

Symbolism of Christ's First Miracle

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Three days after being baptized in the Jordan River (cf. Mt. 3:13-17), Jesus Christ performed his first miracle which prefigured key aspects of the commission he was going to fulfill.

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there (Jn. 2:1; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

As we will see, Christ's first miracle involved changing water into wine on the third day since his "figurative" burial, when he was completely immersed in water at his baptism. This is not a coincidence, because another miracle occurred on "a third day" when Almighty God, the Father, resurrected Christ from his literal burial in the earth.

*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, **so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth** (Mt. 12:40; emphasis added).*

*And we (Christ's apostles) are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. ⁴⁰**Him God** (the Father) **raised up on the third day**, and showed him openly (Ac. 10:39-40; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

Because Jesus Christ completed his commission to provide a covering for the sins of those who repent, he can now be married, figuratively, to a new wife comprising those who are faithful and obedient to God's word.

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for **the marriage of the Lamb** (of God, who is Jesus Christ; cf. Jn. 1:29) **has come, and his wife has made herself ready.** ⁸And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for **the linen is** (represents) **the righteous acts of the saints** (Rev. 19:7-8; Ps. 132:9; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

Righteousness, by God's definition, is attributed to those who seek to obey His every word.

*For **all Your commandments are righteousness** (Ps. 119:172b; cf. Mt. 4:4; emphasis added).*

So Christ performed a miracle on the third day following his baptism, and this foreshadowed the miracle his heavenly Father would perform on the third day after Christ's death. And now that Christ has been resurrected, he can be married to his future bride following his return to rule this planet.

The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king (Almighty God, the Father) who arranged a marriage for his son (Jesus Christ) (Mt. 22:2; Ed. notes in parentheses).

*And while they (5 foolish virgins) went to buy, **the bridegroom** (Christ) **came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding**; and the door was shut (Mt. 25:10; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

During the wedding in Cana of Galilee, Christ's mother was present and witnessed everything that took place. In like manner, the loyal angels of God witness everything that Christ does and they symbolize the care that a mother provides for her children as they serve Christ and those who follow him.

But the **Jerusalem above is free** (location of God's angels), **which is the mother of us all** (Gal. 4:26; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Then the devil left him (Christ), and behold, **angels came and ministered to him** (Mt. 4:11; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that **in heaven (Jerusalem above) their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven** (Mt. 18:10; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Are they (loyal angels) **not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?** (Heb. 1:14; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Not only was Jesus at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, but his disciples were there also. This reflects a future scenario when Christ will be the bridegroom who marries those who are faithful and obedient to his Father's word. Marriage is used figuratively to picture a very close relationship.

Now both Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding (Jn. 2:2).

At some point during the wedding in Cana of Galilee, the wine ran out. When this occurred, Christ's mother looked to him to provide new wine, but he pointed out that it was not time yet for him to provide new wine.

*And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with me? **My hour has not yet come.**"* (Jn. 2:3-4; emphasis added).

When Christ stated that his hour had not yet come to provide new wine, he was actually

referring to his blood that would be shed to cover the sins of every repentant sinner.

*Then he (Christ) took the cup (of wine), and gave thanks, and gave it to them (his disciples), saying, "Drink from it, all of you ²⁸For **this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission (forgiveness) of sins** (Mt. 26:27-28; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

This is the main reason for Christ's parable regarding the wine skins. Specifically, the blood of animal sacrifices, represented by old wine, cannot provide everlasting life. However, faith in Christ's shed blood to cover one's sins, represented by new wine, is a prerequisite to inheriting everlasting life.

And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸But new wine must be put into new wineskins. ³⁹And no one, having drunk old wine, desires new; for he says, "The old is better (good)." (Lk. 5:37-39; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Although the "hour", or time, of Christ's death was still about three years away, he fulfilled the wish of his mother and performed his first miracle.

Now there were set there six waterpots of stone according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. ⁷Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸And he said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. ⁹When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom (Jn. 2:6-9).

The empty waterpots were probably located close to the main entrance where the wedding activities were taking place. This would have been to placate the Jewish religious leaders who created various traditions as part of their control mechanism over the people, even though the "rules" they introduced were never intended by God.

Because these traditions were added to God's law, Christ's action of changing water into wine confirmed that the scribes and Pharisees did not have authority to add new regulations, including how people should wash their hands,

*Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, ²"Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."³But he answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ⁴For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'he who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'⁵But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me has been dedicated to the temple"- ⁶'is released from honoring his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. ⁷Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: ⁸'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. ⁹And **in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men** (Mt. 15:1-9; emphasis added).*

So the Jewish religious leaders were adding new commandments that their followers were expected to observe. Apparently, one of these new commandments involved washing up to the elbow twice before a meal, then during the meal and, finally, after a meal.

*Now when they (the Pharisees and scribes) saw some of his (Christ's) disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. ³For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they **wash their hands in a special way** (SGD 4435; with the fist; clenched hand; up to the elbow), **holding the tradition of the elders** (Mk. 7:2-3; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

These Jewish religious leaders were breaking God's law, by adding to it, as the next scriptures confirm.

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you (Dt. 4:2; emphasis added).

*Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; **you shall not add to it nor take away from it*** (Dt. 12:32; emphasis added).

Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar (Prov. 30:6; emphasis added).

So by pretending that these additional rules and regulations were commanded by God, the Pharisees and scribes were lying to the people who followed them. In reality, these religious impostors were making God's way of life more burdensome for the people.

*For they (the scribes and Pharisees) **bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers*** (Mt. 23:4; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Going back to the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, it is interesting that the waterpots were

empty. This is an indication that everyone who attended this event ignored the traditions of the religious leaders. No doubt because they knew these traditions were not part of God's law.

The next comment by the master of the wedding feast is insightful because it confirms that although the old wine representing the blood of animal sacrifices was adequate, there is now a much better wine provided "figuratively" through Christ's shed blood.

*And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then that which is inferior; but **you have kept the good wine until now.**" (Jn. 2:10; emphasis added).*

So there are many lessons contained within Christ's first miracle. The fact it occurred on the third day after his baptism pointed forward to his sacrifice, and resurrection on the third day. And this sacrifice made it possible for every repentant sinner to participate a future wedding with Jesus Christ. By changing the water, that was "commanded for washing by the religious leaders", into new wine, it confirmed Christ's authority to change the Levitical priesthood that was causing harm to those who followed them. This change of the priesthood was finalized in 70 CE when God's temple was destroyed by the Roman army. Since that time, the priesthood of Melchizedek has authority over God's faithful and obedient servants.

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law [inclusive of animal sacrifices]), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? ¹²For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law (regarding the

sacrifice of animals: cf. Heb. 10:4) (Heb. 7:11-12; Ed. notes in parentheses).

And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest ¹⁶who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment (because the death of an animal did not provide everlasting life), but according to the power of an endless life (made possible through Christ's shed blood). ¹⁷For He (Almighty God) testifies: "You (Christ) are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." (Heb. 7:15-17; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So the new wine, provided by Christ's miracle, was to replace the old wine that represented the blood of animals that were sacrificed continually throughout the First Covenant period. Because Christ's shed blood provides the means through which repentant sinners can inherit everlasting life, it is much better than the old wine which represented the blood of sacrificed animals.

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