirming Jesus is the Christ.
 - b. Second, this miracle was recorded for the purpose of bolstering our faith in Christ so we may endure to the end and receive a the crown of life.
 - i. **Jn 2:11** “This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.”
4. We would not be doing this lesson justice if we didn’t discuss the “controversies” surrounding this miracle as well.
 - a. What does Jesus mean by “Woman what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”
 - b. Did Jesus turn water into alcoholic wine?
5. With this in mind let us look at our text this day.

I. The Miracle Examined

A. The third day

1. There are two basic reasons for this statement.
 - i. It could be referring to the third day after the conversions of Philip and Nathanael.
 - a. This being most likely.
 - ii. It could be referring to the third day of the wedding.
 - ii. It could be referring to the third day of the wedding.
2. There is another possibility.
 - i. It could be a symbolic reference to the resurrection of Jesus.
 - a. In other words it has a literal truth which is not clearly revealed but the “third” is used primarily as a symbolic reference to the resurrection of Christ.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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B. The wedding

1. This wedding was in Cana.
 - i. Cana was in Galilee.
2. These Jewish weddings were not like our weddings of today.
 - i. They lasted several days not just a couple of hours.
 - ii. The host & hostess lavished the guests with food, drink, and entertainment.
 - iii. Guest would come and go as we see in our text.
 - a. Mary was already there, possibly several days, when Jesus was asked to come to the wedding.
 1. We cannot be sure who invited Jesus as the text gives no true indication.
 - i. It was likely either Mary or Nathanael.
 - a. Mary, since she appears to be a hostess.
 - b. Nathanael since he is from Cana in Galilee (**Jn 21:2**).
3. We are not certain who was getting married.
 - i. There is nothing in the text to indicate who it was.

C. The mishap

1. Jesus' mother, Mary, finds herself with guests but lacking something to drink.
 - i. Wine or grape juice was the common drink of choice for festivities such as this.
 - ii. If this ran out Mary, as a hostess, would have been socially banished.
2. Mary goes to Jesus and lets Jesus know the guests have run out of grape juice.
 - i. She implies, "Jesus do something about this."
 - a. We can know this from both Jesus' reaction to the statement and Mary's response.

D. Jesus' miracle

1. Mary tells the servants "Do whatever [Jesus] tells you"² (**Jn 2:5**).
 - i. What a powerful statement that all should adhere to.
2. Jesus tells the servants to...
 - i. Fill six stone jars.
 - a. There were six jars.
 - b. Each jar held about 20 to 30 gallons of water.
 - c. The servants filled them to the brim.
 - ii. Draw out the water and take it to the master of the feast.
 - a. The master is the "chief butler" i.e. the one in charge of all food and drink and he who knew the proper etiquette for such an occasion.

² Brackets added for clarification, as the original says "he."

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- E. The master of the feast's reaction
 - 1. He tastes the water turned to grape juice.
 - i. He realizes it is better than what they had been serving.
 - 2. He calls for the bridegroom and says to him...
 - i. **Jn 2:10** "...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."
- F. Thus...
 - 1. We have the first miracle of Jesus in Cana in Galilee.
 - i. This miracle "manifested Jesus' glory" and helped the disciples to "believe in Him" (**Jn 2:11**).

II. The Controversy Examined

- A. Jesus' response to His mother
 - 1. "Jesus' response is somewhat puzzling, due in part to the difficulty in translating his statement."³
 - i. Literally it says "What to me and to you, woman?"
 - ii. NKJV "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?"
 - iii. ASV "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"
 - iv. Goodspeed "Do not try to direct me."
 - v. NEB "Your concern, mother, is not mine."
 - 2. However we can grasp the basic understanding by looking at the next statement, "My hour has not yet come."
 - i. Jesus had a time table by which He must follow.
 - a. **Jn 7:6, 8** "...My time has not yet come, but your time is always here...8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come."
 - b. **Jn 12:23, 27** "...The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified...27 Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour."
 - 3. Thus it appears Jesus saying "Don't push me into doing this before the appropriate time. I'll handle it on my own timetable."⁴
- B. Grape juice or alcoholic wine
 - 1. There is an old joke about the Catholic priest that was pulled over by a police officer. The officer, upon seeing a paper sack with what appeared to be a bottle inside, ask the priest what was in the sack. The priest responded by saying water. The officer taking the sack opened up the bottle and could smell and see it was alcoholic wine. When asked the priest simple said "Jesus did it again I guess."

³ Notes on John by Parrish, Eddie pg. 17

⁴ Ibid

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- i. This underlies the modern thought behind what people think Jesus did in Cana.
 - a. I had a young atheist woman tell me one time “Jesus was a social drinker.”⁵
 - ii. The truth is we don’t have to spend much time on this because it is simple to grasp.
2. The two arguments for this being alcoholic wine.
 - i. Everyone at that time drank alcoholic wine because they couldn’t keep it from fermenting.
 - a. The Jews were able keep many things fresh for years such as wine, various fruits like grapes...
 1. Josephus tells of the Romans capturing the fortress of Masada where Jews had stored up much provisions. “for here was laid up corn in large quantities, and such as would subsist men for a long time; here was also wine and oil in abundance, with all kinds of pulse and dates heaped up together... These fruits were also fresh and full ripe, and no way inferior to such fruits newly laid in... when the Romans got possession of those fruits that were left, they found them not corrupted all that while: nor should we be mistaken if we supposed that the air was here the cause of their enduring so long, this fortress being so high, and so free from the mixture of all terrene and muddy particles of matter.”⁶
 - i. We are not given insight by the Jews how they specifically keep things fresh but we have other classical writers that tell us.
 - b. One of those classical writers is Columella, a renowned agriculturalist during the first century A.D.
 1. He explains in great detail how to keep many things fresh. Grapes was one of the things he writes about.
 - i. Grapes were kept fresh for up to a year by cutting the branches that had many grapes on them and sealing the cut with pitch. The branch and grapes were put in an earthenware vessel that was filled with the driest possible chaff that had been sifted and without dust in it. That vessel was sealed then with clay mixed with chaff. They were stored then in a dry loft.
 - a. This tells us that people could have fresh grapes all year round.

⁵ Rebecca Yeager on a Facebook in response to my update on social drinking is wrong May 30, 2010.

⁶ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged. Peabody: Hendrickson.

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- c. Both Jews and Christians write concerning their desire to have unfermented grape juice.
 1. In the Talmud we find “One may press out a cluster of grapes and pronounce the Kiddush [blessing pronounced at the consecration of the Sabbath or a festival] over the juice, since the juice of the grape is considered wine in connection with the law of the Nazarite.”⁷
 2. The 2nd and 3rd century Christians used freshly squeezed grapes for the juice of the Lord’s Supper to make sure it was not fermented. Notice what the Acts and Martyrdom of Matthew states “Bring as an offering the holy bread; and, having pressed three clusters from the vine into a cup, communicate with me, as the Lord Jesus showed us how to offer up when he rose from the dead on the third day.”⁸
 - ii. The master of the feast indicates Jesus made alcoholic wine.
 - a. This comes from the statement “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine” (**Jn 2:10**).
 - b. Why this man cannot be referring to alcoholic wine.
 1. The people had already “drunk freely” before Jesus made the grape juice.
 - i. If this man is saying “drunk freely, means alcoholic wine hen Jesus made alcoholic wine for drunk people, which is absurd.
 - ii. Notice these people had already “drunk freely” which is why the man is upset.
- C. Thus...
1. We can clearly see that there ought not be any controversy concerning this miracle. Anyone not ignorant on how to study the Bible can clearly see that Jesus did not turn the water into alcoholic wine.

CONCLUSION

1. Brethren, let us make sure are not ignorant concerning studying God’s Word so that we can move past irreverent argument concerning this miracle.
 - a. Let us focus on the reason for such, to prove Jesus is the Christ and that it is He that helps us fight the good fight of faith.
2. Question: Are you maturing in your walk with God by every means possible such as studying the miracles of Jesus?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?

⁷ Wine In The Bible: A Biblical Study On The Use Of Alcoholic Beverages by Bacchiocchi, Samuele (<http://goo.gl/DwBcp8>)

⁸ Ibid

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3. Invitation

- a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**