

# The Gospel of John 2:1-11

## I The Book of John is a book of Signs

- A. The events in this gospel are not simply stories, but events accomplished by the Lord Jesus to establish and illustrate the principle of life. What is the principle of life? The principle of life is to change death into life. In each of the nine cases recorded from chapters three through eleven, the principle is to change death into life. (**John1:11**)
- B. The first mentioning of any matter in the Scriptures sets forth the principle of that matter. Therefore, this first sign sets forth the principle of all the following signs, that is, the changing of death into life. In the Scriptures the tree of life is, figuratively, the source of life, and the tree of knowledge is the source of death, as revealed in **Gen. 2:9, 17**. The meaning of all the cases recorded in this Gospel corresponds with the principle that the tree of life results in life and the tree of knowledge results in death. In this book all the miracles done by the Lord are called signs (**v. 23; 3:2; 4:53; 6:2, 14 26 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30, 31**). They are miracles, but they are used as signs to signify the matter of life

## II The First Sign is Set at a Wedding in Cana on the Third Day

- A. Marriage signifies the continuation of human life, and a wedding (feast) signifies the pleasure and enjoyment of human life. Marriage is very significant and essential to human life, for without it human life is hindered. If you eliminate marriage, you terminate human life.
- B. The wedding which Jesus attended in John 2 was in Cana of Galilee. Cana means land of reeds, and reeds signify weak and fragile people (**Isa.42:3a; Matt.23:20a; 11:7**). Galilee was a place despised by people (**7:52**). As a despised place, Galilee signifies the low and mean condition of the world.
- C. John 2:1 indicates that it was on the third day that the Lord Jesus came to Cana of Galilee. This means that the Lord came in resurrection. When the Lord Jesus came to us, He came in resurrection...In **11:25** the Lord Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life." Notice that here the Lord says, "I am the resurrection;" He does not say, I shall be the resurrection." Even as a Man of Nazareth in the flesh, the Lord could say, I am the resurrection." According to the human concept, He was present merely in incarnation. But from God's point of view in His economy, the Lord came to Cana of Galilee in resurrection. Cana means a land of reeds, and reeds signify weak and fragile people (**Isa 42:3; Matt.12:20; 11:7**). It was in resurrection that the Lord Jesus came to the weak and fragile people in Cana of Galilee—a despised place.

## III Human Enjoyment Runs Out (John 2:3)

- A. The wine, which was the center of the enjoyment of the wedding feast, ran out. Wine, the life juice of the grape, signifies human life. (**Rev.14:19-20**) Hence, the wine's running out symbolizes that human life running out. This signifies that the enjoyment of the human life will be terminated when human life runs out. When the wine runs out, the pleasure of the marriage feast is gone. This signifies not only that the enjoyment of life is over, but that human life is finished. When our wine is about to run out, we know that our marriage feast will soon be over. When the wine has been exhausted, the feast is over, for the feast is dependant upon the wine. All your enjoyment depends upon your life. If your life has been terminated, your enjoyment is brought to an end. Regardless of how good your wife, your husband, your parents, your children, or your job may be, if your life has come to an end, your pleasure is gone. During the course of the wedding feast in Cana, "the wine ran out" (**2:3**). We can testify that in every human "wedding feast" the wine eventually runs out.
- B. At such a time, the Lord comes into our situation. In our marriage feast we have the Lord! We need not be afraid, for He can change water into wine. In our human life the "wine" will always run out...However Christ in resurrection never "runs out". ...In our human life the "wine" will always run out. However, Christ in resurrection never "runs out." ...Only what the Lord Jesus gives never runs out. Nothing in this present life is lasting. Everything is running out. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is eternal, everlasting

## IV The Natural Life & Religious Practices Unable to Reverse the Loss of Enjoyment

- A. Mary, the mother of Jesus, here signifies the natural man, which has nothing to do with life and which must be subdued by the divine life (**vv.3-5**). When the wine was exhausted, the natural man came out and even prayed to the Lord...We are today's Mary, praying as a natural man according to our natural life....The natural man will pray in this way, the Lord will turn to you and say, "What do I have in this that concerns You? You have nothing in this matter which concerns Me." Nearly all of us would act the same way as Mary did
- B. The Lord commanded that six water pots be filled with water. The six water pots signify the created man, for man was created on the sixth day (**Gen.1:27,31**) The pots were used for the Jews' rite of purification with water-this signifies religion's attempt to make people clean by certain dead practices. Water here signifies death, as in **Gen. 1:2, 6; Exo.14:21; Matt. 3:16**. Naturally speaking, we are nothing but "waterpots," vessels to contain something. We, the "waterpots," were located in Cana, the land of reeds, full of weak and fragile people....The Lord told the servants to fill the waterpots with water, and they filled them up to the brim (**2:7**)...The waterpots, that is, mankind created on the sixth day, are filled with the waters of death.

## V Changing Water into Wine Signifying Changing Death into Life

- A. The Lord's miraculously changing water into wine signifies that He changes our death into life. The water signifies death, and the wine signifies life. When the Lord changes our water into wine, that wine will never end. Since we have been regenerated, life with its spiritual enjoyment will last forever.
- B. As the ruler of the feast discovered that the new wine is better than the former wine (**2:9-10**), so we too find that the life we receive through regeneration is much better than our natural life. Our former life, symbolized by the poor wine, was greatly inferior. The Lord did not give us the best first, but the best last. The first life, the human, created one, is an inferior life; the best life is the second life, the divine and everlasting one. This life is the best because it is the life of God Himself in Christ. We have everlasting enjoyment, for Christ has translated us from death into life. He, as our everlasting, eternal life, can maintain our pleasures and enjoyment forever and ever. A new marriage feast began when we were saved, and it will never end. There is always joy within and there is always a marriage feast within because we have the divine wine, which is the divine life—the Lord Himself.
- C. Another word for the changing of water into wine, the changing of death into life, is transformation. Transformation is implied by the word "stone" in 1:42. The transformation in John 1 is equal to the changing of water into wine in John 2. What is the genuine Christian life is? The Christian life is a life of changing water into wine. The Christian life is not a character-changing life or a behavior-improving life. The Christian life is altogether a matter of changing our death into life.