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Messianic Sign in Wedding at Cana: Revealed God's Glory and Leads Jesus' Disciples to Faith Narrative Reading of John 2,1-12

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Abstract

The story of the miracle of the wine in wedding at Cana is one of the most significant narrative text in the New Testament. Jesus did his first sign at the beginning of his public ministry. This study of the account of the wedding at Cana in Jn 2,1-12 is influenced by two statements "he revealed his glory and his disciple believed in him (v.11). I will approach the text by analyzing the characterization of every character in the narrative: how the character works to contribute to the theological perspective of the Gospel? The literary structure of the periscope is analyzed, and the meaning of the sign is understood as a Messianic miracle that leads the disciples to a firm belief in Jesus as the Messiah. It is argued that the revelation of glory does not create faith directly but it is link with the faith that the secret is only reveled to those who believe. The miracle of the wine is then able to reveal a profound secret concerning the person of Jesus, his union with the Father. The faith of the disciple in this text is not only an initial faith but a total faith in Jesus.

Keywords

Literary structure, wine, glory, sign, faith, mother of Jesus, Jesus, Disciple, servant

INTRODUCTION

Each gospel contains sayings and stories that leave a deep imprint on the reader. Passages, for the most part, in which everything is lucid and understandable for the common reader, full of comfort and strength. The fourth Evangelist shaped the text according to his particular criteria. It is the product of a world that is behind the text. The text can be approached as a portrait, presenting its own world. The identification of narrative units and understanding of their relationship to one another in the Gospel as a whole must also be determined by devoting attention to the rhetoric used by the narrator: relationships between incidents, inclusions, the use of key word, direct and indirect speech, foreshadowing and retrospection, double-

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meaning words, the deliberate use of misunderstanding and irony.[1] In this exegetical study, I use the character study to approach the text as one-unit narrative and find out how a narrator uses setting, rhetoric, character, and plot to persuade the reader to adopt his evaluative point of view.

METHOD

This paper employs the method of literature review (Library Research). Library research is a research activity conducted by collecting information and data using various source materials available in libraries or through the Internet. The steps taken by the author involve gathering various recent journal articles (within the last ten years) on the phenomenon of inequality in Batak Toba culture and the feminist theological thoughts of Ivone Gebara. From these references, the author reads, comprehends, and takes notes on findings that support the focus of this study.

Text and Translation

[1]Καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ γάμος ἐγένετο ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ ἦν ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκεῖ· [2]ἐκλήθη δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν γάμον.	[1]On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.
[3]καὶ ὑστερήσαντος οἴνου λέγει ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πρὸς αὐτόν· οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσιν. [4]καὶ λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; οὔπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου. [5]λέγει ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ τοῖς διακόνοις· ὅ τι ἂν λέγῃ ὑμῖν ποιήσατε.	[3] When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." [5] His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."
[6]ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ λίθιναι ὑδρίαι ἓξ κατὰ τὸν καθαρισμὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων κείμεναι, χωροῦσαι ἀνὰ μετρητὰς δύο ἢ τρεῖς. [7]λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· γεμίσατε τὰς ὑδρίας ὕδατος. καὶ	[6] Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. [7] Jesus said to them, "Fill

[1] Moloney, Francis J., *Belief in the Word*. Reading the fourth Gospel, John 1-4 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 6.

ἐγέμισαν αὐτὰς ἕως ἄνω. [8]καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἀντλήσατε νῦν καὶ φέρετε τῷ ἀρχιτρικλίνῳ· οἱ δὲ ἤνεγκαν.

the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. [8] He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it.

[9]ὡς δὲ ἐγεύσατο ὁ ἀρχιτρίκλινος τὸ ὕδωρ οἶνον γεγενημένον καὶ οὐκ ἤδει πόθεν ἐστίν, οἱ δὲ διάκονοι ἤδεισαν οἱ ἠντληκότες τὸ ὕδωρ, φωνεῖ τὸν νυμφίον ὁ ἀρχιτρίκλινος [10]καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· πᾶς ἄνθρωπος πρῶτον τὸν καλὸν οἶνον τίθησιν καὶ ὅταν μεθυσθῶσιν τὸν ἐλάσσω· σὺ τετήρηκας τὸν καλὸν οἶνον ἕως ἄρτι.

[9] When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom [10] and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now."

[11]Ταύτην ἐποίησεν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐφανέρωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. [12]Μετὰ τοῦτο κατέβη εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκεῖ ἔμειναν οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας.

[11] Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.[12] After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

Definition and Context

Narrative text is placed right after the call of Philip and the encounter between Jesus and Nathanael (Jn 1,43-51). Philip "finds" Nathanael (1:45) as Jesus had "found" him (1:43). Nathanael's confession offers another lesson for the Johannine community. Nathanael recognizes Jesus' identity as Messiah with proof only of Jesus' prophethood because if he is a true prophet he cannot be a false messiah. Philip had already told Nathanael about Jesus' identity from Scripture (1:45), so it was a witness as well as a sign that enabled Nathanael to correctly interpret Jesus' identity.[2] And after that, it followed by the Jesus cleans the temple in Jerusalem (Jn 2,13-22). Jesus'

[2] Craig S. Keener, The Gospel of John. A Commentary Volume I (Grand Rapids, MI 2012) 488.

action in cleansing the temple precincts seems to mean roughly the same thing to the Synoptic and to John, namely, a protest like that of the prophets of old against the profanation of God's house and a sign that the messianic purification of the Temple was at hand. In John this fits in with motifs already seen at Cana: replacement of Jewish institutions, and an abundance of wine heralding the messianic times.[3]

The events in Jn 2,1-12 take place at a wedding in the Galilean village of Cana (ν 1). The steward's compliments in vv. 9-10 indicate that the festivities are being hosted by the bridegroom in his home. The disciples who have already begun to believe in Jesus (1, 35–51) come to a new level of faith through Jesus' first sign.[4] This mention of the *first* of the signs done in Cana calls to mind the statement in 4:54, that the healing of the royal official's son was the *second* sign performed by Jesus on coming from Judea into Galilee[5]. The action of the narrative is framed by passages that focus attention on the movement of the characters in the story: Jesus, his mother, and the disciples (vv.1-2 and v.12). The brothers of Jesus are introduced in v.12, a first mention of the characters who will return later in the narrative (7,1-10). When they return, the reader will recall that they were present at the first miracle in Cana. Between that frame, there are two verbal exchanges: the mother of Jesus leads the way (vv.3-5) and the attendant respond silently to the word of Jesus. The encounter between mother of Jesus and her son leads to the production of the wine and the reaction of the steward (vv. 6-10). Finally, the narrator comments on the significance of the event (v.11).[6]

Structure and Dynamics

The structure of the narrative is clear. The situation is described in vv. 1–3a; the need for an intervention is made known in 3b–5, entailing a dialogue between the mother of Jesus and Jesus himself: in 6–8 a miracle occurs, as servants obediently carry out the commands of Jesus; in vv. 9-10 the miracle is attested through the master of the feast, as he compliments the bridegroom on the excellence of the wine. A comment is added in v 11, emphasizing that it was the first of the signs of Jesus, and

[3] Brown, R. E., The Gospel according to John (I-XIII). Introduction, translation, and notes, (Vol. 29, Yale University Press 2008) 121.

[4] Craig S. Keener, The Gospel of John. A Commentary Volume I, 492.

[5] Beasley-Murray, G. R., John, (Vol. 36, Word, Incorporated 1999) 33.

[6] Moloney, Francis J., Belief in the Word. Reading the fourth Gospel, John 1-4, 78.

clarifying its function as a revelation of the glory of Jesus and a strengthening of the faith of his disciples.[7]

John 2,1-12 can be subdivided into five small scenes: 1) vv. 1-2; 2) vv. 3-5; 3) vv. 6-8; 4) vv. 9-10; and 5) vv. 11-12. Applying the criterion of active characters, these small units can be given the following titles: 1) vv. 1-2: Jesus and his family in wedding at Cana; 2) vv. 3-5: Dialogue about no wine; 3) vv. 6-8: Action of Jesus; 4) vv. 9-10: Dialogue about good wine, and 5) vv. 11-12: Jesus and his family from Cana to Capernaum. These small units can be displayed in the formal structure ABCB'A' with the action of Jesus as the central point of chiasm form.

A: vv. 1-2: Jesus and his family: in wedding at Cana

B: vv. 3-5: Dialogue: about no wine

C: vv. 6-8: Action of Jesus

B': vv. 9-10: Dialogue: about good wine

A': vv. 11 -12: Jesus and his family: from Cana to Capernaum

The narrative opens with an accumulation of important data for the implied reader (vv.1-2). The characters are presented: the mother of Jesus, Jesus and his disciples. Then, the narrator reports the dialogue about lack of wine between the mother and Jesus; and mother and servants (vv.3-5). The mother is disappearing from the episode and Jesus becomes the main actor who tells the servant to act (vv.6-8). Good wine becomes the topic of dialogue between steward and bridegroom (vv.9-10). It becomes the first sign of Jesus to reveals his glory and leads disciple to believe in him. From that moment, they decided to go and remain with Jesus, the mother of Jesus and his brothers (vv.11-12).

A- A' : The movement of Jesus' family

A and A' are respectively the opening and the closing units of the story. A provides the information about setting of place and time of Jesus and his family and how they were presented in wedding at Cana. The most important characters are mother of Jesus, Jesus himself and his disciples. Mother of Jesus was there before but Jesus and his disciples were invited. A' explain about the purpose of the narrative and its result. Wedding at Cana has new purpose as the moment of revealing God's glory and leads disciples to believe in Jesus.

[7] Beasley-Murray, G. R., John, 33.

In A, Jesus comes into Cana and in A' he goes out from Cana to Capernaum. From Cana, they start their journey together to begin Jesus public ministry. Here, the brothers of Jesus were added as the new character and they move from Cana to Capernaum. The expressions third day (v.1) and after this (v.12) are indications of time respectively in A and A'. The expression third day raises problems of interpretations. On the third day of his stay in Galilea, there was a wedding in Cana, to which Jesus and his disciples were invited. Chronically, this is a reasonable way of counting the days. But we know that a narrative plotline is not built according to the chronologically of events.[8]

B- B' : The need of wine

In B and B', wine becomes the main topic of dialog between the characters. It indicates by five times the occurrence of the word wine in this periscope. The narrator introduces his account of the lack (B) and gift (B') of wine. B is the dialog between Mother of Jesus and Jesus about the problematic situation lack of wine. Mother of Jesus report to her Son about the real situation that is going on during the feast. It is just the normal reaction of a mother to her adult son wishing that he could do some action to solve the problem. For Jesus, it is not his concern and his hour had not yet come. But Mother of Jesus reminds the servant, as new characters to do whatever Jesus told them. Servants are the characters from B who are still present in B'. They are the only one who knows from where the good wine came from. Two new characters, steward and bridegroom were introduced. Steward tasted the water that had become wine which has brought by the servants to him. He did not know from where it was. He praised the bridegroom who had a new way to serve wine and kept the good wine until the end.

In B, Mother of Jesus is the one who leads the dialogue. Dialogue of mother of Jesus with Jesus (vv.3-4) and mother of Jesus with the servants (v.5). But these two main character, Mother of Jesus and Jesus seem to be lost in B'. The dialog in B' leads by steward. The servants bring the water that had become wine to be tasted by the steward (v.9). It leads the steward to make the intensive dialog with the bridegroom (vv.9-10). The servants are present in B and B' and give the connection between these two episodes. The mother of Jesus and the steward are both in close dialogue with the servants. The mother of Jesus seems to have authority over latter. She commands

[8] Jean-Bosco Matand Bulembat, Head-Waiter and Bridegroom of the Wedding at Cana. Structure and Meaning of John 2.1-12 (JSNT 30.1, 2007) 58-59.

them without any hesitation. The steward on the contrary is simply juxtaposed to them. he only receives the wine they had brought him and tasted it. The servants are inactive: they neither speak no act. They are just commanded by mother of Jesus to do everything Jesus might ask them to do (v.5). They have knowledge of the giver of the water which has become wine, but they do not tell the steward.[9]

C : Jesus, the giver of wine

In unit C, Jesus and servants are presented as the main characters. It is the central point of the chiasm pattern of narrative. It provides some main information: a short explanation about the jars; Jesus who plays a more prominent role in the feast; and servants are more active. Jesus effectively takes charge of the feast, by giving decisive commands to the servants: to fill the jars with water, and draw some out and take it to the chief steward. As it is reported in C, it seems as if even the servants themselves do not know that the water they are bringing has become wine. It is the steward who after having tasted it, will reveal what has happened while he is speaking to the bridegroom. There is really not so much to say about the bridegroom. He is the only one who is completely silent and inactive: no speech and no action.[10]

The narrative is rich in Johannine symbolism and points out many of the themes that will develop throughout the Gospel. The encounter between Jesus, the woman and the mother and the first appearance of the term "hour" (vv.3-5) are intimately linked with the scene at the cross (19,25-27). The super abundance of water changed into the best of wines begins a series of "sign" which will mark the first half of the Gospel (2,23; 3,2; 6,2,14,26,30; 7,31;9,16; 10,41; 11,47; 12,18,37; and 20,30-31). The theme of water will return in chaps.3, 4, 5, 7, and 9. The revelation of the *doxa* is also an important theme throughout the Gospel.[11] The narrative depends on a series of encounters where there are never more than two active characters on stage at the same time. The action unfolds as the result of "words", that is, direct speech.[12]

- The mother *speaks* to Jesus (v.3)
- Jesus *responds* to his mother (v.4)

[9] Jean-Bosco Matand Bulembat, Head-Waiter and Bridegroom of the Wedding at Cana. Structure and Meaning of John 2.1-12, 61-62.

[10] Jean-Bosco Matand Bulembat, Head-Waiter and Bridegroom of the Wedding at Cana. Structure and Meaning of John 2.1-12, 62-64.

[11] Moloney, Francis J., Belief in the Word. Reading the fourth Gospel, John 1-4, 79.

[12] Moloney, Francis J., Belief in the Word. Reading the fourth Gospel, John 1-4, 86.

- The mother *speaks* to the attendants (v.5). This is a crucial turning point in the narrative, as she points toward her son and instructs them to act according to his word. She disappeared from the action, and Jesus becomes the leading character.
- Jesus *speaks twice* to the attendants (vv.7-8).
- Jesus *apparently* disappears from the action, as the steward *speaks* to the bridegroom (v.10)

Every narrative has a setting, a verbal exchange, the main action, the narrator's comment, and the final scene which moves the main characters toward. In John 1,1-12, the reader encounters a miracle story that is quite untypical.[13]

1	Problem	"The wine failed" (v.3a)
2	Request	"The mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine" (v.3b)
3	Rebuke	"O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come" (v.4)
4	Reaction	"His mother said to the servants, do whatever he tells you" (v.5)
5	Consequence	A miracle that leads to the faith of others (the disciples) (vv.6-11)

There are several elements within the structure that make it non-typical of miracles story: Jesus rebuke his Mother who raised the problem to him, without being instructed in any way by Jesus; his mother is the one who turns and tells the attendants what to do; and nothing is said of the effect of miracle upon the guest, who are mentioned.

Study of Characters

Characters are the dramatis personae, the persons in the story. Characters reveal themselves in their speech (what they say and how they say it), in their actions (what they do), by their clothing (what they wear), in their gestures and posture (how they present themselves).[14] Characters are either dynamic (developing) or static. A dynamic character undergoes a radical change throughout the course of a narrative,

[13] Moloney, Francis J., Belief in the Word. Reading the fourth Gospel, John 1-4, 90.

[14] James L. Resseguie, Narrative Criticism of the New Testament. An Introduction (Grand Rapids, Michigan 2005) 121.

displaying new behaviors and changed outlooks. The change can be for better or for worse, and may be large or small. But the change is not minor or insignificant: it is a basic and important change in the character. Changes in characters elaborate and develop a narrative's meaning. Since character and plot are intricately bound, a change or development in a character often provides a clue to the direction and meaning of the plot and theme.[15]

Mother of Jesus

Mother of Jesus plays a special role in the Gospel of John. She appears only twice in the fourth Gospel: at wedding at Cana (2,1-12), and at the foot of the cross (19,25-27). Her presence frames the public ministry of her son.[16] The narrator did not give her a personal name. She is just addressed as "mother and woman". Her initial words "they have no wine" (v.3), and Jesus' first response, "what is this to me and you, Woman" appear to be simply a statement of fact. The mother's apparently neutral comment, "they have no wine", can be understood as a linguistic strategy of indirectness where without making an explicit request, she presumes, because of her relationship with her son, that he will hear the implied request. Jesus' response indicates that her presumption is correct. He hears the implicit request.[17]

Jesus mother asks for a favor not for herself but for the bridegroom's family, which is on the verge of social humiliation. They, who have no wine, are the one who are in need of patronage, of a share in someone else's honor. Mother of Jesus puts herself in a tenuous position. On the one hand, she already participates in Jesus' social status and prestige by virtue of her relation to him. On the other hand, she had made someone else's problem her own. If her son refuses to help the groom's family, he also rejects her attempt to function as a broker on his behalf.[18]

The narrative concludes with Jesus' traveling to Capernaum and staying there with his mother, brothers, and disciples (2:12). In spite of the tension which underlies Jesus' remarks to his mother, he does not dissociate himself from her or from his brothers at this time. They are with the disciples at the beginning of his Galilean

[15] James L. Resseguie, Narrative Criticism of the New Testament. An Introduction, 125-126.

[16] Ritva H. Williams, The Mother of Jesus at Cana. A Social-Science Interpretation of John 2:1-12 (THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY I 59, 1997) 679.

[17] Mary L. Coloe, The Mother of Jesus. A Woman Possessed. Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figuers in John (Ed. Steven A. Hunt) (Tűbingen,2013) 204-205.

[18] Ritva H. Williams, The Mother of Jesus at Cana. A Social-Science Interpretation of John 2:1-12, 688.

ministry. Jesus' mother turns up once again in the company of Jesus' followers at the foot of the cross. There Jesus' last act is one of filial piety ensuring that she will be cared for when he is gone (19:26- 27). In spite of the tension over patronage and brokerage evident in the scene at Cana, Jesus does not reject his mother in John's Gospel as he does in the Synoptic (Matt 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21).[19] At the end of his life, he makes his mother's welfare the responsibility not of his brothers but of the Beloved Disciple, thus dissociating her from them as well.

Disciples

In the words of R. Alan Culpepper, the disciples are marked especially by their recognition of Jesus and belief in his claims. They were invited together with Jesus to participate in wedding at Cana. There are two verbs that characterized them as the disciple of Jesus: belief in Jesus (2,11) and remain with Jesus (2,12). Many of the disciples' action simply show their presence with and response to Jesus (3,22; 4,2, 8, 31; 6,12; 18,1; 20,20). Thus actions of the disciples characterize them as understanding something significant about Jesus, something that contribute to the reader's developing understanding of who Jesus is.[20]

In contrast to their actions, the disciples' speech almost uniformly characterizes them as misunderstanding Jesus. As a group, the disciples speak relatively infrequently, but they do show blatant incomprehension. Twice the disciples do not understand Jesus' metaphorical speech (4,33; 11,12-13). They response to Jesus' teaching with confusion. John constructs a narrator who gives frequent insight into the disciples' inner life. On the negative side, the narrator underscores the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus and their reluctance to ask the question. Yet the narrator also points forward to a later time when the disciples' remembrance of Jesus and his words provide important insights. The verb tenses of Jesus' words create an impression that the disciples' faith is accomplished fact. The use of the aorist when the disciples' belief is introduced in 2,11 suggest that the narrator views their belief as a complete event. In these case, Jesus' words suggest the disciples' firm belief.[21]

[19] Ritva H. Williams, The Mother of Jesus at Cana. A Social-Science Interpretation of John 2:1-12,690.

[20] Susan E. Hylen, The Disciples. The "now" and "not yet" of belief in Jesus. Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figuers in John, 217.

[21] Susan E. Hylen, The Disciples. The "now" and "not yet" of belief in Jesus. Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figurers in John, 221.

Servant/Steward at Cana

In study of character, all characters, even minor ones, participate the narrative ideological goal. Bar-Efrat points out that it is not always possible to make a clear and unequivocal distinction between a primary and a secondary character. An apparently, minor character may have a significant function. The servants, they fill the available jars with water, and then take some to the steward (vv.7-8). When the steward's judgment is given to the bridegroom, these servants along with Jesus and his mother, are only the ones who know the origin of this good wine. The steward of the feast, though apparently a minor character, in fact has great significance when considering the sign value of the miracle. By many standards of character analysis he is a flat character or a type.[22]

When the steward discovers miraculously provided wine, he goes to the bridegroom and comments, you have kept the good wine until now (2,10). His statement indicates that it was the role of the bridegroom to provide the wine, thus the steward implicitly reveals Jesus' identity as the bridegroom, since it was Jesus who provided the bountiful supply of good wine. The sign of Cana points to the deeper identity of Jesus.

Bridegroom

At a wedding in Cana of Galilea, the bridegroom, a necessary component for a wedding to exist is conspicuously minimized in the narrative. He is given no name and voice. He is only mentioned one time (v.9) and only implied (v.10) as the person to whom the master of ceremonies speaks. The character of bridegroom is best defined as an agent, a character given the least degree of complexity, development, and penetration into the inner life. To analyze the character of the bridegroom, therefore we must understand the agent in relation to the plot. The conflict made clear from the beginning (v.3) is the lack of wine. The climax of the conflict is presented in the moment when Jesus distance himself from the problem at this wedding, and a very Johannine way unites himself to a much larger problem.

Just as the mother of Jesus is clueless regarding the larger conflict to which Jesus refers (v.9), so also the master of the banquet is clueless regarding the origin of the wine (v.9). It is ironic that the master of the banquet, the person who should have the

[22] Mary L. Coloe, The Servant/Steward at Cana. The "Whispering Wizard's" Wine-Bearers. Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figurers in John, 228.

most intimate and accurate knowledge of the source and quality of the wine from the wedding was surprised by what he was responsible for. The bridegroom remains silent, but plays one central role in the actual circumstance of the scene. An ironic implication is suggested when the master of the banquet place the responsibility for this act of the bridegroom: but you have kept the good wine until now. The bridegroom gets the credit for what Jesus has done.[23]

Brother of Jesus

The brothers of Jesus appear only twice in the Gospel. They are first introduced in an itinerary fragment (v.12), where they are seen leaving Cana with Jesus, his mother, and the disciples after Jesus turned the water into wine. They reappear briefly to share center stage with Jesus before the Feast of Tabernacle (7,1-9), where instruct him to go up to Jerusalem to reveal himself to the world.[24] The brothers appear to be exhorting Jesus to live up to his own word: Jesus belonging to Jerusalem, especially during feast time, so that he might reveal himself to the people instead hiding in Galilea.

The Fourth Gospel characterizes the brothers of Jesus as unbelievers, there is another group, however that appears as the brothers of Jesus later in the Gospel, namely the circle of Jesus' followers. After the resurrection, when Jesus instruct Mary Magdalene to "go to my brothers" and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God", the narrator intends to communicate the meaning of brothers as the one who has faith in Jesus. The "physical brother" commands Jesus with suspicious intentions and from position of unbelief, a "true brother" respectfully asks a question which acknowledges Jesus as Lord as well as the reality of his revelation.[25]

Theological Message

After analyzing and reading every character presented in this narrative unit, I found that there are three main topics which formulates and communicate the

[23] Edward W. Klink III, The Bridegroom at Cana. Ignorance is Blis. Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figuers in John, 233-236.

[24] Joel Nolette, The Brothers of Jesus. All in the Family? Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figuers in John, 239.

[25] Joel Nolette, The Brothers of Jesus. All in the Family? Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel. Narrative Approaches to seventy Figuers in John, 243-244.

theological message from Jn 2,1-12: Temporal and place setting; from water to wine; and sign leads to faith.

***On the third day, wedding at Cana* (*vv.1-5*)**

The narrative begins with temporal and place setting that indicate the spiritual moment and socil-cultural meaning. On the third day: reckoned from the scene featuring Nathanael. Because Jesus was still in the region of the Jordan in the previous scene. Cana in Galilee: the reader will of course know where Jesus is now headed. Wikenhauser takes this to refer to Khirbet Cana (14 km north of Nazareth) or to Khirbet Kenna (7 km northeast of Nazareth). One normally used γάμος in the plural for a marriage celebration. Earlier exegetes trace the presence of Mary (never referred to in the Fourth Gospel by name) at the wedding celebration to friendship or the role of a relative; or, they assume that the family of Jesus had moved to Cana.

Who invited Jesus is one of those details about which the narrator is completely indifferent. According to Braun, Nathanael had invited the small group while they were still near the Jordan. Brown mentions the possibility that the invitation came from Nathanael. The narrator is also not concerned with why the wine fails (read ὑστερήσαντος οἴνου with P^{66} and P^{75} rather than the longer text found in א* it syh^{mg}), although some interpreters are. The address "woman" (γύναι) (translated by Luther with *Weib,* which today is misleading) contains nothing really disparaging. But it is nevertheless surprising that Jesus addresses his mother here (and in 19:26) in same terms as he does the Samaritan woman in 4:21 and Mary Magdalena in 20:13. This form of address becomes more understandable, as does his way of putting his refusal, "what have you to do with me?" (τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί) (1 Ki 17:18, etc.), in the light of Jesus' further response: "My hour has not yet come." That means: Jesus does not permit himself to be prompted to act by any human agent, even when that agent is his own mother; he is driven by the will of the Father alone. The mother of Jesus does not waver in her conviction that he will help by performing some sort of deed. The narrator does not explain how Mary achieved her authority in the wedding party. It is only important to him that the servants be prepared to follow what must have been to them an incomprehensible order issued by a guest.

***In Jar for Purification: Water become wine* (*vv.6-10*)**

Verse 6 depicts the conditions of the miracle that is to come. It will certainly not consist merely of changing a little water into wine. Rather, an enormous amount of

water will be changed into wine. But where can such a large amount of water be found in the home that is the scene of the wedding? However, we nowhere have any indication that six stone jars of such unheard of capacity would have stood ready in a house for the purposes of purification. This exaggeration owes to the narrator's desire to represent a miracle of transformation of super proportions in this story. Jesus now instructs the servants to fill the stone jars.

The jars are now filled to the brim with drinking water, which has been fetched from somewhere nearby. The story appears to reckon with the maximum case. For only if the jars were entirely empty and then filled to the brim with water is it certain that a prodigious amount of water was actually changed into wine. Brown thinks it possible that only this sample of the water was changed into wine, but he agrees that such a possibility contradicts the intention of the narrator. For the logic of the narrative suggests that this wine would have to be served to others in the course of the wedding party. Moreover, it would not have been necessary to have emptied the stone jars and filled them with fresh water had only a small amount of water been transformed into wine. Brown believes it overcritical to hold the view that the Evangelist himself created this alleged maxim *ad hoc.* But this verse need not go back to the Evangelist. For another thing, the situation presupposed by the "maxim" is not a real situation: a marriage celebration of this kind lasts not only a couple of hours during which the guests gradually become drunk and unable to judge the quality of the wine. Rather, the festival is extended over several days; during this period some guests leave and others arrive. Neither group is able to certify that the wine has been switched.

***Sign Leads to Faith* (*vv.11-12*)**

"This Jesus did as the first sign in Cana of Galilee" sums the story up and characterizes it. For this construction Bauer points to Isocrates: ἀλλ' ἀρχὴν μὲν ταύτην ἐποιήσατο εὐεργεσιῶν ("But he did this first of the good deeds"). The word σημεῖον, which is used to translate the Hebrew term אות ("sign") in the LXX (Ex. 4:8f., Isa 7:11, 14) might have been understood as "miracle" in the tradition embodied in this story. But the Evangelist takes it as "pointer" and thus as indicating something quite different; it is in this sense that he understands it as "sign." The note that Jesus' disciples have only now come to faith (ἐπίστευσαν) is not congruent with 1:40-49 where various confessions of faith are given. The attempts of some exegetes to do away with this tension the disciples came to a deeper understanding of the person of

Jesus does not suit the underlying tradition, but at best matches the meaning of the tradition that the Evangelist found tolerable. Verse 12 is a transitional verse: Jesus cannot go from Cana down to Jerusalem.[26]

CONCLUSION

The concept of *sign* is familiar in the OT (commonly אות, *ôt'*). It is used especially of events, both normal and supernormal, that demonstrate the truth of God's word through his prophet (Ex. 3:12; 1 Sam 10:1–9) and so authenticate the prophet himself (Ex. 4:1–9). It also denotes events that herald things to come, especially in relation to the eschatological future (e.g. Isa 7:10–16). As in the synoptic Gospels so in the Fourth Gospel, the miraculous deeds of Jesus attest that the promises relating to the kingdom of God are actualized in and through Jesus. Our evangelist goes one step further in viewing the miracles as *parables* of the kingdom which comes through the total work of the Son of God. Such things are sign because they are indication of God's work in the world. In the synoptic, faith is often the premise for healing (Matt 9,2,22,29; 15,28; Mark 10,52; Luke 7,50; 8,48; 17,19;18,42), not the response to Jesus' deeds. Synoptic record variety of responses to Jesus' deeds: awe, fear, amazement, astonishment, wonder, and unbelief. The meaning of sign in John points to Jesus authority and his unity with the Father (5,19-30; 10,37-3; 14,10-11). Jesus' signs are interpreted in lengthy discourses, elaborating these aspects of his identity.

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