

John 2: 1-25

What do the accounts of the miracle at Cana and the cleansing of the Temple have to do with each other?

- **John's treatment of miracles as signs.** Their purpose is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah
- Today we note the Temple cleansing in this context. We'll consider it **more in depth next time.**

John's topical arrangement of material

- The action centers around **5 visits to Jerusalem** for a Jewish feast
 - Ch 2: Passover
 - Ch 5: Unnamed feast
 - Ch 7: Tabernacles
 - Ch 10: Hanukkah (Dedication)
 - Ch 12: Passover (Jesus's final visit to Jerusalem)
- The main section (ch 2-12) consists of **seven signs**, with a **discourse before or after each** sign expounding on its spiritual meaning, interspersed with *seven resounding "I am" statements*.
- We should consider this concerning the apparent **discrepancy vis a vis the Synoptics** on the timing of the cleansing of the Temple.
 - Opt 1: One cleansing (most likely at the end of his ministry)
 - Opt 2: Two cleansings, the first when he was largely unknown. After the second one, they killed him.

The wedding feast miracle (the seventh day)

- Details of the account
 - Mary gets Jesus involved. What was she expecting him to do?
 - Six empty stone jars holding 20-30 gallons each, used for the Jewish purification rite.
 - The master of the feast notes that the wine is of exceptional quality
- Verse 11 is the punch line, the explanation. See 20:30, the purpose of the signs. This first miracle had its intended effect.
- The miracle is a sign not just that Jesus has divine power, but that he is the Messiah.
 - **A Wedding**

- ◆ Is 62: 4-5. The Lord will marry his people.
- ◆ Mt 22: 1-14. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a wedding feast
- ◆ Rev 19: 6-9. The marriage supper of the lamb
- ➔ **Abundant Wine:** Representing abundance, a fitting Messianic symbol
 - ◆ Is 25:6-8. A feast with well-aged wine
 - ◆ Amos 9:13-14, Jeremiah 31:12, for example
 - ◆ Mk 2:22. New wine in new wineskins
 - ◆ Choice wine a symbol of Messianic abundance. In contrast with the emptiness of Jewish legalism, we have 120 gallons of messianic wine.
- The main theme is **Christological**, the glory of Christ.
- John is beginning to develop **replacement themes**.

Excursus on believing in John

- A **long-running theme** in John
- **Frequency of use:** John: 98, Mt: 11, Mk: 10 (+4), Lk: 9
- John never uses *faith (noun)* but always *believe (verb)*.
- **Believe into** distinctive for John. **39** times vs **8** for NT and **never** in other Greek literature, including LXX.
- **Don't press it too far**, but it seems to communicate an element of personal trust or reliance instead of simple credence or intellectual judgment.
- **An active placement of oneself** into another. Similar to the Pauline idea of being incorporated into Christ.
- **Corroborated by some of John's parallel expressions:**
 - "I am the bread of life. The one who comes to me will never hunger. The one who believes in me will never thirst." (6:35)
 - "On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (7:37-38)
- This is a strong tendency in John, **not perfectly consistent usage**.

vv 12: **An interlude.** Jesus and his disciples go to Capernaum.

Vv 13-22: The **Cleansing of the Temple**

- The request for a sign
- He veils the announcement.
- Next week, we'll look more deeply into the Temple replacement theme.

vv 23-25: **The questionable faith of the crowd** (i.e. not the authorities, not the disciples)

- A median response
- A play on words

Takeaways

- The deep structure and organization in John reveals the utter bankruptcy of liberal efforts to strip away large portions of the New Testament.
- Through the Holy Spirit, let John's witness about Jesus do its work in you.