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The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Turning Water into Wine

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THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST

MIRACLE ONE: Turning Water Into Wine (Jn. 2:1-11)

SURVEY

During a wedding in Cana of Galilee, Jesus, at Mary's request, transforms approximately 120 gallons of water into wine, the quality of which is highly praised by the ruler of the feast.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This marks the second of four public encounters Mary had with Jesus. The other three are:
 1. In a Jerusalem Temple (Lk. 2:41-52)

"And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing, And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my fathers business?" (Lk. 2:48, 49)
 2. In Capernaum (Mk. 3:31-35)

"There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee." (Mk. 3:31, 32)
 3. At Calvary (Jn. 19:26, 27)

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, 'Woman, behold your son.' Then He said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!' And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home." (Jn. 19:26, 27)
- It is the first of at least five occasions where the word "hour" is used in reference to Calvary ("*mine hour is not yet come*"). Other references would include:
 1. At the feast of tabernacles - "*Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.*" (Jn. 7:30)
 2. In the temple treasury - "*These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.*" (Jn. 8:20)
 3. In the Upper Room - "*Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*" (Jn. 13:1)

4. On the Mount of Olives - *"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said. Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee."* (Jn. 17:1)

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus chose a wedding to perform His first miracle, doubtless to emphasize the sanctity of marriage. (See Gen. 2:18-25; Mt. 19:3-8; Eph. 5:22-33; Heb. 13:4.)
- Earthly weddings thus should serve as a reminder of that grand and glorious future wedding between Christ and His Church! (See 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7-9.)
- It should be noted Jesus was invited on this occasion. It is always a wonderful thing when He is made welcome in a wedding!
- Jesus used water pots to accomplish His first miracle. He desires to do the same today, but now he uses living, earthly vessels. If we allow Him, He fills us with the water of God's Word; and when we pour it out (give it out) it becomes the wine of the Spirit.
- While no Christian of course should pray to Mary, all believers would profit greatly from heeding her advice on this occasion: *"His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."* (Jn. 2:5)
- Jesus thus did this miracle to accomplish a three-fold purpose:
 1. To solve a difficult problem for Mary
 2. To increase the faith of His disciples
 3. To display His glory

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." (Jn. 2:11)
- Was this real wine? The Greek word used here, *oinos*, can refer to either grape juice or wine.
 1. Examples in which it means juice:
 - a. *"Neither do men put new wine [unfermented grape juice] into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out."* (Matt. 9:17)
 - b. *"He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."* (Rev. 19:15)
 2. Examples in which it means wine:
 - a. *"Be not drunk with wine."* (Eph. 5:18)
 - b. *"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."* (1 Tim. 5:23)
- If it was real wine Jesus created, it bore little if any resemblance to the modern product.

1. In New Testament times wine was first boiled before storage, then diluted with three to ten parts water before serving.
2. The Old Testament distinguishes between this wine and the strong, coarse, undiluted wine prepared solely to make one intoxicated.
 - a. Both Noah and Lot became drunk on this wine (Gen. 9:21; 19:32-34).
 - b. Drinking this kind of wine may have caused the death of Aaron's two priestly sons, both killed by God (Lev. 10:1-9).
 - c. It was for the sin of national drunkenness that God would destroy Israel (Isa. 28:1-8).
 - d. Daniel refused to defile himself by drinking this kind of wine (Dan. 1:8).
 - e. The book of Proverbs warns against this kind of wine:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1).

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31-32).
 - f. Habakkuk forbids the giving of this wine to one's neighbor (Hab. 2:14).
 - g. Even the pagan Greeks felt only barbarians drank undiluted wine.
 - h. The rabbis held that undiluted wine could not be blessed.
- Whatever the meaning of the word wine here in John 2, the sincere believer must carefully consider other Scripture passages even in the practice of social drinking.

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God"* (1 Cor. 10:31-32).