

SABBATH HEALINGS

Chronological Interlude I - The Wedding Feast of Cana¹

John's testimony-

John 1:19-28

19 Now this was John's testimony when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was.

20 He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ."

21 They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No."

22 Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

23 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

24 Now some Pharisees who had been sent

25 questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26 "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know.

27 He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

28 This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing. NIV

Unlike the synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel begins after the wilderness experience. It begins with a testimony of the eternally abiding Word of God and how that Word became flesh. In John 1:15, the apostle quotes the prophet speaking in the present tense. "John testifies concerning him saying, "This is he of whom I said. . ." We can call the events of John 1:24-28 as Day 1.

John 1:29-34

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

30 This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.

33 I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

34 I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (NIV)

The Holy Spirit coming down and abiding happened when John baptized him. When Jesus returned he went to the area where John was ministering. Here John is giving testimony to what had already happened. "I have seen. . ." he says. This next day makes it Day 2.

¹I owe the impetus of this search and much of its insight to Timothy Keyes.

John 1:35-42

- 35 The next day John was there again with two of his disciples.
36 When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"
37 When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.
38 Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"
39 "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.
40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.
41 The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ).
42 And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter). (NIV)

This is Day 3. Here we see John again bearing witness that Jesus is the Lamb of God. It was his job to prepare the way of the Lord. Part of this preparation involved his corps of disciples. From here he gets Andrew and Peter. As a matter of fact, the original 13 apostles (12 + 1) all had their start with John.

Acts 1:21-22

- 21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection." (NIV)

John 1:43-51

- 43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."
44 Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida.
45 Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote-- Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."
46 "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.
47 When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."
48 "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."
49 Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."
50 Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that."
51 He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (NIV)

On this day, Day 4, he picks up Philip and Nathaniel. His prophetic word to Nathaniel (I saw thee under the fig tree) convinces the man of Jesus' messiahship. Jesus informs him of greater things to come, the seeing of angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

Gen 28:10-17

10 Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran.

11 When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.

12 He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

13 There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.

14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

15 I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

16 When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it."

17 He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." (NIV)

Eph 4:7-13

7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?

10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (NIV)

1 Tim 2:5

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (NIV)

Heb 7:25

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. (NIV)

John 2:1

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, (NIV)

John 2:1 (KJV)

And¹ the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

Strong's definition-

2532 **kai**¹ (kahee); apparently, a primary particle, having a copulative and sometimes also a cumulative force; and, also, even, so then, too, etc.; often used in connection (or composition) with other particles or small words: KJV-- and, also, both, but, even, for, if, or, so, that, then, therefore, when, yet.

"And the third day. . ." When we add (and, kai) the three days to the days previous (four) you wind up on the seventh day. On day seven in the Gospel of John we find Jesus attending a wedding feast in Cana.

John 2:2-11

- 2 and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.
- 3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."
- 4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."
- 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."
- 6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.
- 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.
- 8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so,
- 9 and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside
- 10 and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."
- 11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. (NIV)

Wine symbolizes many things in the Bible. In reference to Jesus, feasts and cleansings, wine is representative of his blood and its cleansing.

Matt 26:26-30

- 26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."
- 27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.
- 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
- 29 I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."
- 30 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. (NIV)

We have come once again to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb during which the saints of God will drink wine with their savior.

Isa 25:6

On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. (NIV)

The ISBE has an interesting note regarding the wine of the Last Supper.

WINE, WINE PRESS

At a later period, however, the Greek use of diluted wines had attained such sway that the writer of 2 Macc speaks <15:39> of undiluted wine as "distasteful" (polemion). This dilution is so normal in the following centuries that the Mishna can take it for granted and, indeed, R. Eliezer even forbade saying the table-blessing over undiluted wine (Berakhoth <7:5>). The proportion of water was large, only one-third or one-fourth of the total mixture being wine (Niddah <2:7>; Pesachim 108b).

NOTE.-- The wine of the Last Supper, accordingly, may be described in modern terms as a sweet, red, fermented wine, rather highly diluted. As it was no doubt the ordinary wine of commerce, there is no reason to suppose that it was particularly "pure." (from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (C) 1996 by Biblesoft)

In John 19:34 we read of the blood and water that flowed from our Saviors side when He was pierced by the spear. The cup, if indeed it held mixed wine and water, would have been truly prophetic of the degree of His suffering.

Wine was also part of the daily sacrifice and used as a libation in the grain offering. The prophet Joel concerns himself with the wine and grain offering.

Joel 2:23-32

23 Be glad, O people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains in righteousness. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.

24 The threshing floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

25 I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten-- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm-- my great army that I sent among you.

26 You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed.

27 Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.

28 'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

30 I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

31 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

32 And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls. (NIV)

From "The Five Offerings":

Verse 30 speaks of wonders in the heavens and on the earth. The word for wonders (mopet) is also translated as "sign" or "symbol", as in a token of a future event (1 Kings 13:3; Zech. 3:8).

The immediate sign or wonder is blood and fire and billows of smoke, which refers to the brazen altar. The grain and drink offering pointed to the outpouring of the holy spirit. The pouring out is the wine provided by God (vs.14) and the prophecies, dreams, and visions are the grain (bread) provided by him as a blessing (vs.14).

WINE

The use of wine at the Paschal feast was not commanded by the law but had become an established custom at all events in the post-Babylonian period. The wine was mixed with warm water on these occasions, as implied in mention of the warming kettle. Hence in the early Christian church it was usual to mix the sacramental wine with water.

Figurative. Wine is figurative of the blood of Christ <Matt. 26:27-29>; of the blessings of the gospel <Prov. 9:2,5; Isa. 25:6; 55:1>; of the exhilarating effect of the Holy Spirit's fullness <Eph. 5:18>; of the wrath and judgments of God <Pss. 60:3; 75:8; Jer. 13:12-14; 25:15-18>; of the abominations of the apostasy <Rev. 17:2; 18:3>; of violence <Prov. 4:17>. (from New Unger's Bible Dictionary) (originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (C) 1988.)

Acts 2:12-21

12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' (NIV)

Eph 5:18-20 (NIV)

18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,

20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The wedding feast of Cana gives us portents of many things. In that it involves the water of cleansing and wine, it speaks of Jesus' coming sacrifice on the cross, in which we are cleansed by his blood. It also speaks of the exuberance of the fullness of the Holy Spirit as spoken of by the prophet Joel and affirmed by Peter on the day of Pentecost. And finally, it speaks of that day when with joy we will drink of the fruit of the vine with our bridegroom in the Father's kingdom, for this feast was a wedding feast that took place on the seventh day in the Gospel of John, the

gospel of salvation of the spirit. We are told that Jesus and His disciples were invited to the feast. RSVP the Lord, follow His word and be a disciple.