

Miracle At Cana In Galilee

John 2:1-12 - Part 3

Introduction.

1. We have spent two weeks studying the miracle at the wedding feast in Cana in Galilee. (Jn. 2:1-12).
2. As we have seen, this passage teaches many things that are often overlooked by those studying this first recorded miracle of Jesus in John's gospel and the first sign or miracle performed in Cana of Galilee.
 - a. The main point John had in recording this "sign" [miracle] of Jesus along with the 6 other signs recorded in this gospel was to prove Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. (Jn. 20:30, 31).
 - b. We have found there are many other lessons we learn from this first sign Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee.
3. For the next two weeks I would like for us to study a problem this passage presents to some or most who read this passage.
4. John records these words about Jesus making wine at the marriage feast. (Jn. 2:3-10).

John 2:3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

John 2:4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

John 2:5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

John 2:6 Now there were six stone waterpots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.

John 2:7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.

John 2:8 And He said to them, "Draw {some} out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it {to him.}

John 2:9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

John 2:10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when {the people} have drunk freely, {then he serves} the poorer {wine;} {but} you have kept the good wine until now."

5. It is clear from this reading that Jesus made "good wine" (2:10) for the guests at the marriage feast to drink.
 - a. It was superior in taste to the wine that had been earlier served to the wedding guests. (Jn. 2:10).
 - b. "Good" could mean intoxicating wine as some would like to make it, but not necessarily.
 - c. It really means wine that was tasty. (Jn. 2:9).
 - d. Tasty wine does not have to be intoxicating wine or even contain alcohol as this study will illustrate.

Problem

1. Some believe Jesus was endorsing either drinking in moderation or perhaps drinking period by making this wine.
2. Others believe Jesus was promoting drunkenness based on the amount of wine He made from the water jars.

- a. Jesus had made 120 to 180 gallons of wine for an undefined number of guests. (Jn. 2:6).
- b. There is no way of knowing how many guests were present at the wedding feast or for what period of time the wine was intended.
 - 1) Its not affirmed how much of this wine was consumed, but it can be assumed at least some and perhaps all of it was consumed over an undefined number of days.
 - 2) Wedding feasts often lasted 7 days, but we do not know what day of the wedding feast the wine ran out.
3. In order to properly understand this passage a brief study of wine Jesus made at the wedding feast needs to be studied and see if the wine corresponds to our modern wine, beer, whiskey, gin and other alcoholic beverages.
4. Many, even some Christians, use the fact Jesus changed water to wine as a justification for drinking all kinds of alcoholic beverages.
 - a. There are countless kinds of alcoholic beverages.
 - b. Often those who drink these various alcoholic beverages point to the example of Jesus making wine for the wedding guests.

What Wine Was Commonly Consumed?

1. Was it the equivalent of our modern wines and other alcoholic drinks?
2. Many assume the wine consumed at the wedding feast and mentioned in the New Testament is equal to whatever they wish to drink and even to various drugs.
 - a. Wine is equated to all kinds of alcoholic beverages.
 - b. Some seek to equate it with marijuana and other drugs that they find enjoyable and claim these drugs help them in various ways giving them pleasure, relaxation, health, etc.
3. This is an assumption and has no evidence to back it.
 - a. The wines of the 1st century could vary a lot in strength. Some wines could be very strong and some could be very weak.
 - b. Wine could be mere grape juice or be alcoholic in varying degrees.
 - c. **The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary** cites ancient skills for the preservation of grape juice all year long. See page 895 of this dictionary.
 - d. Isaiah speaks of the “wine in the presses” and Joel writes about the presses that overflow with wine. (Isa. 16:10; Joel 2:24).
 - e. This shows wine was not always an intoxicant. Neither were all wines high in alcoholic content.
4. Today the word “wine” denotes an alcoholic beverage that can vary in strength, but many wines are high in alcoholic content and most modern wines contain varying degrees of alcohol.

- a. As already affirmed this was not always the case with the Greek word “oinos” translated “wine.”
- b. It was used by the Greeks to refer to unfermented grape juice and to fermented juice.
- c. One errs when he/she automatically says it always referred to fermented wine.
- d. The Hebrew word for “oinos” [wine] was “yayin” [yaiin].
 - 1) Some Old Testament passages praise the drinking of wine. (Song of Solomon 5:1; Psa. 104:15; Eccles. 9:7).

S o f 5:1 "[BRIDEGROOM] I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers."

Psa. 104:15 And wine which makes man's heart glad, So that he may make his face glisten with oil, And food which sustains man's heart.

Eccles. 9:7 Go then, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works.

- 2) Other Old Testament scriptures strongly warned against its great dangers. (Prov. 20:1; 31:4).

Prov. 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.

Prov. 31:4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Or for rulers to desire strong drink,

- 3) These Old Testament warnings would lead one to conclude the wine praised by the headwaiter at the marriage feast was either tasty grape juice or a weak fermented or alcoholic wine drunk in moderation.

- 4) If this wine was high in alcoholic content, it would have produced drunkenness in any who freely drank of it and drunkenness in all who had a low tolerance for alcohol.

- 5) Some can become intoxicated with smaller amounts of wine.

- 6) **Jesus would never do anything to cause one to stumble and violate His own teaching.**

- 7) He gave this warning that applied to Himself and all others. (Matt. 18:6). See Lk. 17:1.

Matt 18:6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

- 8) Paul gave this warning to Christians. (1 Cor. 10:31-32).

1 Cor 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Cor 10:32 Give no offense [stumbling-block] either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God;

New Testament

1. As already seen, the New Testament also makes some reference to wine drinking.

- a. **In the 1st century wine was not all the same.** It could have no alcohol at all or it could have different amounts of alcohol to make it more potent.

- b. Wine could be used to sanitize water or give it a better taste or both.
- c. A common way to drink wine was a mixture of two or three parts water to one part wine.
- d. It would take much of this drink to intoxicate.
- e. This diluted wine is likely the wine consumed by many, but even too much of this wine could be harmful and dangerous.

2. We learn that John the Baptist being a Nazirite was forbidden to drink wine. (Lk. 1:15).

Luke 1:15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

- This great man was forbidden to drink wine of any kind.
 - “Liquor” in this translation from the NASB comes from the Greek “sikera” [**sik** er ah] means “strong drink” or “intoxicating beverage.”
 - “Strong drink” seems to denote drink that was even much stronger than the common wines.
 - This great man was “filled with the Holy Spirit” and was not to drink “wine or liquor” at all!
3. Wine in the New Testament is not condemned per se nor commended, but there are cautions against drinking much of it.
 4. There is only one time it was recommended and even then in small amounts that will later be studied.
 5. We have seen advocates of moderate drinking and advocates of non-moderate drinking often use the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee as justification for drinking or drinking in moderation.
 6. Some have even argued it is ok to occasionally get drunk and contends one who occasionally gets drunk is not a drunkard. **This is, however, like arguing one who occasionally steals is not a thief or one who occasionally murders is not a murderer.**
 7. Some Christians argue for moderate drinking of all kinds of alcoholic beverages and contend this is acceptable.
 - a. They argue for **responsible drinking** and usually define whatever they are doing is responsible.
 - b. They seldom agree among themselves exactly what is responsible.
 - c. Those who make millions from the sale of alcohol also shout “Drink Responsibly.”
 - 1) They often make this statement, but are unable to define what this really means.
 - 2) They never reveal the data about the millions who once they begin to drink are not able to control their drinking and harm themselves and others.
 - 3) They never want to be blamed for the destroyed lives and countless deaths of those who drink in varying degrees their addictive beverages.
 - d. They fail to mention the countless accidents and deaths cause by alcohol and the countless health issues and other gross things caused by the consumption of alcohol.

- e. These tragic consequences are the rule and not the exception.
- f. It would be impossible to list all the lives harmed or destroyed by alcohol.

Was Jesus A Drinker Of Wine?

1. Jesus was falsely accused of being “a drunkard.” (Lk. 7:33,34).

Lk. 7:33 "For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!'
Lk. 7:34 "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

- a. It is clear this accusation of Jesus being “a drunkard” was false, but it would seem that He did drink wine in moderation.
- b. Jesus did not deny the charges made against Him, but neither did He indicate that all were true.
- c. He is called “a gluttonous man” because He did not fast twice a week like His Pharisee accusers.
- d. His fasting appears to be limited to His 40 day fast in the wilderness just before He began His public ministry. (Matt. 4:1-2).
- e. Jesus taught others how to fast (Matt. 6:16-18), but He taught it was not proper for Him or His apostles to fast. (Matt. 6:16-18; 9:14-15).

Matt 6:16 "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites {do,} for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Matt 6:17 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face

Matt 6:18 so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you.

Matt 9:14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

Matt 9:15 And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

- f. The question is “Was the wine He drank fermented or unfermented?”
 - 1) Grape juice was sometimes called wine and wine diluted with water could be called wine.
 - 2) Stronger wine with more or much alcohol could also be called wine.
 - 3) If this wine at the feast was fermented, what was the strength of the wine?
 - 4) This needs to be examined in view of all the New Testament reveals on this subject.
 - 5) There is not enough evidence in the gospels to draw a definite conclusion in regard to the wine Jesus made, but we can be confident Jesus was very careful in regard to the example He set for others.
 - 6) This study will show it was very unlikely it contained much, if any, alcohol.

g. Jesus certainly was not a drunkard as His enemies falsely charged.

h. Jesus was without sin. (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as {we are, yet} without sin.

1 Pet 2:22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;

1 John 3:5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

i. Jesus' apostles were accused of being drunk." (Acts 2:13).

1) On the day of Pentecost the apostles "were filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4) and spoke in "tongues" [language] they had not studied. They were assumed to be drunk by those who did not understand most of the languages. It sounded like drunken gibberish to those who did not understand most of the various languages the apostles spoke that day.

2) Peter denied they were drunk and proceeded to preach in the Aramaic language to the Jews who had gathered to hear the apostles who had amazed them by speaking their languages.

Acts 2:14 But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.

Acts 2:15 "For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is {only} the third hour of the day;

3) Peter was not saying they might be drunk at a later time in the day, but he was affirming it was not the habit or custom of men to be drunk early in the morning. See 1 Thess. 5:7.

1 Thess 5:7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.

j. There is zero evidence for this false charge that the apostles were drunk or had consumed any wine.

k. The charge was made because the 12 apostles were speaking in languages most of which the multitude would not understand.

1) Being "filled with the Holy Spirit" was the reason the apostles were able to speak in languages they had not studied. (Acts 2:4).

2) Those who heard these various languages were amazed one or more of the apostles could speak their language being Galileans unfamiliar with their languages. (Acts 2:7).

3) Galileans would not normally know these languages nor for their educational level

Conclusion.

1. Next week we will study some additional Scriptures on the subject of drinking.

2. It is important that we examine the other Scriptures that addresss the subject of drinking.

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