

CHAPTER 2 & 3

**BRAZEN
LAYER**

CLEANSING the Key Theme

BRAZEN
LAVER

In John chap. 2 & 3 the Lord is seen as cleansing 3 things:

- 1) Marriage - Wedding at Cana.
- 2) Merchants & Money-changers - Cleansing the Temple.
- 3) Man - Nicodemus (who should have known better).

7 Key SIGNS in JOHN

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[Knew the thoughts of Nathanael 1:43-50]

- 1) Water to wine 2:1-11
- 2) Healing of official's son 4:43-54
- 3) Healing at pool of Bethesda 5:1-5
- 4) Feeding of 5000 6:1-14
- 5) Walking on water 6:16-21
- 6) Man born blind 9:1-12
- 7) Resurrection of Lazarus 11:1-44

[Miraculous catch of fish 21:1-13]

PATTERN of the Signs

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The purpose of John's gospel is to produce faith - (Jn 20:30-31).

To that end he uses a **PATTERN** in his writings:

- 1) The Miracle/Sign.
- 2) Reaction of the people (positive or negative).
- 3) Follow-up teaching.
- 4) Response (some have faith and some reject).

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- They ran out of wine.
- This was a major social mistake and could shame the couple for a long time.
- For a host to fail in providing adequate hospitality (particularly food and drink) was a great dishonor.
- The problem is brought to our Lord, evidence that He had the power to resolve the matter.

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- It's a picture of Christ removing shame and disgrace from one who had erred - **CLEANSING** of sin.
- The Lord's response, at first, seems odd, "My hour has not yet come." Jn. 2:4
- Mary's request, perhaps, was for more than just wine.
- She may have wanted a manifestation of Him as the Messiah?

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- That sign would come later, with His death and resurrection.
- Here He performs the miracle for His disciples to believe.
- “The triumph at Pentecost was not to be achieved at Cana.” J.W. McGarvey
- Suffering must come before Glory; the Cross before the Crown.

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- This is the lesson taught by the Lord to the disciples on the road to Emmaus.
- “Was it not necessary for the Christ to **suffer** these things and then to enter His **glory**?” Lk. 24:26

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- The Lord uses 6 waterpots (number of man) used in “the Jewish rites of **purification**.” Jn. 2:6
- But these rites were of no use to stem the flood of shame that would befall this couples’ future.
- Only Christ could!

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- Why does John stop to tell us that the pots were “filled to the brim”? Jn. 2:7
- The Lord wasn't going to add something to the water; He was going to **transform** it.
- This is a pattern for our faith.
- Salvation does not add to what we are, it changes what we are.

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- The Lord insisted that the miracle be put to the test!
- He didn't command that the water, that was made wine, first be served to the guests...
- They may have already been inebriated.
- He sent the cup to the master of the feast.
- This miracle, and the ones to follow, are proof that the Lord is who He is! Thus they were tested.

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- “When Moses sweetened the bitter water, it was by a tree which the Lord showed to him. When Elisha purged the springs, he threw salt into the water. We have no instrumentality here.” (Spurgeon)
 - These men called on God, and He provided a symbol of His power in the miracle they performed.
- But Christ had the power and authority **in Himself**.
- His miracles were the very Hand of God!

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

1) The Miracle/Sign:

- If the invitation to the wedding to dine is analogous to the invitation of God to dine with Him...
- Then we learn something of the water turned into wine.
 - 1) Wine was **after** water, as the New Covenant is after the Old.
 - 2) Wine was **from** water, as the New Covenant is from the Old.
 - 3) Wine was **better** than water as the New Covenant is better than the Old.

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

2) Reaction of the people:

- The master of the feast paid the bridegroom a great compliment, “you have kept the best wine for last” 2:10
- Running out of wine would have meant social disgrace, but the transformed wine, transformed the wedding into more than anyone could have hoped for!
- We have more (Joy/wine) in Christ than Adam could have ever hoped for in the garden!

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

3) Follow-up teaching:

- “This, the beginning of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee and manifested His glory.” Jn. 2:11
- The miracle happened “On the third day there was a wedding”. Jn.2:1
- A 2nd reference to this time period occurs later in the chapter when the Lord says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Jn 2:19, referring to His resurrection.

1) **Water to Wine** at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

3) Follow-up teaching:

- Further, if we count back, this miracle took place 7 days after John meet the Lord (New Beginning).
- 3 Days brings to mind the **Resurrection**.
- 7 Days brings to mind the **Creation**.
- Chapter 1 is about **The Beginning**.
- Chapter 2 is about **New Beginnings!**

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

3) Follow-up teaching:

- One may ask why John used this as the 1st sign?
- To “manifest His glory”:
- Isaiah tells us why - “...the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine.” Isa. 25:6
- This miracle shows that the Lord and the promise of His Kingdom of Joy and Plenty had come!

1) Water to Wine at a Wedding

John 2:1-12

4) Response:

- “His disciples believed in Him.” Jn 2:12
- Better translated believed **INTO** Him.
- They SO believed that they **submerge** themselves in Him.
- This changed their lives - not just for time but for eternity.
- Such is real faith.

2) Cleansing the Temple

John 2:13-22

- The Temple was a venerated place for the faithful Jew.
- It was literally where Heaven and Earth met together.
- God dwelt with His people there in the Holiest of all.
- Yet men had made it a marketplace where men would meet men to trade cattle and beasts.
- In the Court of the Gentiles, a terrible witness of trade over trust in God was displayed
- So, the Lord, in righteous indignation, drove them out.

2) Cleansing the Temple

John 2:13-22

- The timing of this event is very interesting.
- “The Passover of the Jews was at hand” Jn. 2:13
- Cleansing was part of the Passover celebration.
- Removing every speck of anything leavened from the house was a symbol of cleansing from sin.
- And Christ was doing just that! Preparing for the Passover.

2) Cleansing the Temple

John 2:13-22

- When asked on what authority (what sign) the Lord did this cleansing, He responds with:
- “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Jn. 2:19
- Why?
- Why does He speak of the destruction of the Temple as His authority to cleanse it?

2) Cleansing the Temple

What Christ was saying was that His sacrifice on the cross is truly where Heaven and Earth would meet!

And that the Temple (as grand as it was) was only a picture of that meeting!

2) Cleansing the Temple

John 2:13-22

- Christ's body is the **REALITY** to which the temple building points.
- This is what the writer to the Hebrews references:
- “Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by **the new and living way** that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through **His flesh**, and since we have a Great High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Heb. 10:19-22

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- After the Authority of Christ is shown, the chapter ends with His Wisdom ...
- He “needed no one to bear witness about man, for He Himself knew what was in man.” Jn. 2:25
- The very next verse says:
- “Now there was a man” Jn. 3:1
- Long before Nicodemus came, the Lord knew what he would ask, and what he needed as an answer.

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- Nicodemus addresses the Lord Jesus as Rabbi (Teacher).
- He places the Lord on his level.
- This shows us his mental state...
- Nicodemus was looking for a teaching moment not a transforming moment!
- Our Lord's reply (in essence) is...
- It's NOT Rabbinical learning that you need, but new-life for the Messianic Kingdom.

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jn. 3:3
- The word rendered ‘**again**’ in the Greek ‘anóthen’, Strong’s 509, might equally be translated ‘**from above**’.
- Moral or religious reform isn’t enough. One must be born again from above.
- Since life must begin by birth; he needed to be born again!

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- Nicodemus was truly baffled!
- But since his question was sincere - our Lord explains.
- Whenever there is a **Seeking Sinner** there is a **Searching Savior**.

3) **A Man** - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

What if a nation passed
a law that only persons
born in a nation could
live in that nation?

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- It wouldn't matter if that person:
 - Practiced the religious traditions of that nation.
 - Observed all the social customs.
 - Spoke the language.
 - Dressed like those in that nation.
 - Took a name that was common in that nation.
 - Had parents or children were born in that nation.
 - Had friends in that nation.
- All that would matter was if they were born there!

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- And yet so many seek to enter God's Glory without being born from above! They:
 - Practice the religious traditions of Christianity.
 - Observe all the social customs of Christianity.
 - Speak the "language" of Christianity.
 - Dress like Christians.
 - Take Christian names.
 - Have parents and/or children who are Christians.
 - Have friends who are Christians.

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- No tangential association with Christianity will save!
- “You must be **born again!**” Jn. 3:7
- When the Hebrews left Egypt there were many among them that were not of them.
- They are referred to as “a mixed multitude also (that) went up with them...” Ex. 12:38
- I trust there are none here who may look, act and talk like Christians, but have never been **Born From Above**.

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- On its face, it might seem fascinating that the Lord would speak to a Rabbinical Teacher, a Pharisee, about being **born again**...
- And then, immediately in the next chapter, choose the topic of **worship** to discuss with the woman at the well (who had several men).
- “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the LORD.” Isa. 55:8

3) A Man - Nicodemus

John 3:1-21

- But by the Lord's wise conversation, both made professions of faith, by their words and their actions.
 - Nicodemus defended the Lord before the Sanhedrin, indicating a change in his beliefs (John 7:50-51).
 - Later he participated, with Joseph of Arimathea, in the Lord's burial, demonstrating his commitment and belief (John 19:39-40).
- Hence, we see how Nicodemus was cleansed by the Lord!
- The woman, we will see that in the next chapter...

The 'MUSTS' of Chap. 3

John 3

- Certain things that **MUST** happen for **Salvation**:
 - 1) “**Must** be born again” (3:7).
 - Acknowledge **Sinful State**.
 - Need of spiritual rebirth to enter the Kingdom of God
 - 2) “**Must** be lifted-up” (3:14).
 - Acknowledge the **Cross Work of Christ**.
 - Christ must be exalted for salvation at the cross.
 - 3) “He **Must** increase, I (must) decrease” (3:30).
 - Acknowledge the **Lordship of Christ**.
 - Jesus Christ must become more prominent and we less so.