

*In the Name of the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit*

One God Amen



## The Gospel According to Saint John the Evangelist Chapter 2

**1** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. **3** 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." **5** His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." **6** Now there were set there six water pots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. **7** Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. **8** And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. **9** When 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. **10** And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" **11** This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

**12** After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days. **13** Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. **15** When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. **16** And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" **17** Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up." **18** So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" **19** Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." **20** Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" **21** But He was speaking of the temple of His body. **22** Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

**23** Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. **24** But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, **25** and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

## **General Interpretation:**

- *The wedding in Cana of Galilee*

*On the third day (after the calling of the first disciples), there was a wedding in a place called Cana in the Galilee region away from Jerusalem the capital city of Judea. Being from Galilee Himself, Jesus was invited, along with His disciples, to the wedding. In other words, He was not invited as a special guest but rather as an acquaintance of the groom and the bridegroom.*

*Jesus' mother St Mary, with faith in her Son's divine nature asked Him to save the master of the feast and the bridegroom from ridicule, for they had no wine left and the feast was still underway. However, before answering her request, He declared that His path to the cross has not yet started and it was not yet the time to declare His divinity.*

*Heeding to St. Mary's advice: "whatever He says to you, do it", the servants drew, the servants brought six water pots of stone used in purification rituals and filled them to the top with water. Upon Jesus' command: "Draw some out now", they set out the wine to the guests.*

*This was the first miracle Jesus did before starting His mission. Through it His divine nature was revealed before His disciples and their faith strengthened in Him. For who else can change one substance into another, in this case water into wine, except the Creator of the whole world?*

- *Cleansing the Temple*

*After attending the wedding, Jesus along with His mother, brothers and disciples went to Capernaum and stayed there till the Passover. Jesus attended four Passovers after His baptism:*

- 1. The first one, the one mentioned in this chapter, was right after His baptism.*
- 2. The second mentioned in Luke 6:1*
- 3. The third mentioned in John 6:4*
- 4. The fourth was the one He offered Himself as the Passover Lamb.*

*When the Jews saw how Jesus, with authority, purified the temple from all the commercial activities that were going on, they asked Him to show them a sign for they knew then that He was no ordinary teacher. He answered them to "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They did not understand that he was referring to His death and resurrection from the dead.*

*Lot of people believed in Jesus because of the signs they saw. However, He did not trust them and did not leave them to testify of Him for His witness were His works.*

## **Spiritual Interpretation:**

- *The wedding in Cana of Galilee*

*The Lord went to the wedding in Cana of Galilee as any other guest but He knew what He was about to do. It was no coincidence for John to mention that the wedding was on the third day. Neither was it coincidence for the wine to run out, nor was it a coincidence that the servants brought six water pots made of stones.*

*The first marriage that the Lord established between Adam and Eve was on the sixth day, and man ruined it and made it like a stone incapable of producing according to its original state of love, of royalty and of holiness; of love for the woman was made of man's body, of royalty for God gave man and woman the authority over all His creation, and of holiness for God created man on His image. After the fall, Adam accused Eve of inducing him to sin, and the pure love between them came to an end. So, it was necessary to restore back marriage to its original state and this was what the Lord Jesus did at the wedding in Cana of Galilee. He used the six water pots made of stone, used in purification, and went beyond the Mosaic Law, which was inept to bring back God's creation to its eminence before the fall, and blessed the wedding by turning the water into wine, that is turning what was used as a symbol of purification into a symbol of love<sup>1</sup> and unity<sup>2</sup>. He used the stone to produce blessing for the wedding in the same way He used dust to create Adam and Eve and blessed them.*

*Blessing the man and the woman was the first thing the Lord did, for both united form the nucleus of His Church. But why did St John mention the third day and not the sixth? The number six is a symbol of deficiency and of the human nature<sup>3</sup>. Three is a symbol of Godliness<sup>4</sup>, fruitfulness<sup>5</sup>, and blessedness<sup>6</sup>.*

*Those who follow the scripture closely will find that the wedding did take place on the sixth day<sup>7</sup> according to the sequence mentioned in chapter 1. This is a wonder that the Lord restored marriage on the same day He founded it, but used number three to refer to it for the reasons aforementioned.*

- *Cleansing the Temple*

*St John mentions "Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand", is there another Passover that belongs to other people or another nation? Certainly not. God rejects those who degrade His name and His ways and therefore said the "Passover of the Jews". The leadership turned the Temple into a commercial place void of any spirituality and it was necessary for the Lord to chasten them and bring back the reverence due to His place. He did not do this before his public mission, but now He declared Himself to be the Passover, which is about to be slain. In fact He referred to Himself as the Temple, the altar and the sacrifice as if telling the Jews "Do not concern yourselves with animal sacrifices no more and do not marvel at this temple for I am the true sacrifice and I am the Temple that you should seek".*

## **Word Meaning**

- *Woman:*  
*Many think that the word "Woman" is a degrading word that Jesus should not have used. On the contrary, Jesus used it in the same way we use the word Lady nowadays. He praised the Canaanite woman for her faith addressing her: "O **woman**, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire."<sup>8</sup> Also, He praised the sinful woman's repentance at Simon's house using this same word (Luke 7)*

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<sup>1</sup> Songs of Solomon 1:1, 1:4

<sup>2</sup> The Lord gave His beloved Church His own blood to drink in the form of wine (John 6:56)

<sup>3</sup> The number seven in the Holy Bible always refers to perfection, six refers to what is less than perfection.

<sup>4</sup> God's nature the Holy Trinity

<sup>5</sup> On the third day God created the first thing capable of fruition.

<sup>6</sup> The blessing in the Church of the new Covenant is given through the name of the three hypostasis of the Holy trinity 2Cor 13:14

<sup>7</sup> Day 1 (John 1:15-18), Day 2 (John 1:19-27), Day 3 (John 1:29-34), Day 4 (John 1:35-42), Day 5 (John 1: 43-51), Day 6 (Cana of Galilee wedding)

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 15:28

On the cross, He addressed His mother “Woman, behold your son”<sup>9</sup>

### **Spiritual life Applications**

*The main message of this chapter is to be alert and to prepare ourselves for the heavenly wedding. Jesus is our true Bridegroom and will always come to us when we invite Him. So, let us always share our happiness and good moments with Him, for in Him is true happiness and without him our happiness is lacking.*

*In what manner should we invite Him? When our hearts and our minds are void of earthly matters and when He becomes the sole focus of our lives. The Lord rejected the Jews and their feasts for they turned His feasts to commercial ones and left their spirit for earthly concerns. The feasts were times when the Lord and His people could come together. Instead, the Jews left the Lord and in turn He left them.*

*In the new covenant we have similar feasts, to those of the Jews, where we remind ourselves of something the Lord did for our sake: His birth, His triumphant entrance to Jerusalem, His resurrection, ...etc. We should be mindful of the real meaning of these feasts and how could they bring us close to our Bridegroom and always focus on the spirit of the feast.*

*Finally, let's be alert in this life and always remind ourselves of the example He left us “ that [we] should follow His steps”<sup>10</sup>. For no one is “crowned unless he competes according to the rules”<sup>11</sup> and St Mary left us a precious advice: “**whatever He says to you, do it**”.*

### **Theological Aspects**

- *The wedding in Cana of Galilee reveals the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ for He changed the substance from water to wine and this is creation. How it happened is a mystery for this is a divine matter. In the same way, during the Last Super, He changed the substance of wine to blood, how? Again, in a divine way and that is why the Church calls the Eucharist a mystery.*
- *Intercession is evident in this chapter as Jesus started his mission early for His mother's sake. Traditional Churches believe in the [intercession of the saints](#) as it is clear throughout the Bible. Many studies have been done on this topic.*
- *The traditional Churches believe in the perpetual virginity of Mary; Jesus' mother. Then who are Jesus' brothers mentioned in verse 12? Those are his cousins from St Mary's sisters. Till today in the Middle East region, cousins are called brothers and sisters as was the case with Abraham, Sarah and Lot (in the book of Genesis).*

### **Church life Application**

*Every time the Church gathers around the Eucharist we are reminded of the wedding in Cana of Galilee for the Lord our Bridegroom is present among us and through His grace, He allows us to participate of His flesh and His blood. The Church through communion clings to her Bridegroom in unity.*

- *During the wedding (crowning) ceremony prayers, the Church draws on what the Lord did in Cana of Galilee as the priest says: “You who were present at the wedding of Cana of Galilee, bless this wedding*

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<sup>9</sup> John 19:26

<sup>10</sup> 1 Peter 2:21

<sup>11</sup> 2 Timothy 2:5

as You blessed that wedding, we ask You O Lord to hear us and have mercy upon us.” Also, “O You who has blessed the wedding of Cana of Galilee, now, also, bless this marriage, through the intercessions of St. Mary the Virgin” and “As You blessed the wedding at Cana of Galilee, bless also this wedding of <name> and <name>”.

- The Coptic Orthodox Church celebrates the sign at Cana of Galilee on the third day after John’s testimony: “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”. The feast is on of the seven minor feasts the Church celebrates.
- The Traditional Churches puts St. Mary on top of all the saints when it comes to the intercessory prayers.

### **Early Christian Writers:**

#### **St John Chrysostom (Bishop of Constantinople)**

*"On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. And Jesus was called to the marriage. And the mother of Jesus was there, and His brethren."*

*I said before that He was best known in Galilee; therefore they invite Him to the marriage, and He comes; for He looked not to His own honor, but to our benefit. He who disdained not to "take upon Him the form of a servant" ( Philip.2:7 ), would much less disdain to be present at the marriage of servants; He who sat down "with publicans and sinners" ( Matt. 9: 13 ), would much less refuse to sit down with those present at the marriage. Assuredly they who invited Him had not formed a proper judgment of Him, nor did they invite Him as some great one, but merely as an ordinary acquaintance; and this the Evangelist has hinted at, when he says: "The mother of Jesus was there, and His brethren." Just as they invited her and His brethren, they invited Jesus."*

*For more information on the early Christian Writers, please visit:*

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2401.htm>

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1701.htm>