

## **DID JESUS HAVE SPIRITUAL GIFTS AT NAZARETH?**

Did Jesus have spiritual gifts at Nazareth? Some would think that the consideration of this question is just idle speculation, and without any real value or Scriptural basis, however, the very opposite is true, for such a study demands the consideration of ALL of His wonderful holy life of love and zeal at Nazareth. Such meditation and contemplation is soul changing. It is only as we dwell upon the life of Jesus at Nazareth, that we can fully see the real Jesus, and His devotion to the Father, and His zeal to prepare for His ministry, and the way His resolute love for us drove Him to procure our salvation. From the time that God the Father revealed to the child Jesus His purpose in life, Jesus was consumed by a desire to perfectly fulfil the Father's will in His life and ministry, and to purchase our salvation. Jesus looked upon the full partaking of our humanity, temptations and trials, and the procurement of our salvation, as an obligation and debt to be paid, "opheilen." Heb.2v17,18. Rom.8v1-4. 16v25,26. Rev.13v8. Titus.1v2.

Most Christians seldom meditate upon our Lord's life at Nazareth, and are greatly impoverished as a result. Words cannot express the glory and victory of our Lord's childhood, teenage years, and work life, and His dedicated prayer life and preparation for ministry at Nazareth during these years. If we fail to meditate upon and comprehend this, we deprive ourselves of a life changing insight into His incomparable greatness, loving kindness, goodness, integrity, zeal, and victory over carping criticism, sin and evil during His 30 years of daily living at Nazareth. Jesus victoriously lived out the Sermon on the Mount in the notorious spiritual black spot of Nazareth, before He preached it. Jn.1v46. Let us consider the full glory of the life of Jesus at Nazareth and be enthralled and transfigured by it. 2Cor.3v18.

The synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, give some brief details concerning the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, but only Luke.2v40-52., gives a fleeting glimpse of the life of Jesus at Nazareth, and the events which took place when He visited the Temple when He was twelve. However, certain texts in the Old and New Testaments speak volumes about His life at Nazareth, and we will consider these in detail. I reject the accounts of the public childhood miracles, which are recorded in the apocryphal gospels, for Jn.2v11., states that the turning of the water to wine was Christ's first public sign. The contemptuous astonishment of the people of Nazareth at our Lord's ministry in Mk.6v1-6., also proves that they were not aware that He had performed any miracles during His 30 years at Nazareth, and that the extraordinary knowledge and wisdom that He possessed was hidden from them, for they cynically said, "Whence then hath this fellow these things?" At Nazareth Jesus was the perfect intercessor and prayer warrior, but the extensive and mighty influence of His prayer life was hidden by the Father, as Is.49v1-3. makes clear, Jesus was hidden in God's quiver, until the time came for His public ministry.

### **Did Jesus pray for and receive gifts of power and revelation from God at Nazareth?**

The Scriptures reveal that the remarkable prayer life of Jesus at Nazareth brought rejection and ostracism from His brothers and sisters and the people of Nazareth. Satan saw to it that Christ's life of prayer and fasting, stirred up opposition against Jesus, and He was mocked and sent to Coventry because of it. We read in Ps.69v8-12,19,20., "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; v9. Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. v10. When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. v11. I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. v12. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards.----- v19. You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonour; my adversaries are all before You. v20. Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness, (the Hebrew adds, "and distressingly sick") I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. v21. They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

If we say that Jesus prayed during His life at Nazareth, and the above prophetic facts in Ps.69v8-11., about His life of prayer and fasting, prove that He did, then we must acknowledge that He must have had power gifts to bring an answer to His prayers. Jesus lived in continuous communion with the Father, He, like Enoch, walked with God His Father. The love-dominated nature of Jesus desired and loved to walk in the Spirit, it was His very nature to dwell in the Father and the Father in Him, and prayer was as natural to Him as breathing. Jn.14v10,11. 1Jn.2v24. Paul states in 1Cor.12v31., that spiritual gifts are automatically manifested if we walk and pray in the "more excellent way," ("kath huperbolen hodon") of "agape" love. Jesus certainly prayed, lived, and walked in love at Nazareth, so God must have given Him the revelation and power gifts on their higher levels of manifestation. It is impossible to believe that the child Samuel had more and greater revelations from God the Father than God's pure and holy child Jesus, His only begotten Son.

God prepared Jesus for His ministry while He lived at Nazareth, and this not only involved revelation about truth, the Father also gave Jesus information about people's needs, and trained Him in the operation of the gifts of power and revelation. Christ's Divine love, mercy, and compassion drove and irresistibly constrained Him to pray for people in need, He could not help Himself. His secret prayers and intercessory "sighs too deep for words, and inexpressible yearnings" ("stenagmois alaletos," Rom.8v26.), breathed on their behalf, could not help but operate spiritual gifts in delivering power, for Jesus lived and prayed perfectly on "the more excellent way" of perfect love. The vision ministry and prayer life of Jesus was totally directed by God the Father, and the power and influence of His prayer life, has never been equalled, and cannot be overstated.

I am absolutely convinced that, just as Paul watched over the Colossian Church and other churches under His care (Col.1v1-5. 1Cor.5v1-5.), Jesus prayerfully watched over John the Baptist during His years of preparation in the wilderness before he started His ministry, and that John's remarkable ministry owed a great deal to the superintending vision prayer ministry of Jesus. **Jesus was, and still is, the supreme prayer warrior. Heb.7v25,26. RSV.** "Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. v26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens." **Heb.7v25,26. TEV.** "And so he is able, now and always, to save those who come to God through him, because he lives forever to plead with God for them. v26 Jesus, then, is the High Priest that meets our needs. He is holy; he has no fault or sin in him; he has been set apart from sinners and raised above the heavens."

#### **Jesus did have revelations from the Father at Nazareth.**

If we acknowledge that Jesus had revelations from His Father at Nazareth, and He certainly did, for we read in Is.50v4.: - "The Lord God has given Me the tongue of the learned ("limmuwd," 3928), that I should know how to speak a word in season to Him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, he awakens My ear to hear as the learned," ("limmuwd," 3928). Another translation reads, "The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to strengthen and sustain with a word the weary. Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are instructed." ("Limmuwd," 3928, is translated as, instructed, taught, learned, disciplined, accustomed, see Is.8v16. 54v13. Jer.13v23. See the vivid contrast between the Saviour who was educated by the Father in goodness, and the people in Jer.13v23., who wantonly allow Satan and wicked people to train them in evil, and who are totally unwilling to repent and change their ways).

**Scholars agree that the context in Is.50v3-7., is definitely and exclusively speaking of the Lord Jesus.** "v3. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. v4. The Lord Jehovah has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with words Him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as those who are taught. v5. The Lord Jehovah has opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward. v6. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. v7. For the Lord Jehovah will help me; therefore have I not been confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, (Luke.9v51.)and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

**The Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary**, states of Is.50v4.: "He wakeneth (me) morning by morning," "The image is drawn from a master wakening His pupils early for instruction. "He wakeneth mine ear"-- He prepares me for receiving His divine instructions. "To hear as the learned,"-- as one taught by Him, He `learned obedience, experimentally, "by the things which He suffered," thus gaining that practical learning which adapted Him for `speaking a word in season' to suffering men. Heb.5v8." End of quote.

**The Keil & Delitzsch Commentary** on the Old Testament, states on Is.50v4., "The Lord Jehovah hath given me a disciple's tongue, that I may know how to set up the wearied with words: He wakeneth every morning; wakeneth mine ear to attend in disciple's manner." "The servant of Jehovah affords us a deep insight here into His hidden life. The prophets received special revelations from God, for the most part in the night, either in dreams or else in visions, which were shown them in a waking condition, but yet in the more susceptible state of nocturnal quiet and rest. Here, however, the servant of Jehovah receives the divine revelations neither in dreams nor visions of the night; but every morning ("babbooqer" as in Isa.28v19.), i. e., when His sleep is over, Jehovah comes to Him, awakens His ear, by making a sign to Him to listen, and then takes Him as it were into the school after the manner of a pupil, and teaches Him what and how he is to preach. Nothing indicates a tongue befitting the disciples of God, so much as the gift of administering consolation; and such a gift is possessed by the speaker here. "To help with words Him that is exhausted" (with suffering and self-torture): ---Jerome has given the correct rendering: "that I may know how to sustain Him that is weary with a word." End of quote.

**God gave Jesus a morning call every day, and by direct revelation developed His prophetic and apostolic ministry.** Jesus and the Father longed to manifest to the world their great and loving hearts, and to transform the lives of those who were burdened and weary through sin, sickness, Satan, and the cares of this life. Jesus was not rebellious, He was totally dedicated to God the Father's will and our salvation, and delighted to do His Father's will, and fulfil His perfect plans. Ps.40v8. Heb.10v7-9. Jn.1v14. In Is.50v4., we are definitely told that Jesus had a continual daily manifestation of revelation gifts from God our Father. If we accept this, then we must acknowledge that He must have had power gifts to meet the needs manifested in those revelations. We are told in Is.49v1-3., that Christ's spiritual gifts and prayer ministry were hidden away in God's quiver, and people, both near and far away, did not realise the source of their deliverances. We read in Col.2v1-5., that God directed Paul, through vision ministry, to prayerfully watch over and intercede for the Christians in churches that he had founded, and also to pray for Christians who he had never met. See also 1Cor.5v1-5., where Paul operated spiritual gifts in judgement. Jesus was a greater than Paul, and His vision and prayer ministry was greater and more perfect than that of Paul, we read in John.5v19,30., that all of our Lord's activities were directed by visions from the Father. We see from Is.49v1-3., and 50v3-7., that this vision ministry was experienced and perfected at Nazareth.

## **WAS THE TURNING OF THE WATER TO WINE CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE?**

**John.2v1-11.** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **v2** Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. **v3** And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." **v4** Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? (The phrase literally means, "What is it to me and to thee?") My hour has not yet come." **v5** His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." **v6** Now there were set there six water pots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. **v7** Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. **v8** And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it. **v9** When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. **v10** And he said to Him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!" **v11** This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. (NKJ)

## **John says that the turning of the water to wine was Christ's "first sign." What did He mean?**

In Jn.2v11., "signs," is "semeion," 4592, which speaks of a sign, mark, token, wonder and miracle. "Semeion" is from "semaino," 4591, to give a sign, it occurs 16 times in John's Gospel. Jn.2v11,18,23. 3v2.4v54. 6v2,14,26,30. 7v31. 9v16. 10v41. 11v47. 12v18,37. 20v30. Spiritual gifts are a sign from God and a signpost to God.

The misapprehension that Jesus operated no power gifts until He turned the water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, has arisen through the misinterpretation of "first of His signs" in John.2v11.. Here are three translations of that verse. The New King James translates John.2v11., "This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."

The Revised Version translates John.2v11., "This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."

The Living Bible reads, "This miracle at Cana in Galilee was Jesus' first public demonstration of His heaven-sent power. And His disciples believed that he really was the Messiah."

"The Living Bible" is absolutely correct when it states that the turning of the water to wine was Christ's **first PUBLIC sign** and demonstration of His heaven sent power. However, it was certainly not the first sign that Jesus did, for the first signs of Christ's ministry were given PRIVATELY to the first six of Christ's disciples, through words of wisdom and knowledge. We read in **John.1v42.**, that Jesus told Peter, by revelation, that His name was Simon and His father's name was Jonas, and prophetically renamed Him Peter, to reassure Peter of His future rock-like consistency, which meant a great deal to Peter in His future times of failure. Jesus also told Nathanael in **Jn.1v48-51.**, that he was an Israelite without guile, and how He had seen Him in vision praying under a fig tree, and how Nathanael had been longing to have an experience of God like Jacob at Bethel, Jesus assured Him that a similar experience would be granted to Him through His grace. These signs and the inspiring almighty love and divine majesty manifested in the personal presence of Jesus convinced Peter and Andrew, James and John, and Philip and Nathanael that Jesus was the Christ. The life-changing impact of meeting with a Saviour who was full of grace and truth is revealed in their writings. Decades later they wrote and spoke in awe and wonder of the gentle kindness, radiant compassionate love, humble majesty, and sublime divine glory that they beheld in the life, character and ministry of Jesus their friend and Saviour.. Jn.1v14. 14v9. 2Cor.4v4. Phil.2v6. Heb.1v3. 2Pet.1v16. 1Jn.1v1,2.

A.T. Robertson states that, "This beginning of His signs did Jesus," "tauten epoiesen archen ton semeion ho Iesus," should be translated, "this Jesus did as a beginning of His signs," as there is no article between "tauten," "this," and "archen," "beginning." John uses "sign," semeion," rather than wonders, "terata," or powers, "dunameis," for the works, "erga," of Jesus and the Father. Christ's infallible signs were the fulfilment of prophecy, and demonstrated that Jesus was Israel's Messiah; they irrefutably revealed the glory, majesty, and deity of Jesus, they created faith in many seeking hearts, but consternation and hatred in Christ's enemies. Jn.15v22-27.

In, "manifested His glory," "ephanerosen ten doxan autou," "manifested," is the aorist active indicative of "phaneroo," 5318, Jesus revealed to His disciples the glory ("doxa"), which John spoke of in awed wonder and thankful love in Jn.1v14.. When the six disciples who were with Jesus saw the water turned to wine, they accepted and rejoiced in the sign and, "believed on Him," "episteusan eis auton," the aorist active indicative of "pisteuo," to believe, to put trust in, a common verb in John's Gospel. However, it was not just the miracle that made them believe, it was the gentleness, love and grace that radiated from Jesus. John, who was one of these six disciples, has already told us in Jn.1v35-51. N.B. v41., that the six disciples already had faith that Jesus was the Messiah, but the changing of the water to wine greatly strengthened their faith, and confirmed to them that Jesus really was the Messiah.

**The turning of the water to wine was not only a proof of Christ's and God the Father's**

**compassionate concern for the young married couple, it was also the first public sign and proof of Christ's Messiahship, and was for the spiritual benefit of all who were willing to receive it.**

**John states that the "second sign," was the healing of the nobleman's son. Jn.4v46-54.**

The New American Standard Bible correctly translates Jn.4v54.; "This is again a second sign that Jesus performed, when He had come out of Judea into Galilee." The healing of the nobleman's son at Cana was a "second sign," "deuteron semeion," there is no article in the Greek, literally, "This again a second sign Jesus did having come out of Judea into Galilee." This was certainly not the second sign in time, for we read in Jn.2v23., that Jesus did many signs in Jerusalem between the first and second signs mentioned in Jn.2v11. and 4v54.. The explanation for this is twofold; the healing of the nobleman's son was a second sign in Cana, and it was also a second personal sign for His disciples. Jesus gave personal and public signs, in the form of revelation and power gifts. Christ's walking on the water, the stilling of the storm, and the supernatural transport of the boat, the disciples and Jesus, were further signs to His apostles. These signs strengthened the faith of all of them, except Judas Iscariot, and fortified them against the apostasy of many of His disciples that would take place on the following day. Mt.14v22-33. Jn.6v15-21,60-71. So we can see that Jn.2v23. and 4v54., reveal to us that when Jesus turned the water to wine it was not the first time that He had experienced spiritual gifts, it was just His first public manifestation of spiritual gifts. Further proof of this can be seen in the following points.

**We read in Jn.2v3. "When they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, They have no wine."**

It is quite possible that the bride or bridegroom's family were relatives of Mary. The failure of the wine could have been partly due to the fact that seven extra guests in the form of Jesus and His six disciples were invited to the marriage feast at the last minute, and provision had not been made for them. It would have been particularly embarrassing for Mary if the arrival of her son and His disciples had caused the shortage of wine. Mary said to Jesus, "They have no wine," "Oinou ouk echousin." The reaction of Jesus shows that this was not just a statement of fact, and that it was in fact a request for a miracle. **Mary's statement speaks volumes**, it reveals that she had not only treasured in her heart the wondrous events connected with the birth and childhood of Jesus, but that she had also personally witnessed miracles of provision for her family, which had been hidden from the rest of the family. Lk.2v40,52. **Mary remembered how miracles of provision had met their needs on many occasions, when they had no money to buy food or wine for the family.** This poverty was not because Jesus neglected His work to pray, it was because people did not pay their bills, because of circumstances, or because Satan had inspired and provoked dishonest people not to pay their bills for work that Jesus had done.

**Jesus was tempted in all points like us; He knew what it was to be under severe financial deprivation and constraint, when he had to feed the large family of Mary after Joseph had died.**

Heb.4v15. From a rich personal experience of acts of Divine provision by miracles through the prayers of Jesus, Mary knew and believed that Jesus could do a miracle to meet the need for wine. God did not leave Mary to fight the battle alone over the dishonour and criticism that came upon her over the birth of Jesus, God gave her many infallible proofs of miraculous provision at Nazareth, through the developing prophetic ministry of Jesus, that demonstrated that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Holy One of God. Mary's command to the servants in Jn.2v5., "Do **whatever** He tells you, shows the living and deep faith of Mary in Jesus, and His ability to perform a miracle. It was not a first act of blind faith; Mary had proved that "**whatever**" Jesus told her to do, in the realm of miraculous provision, came to pass. Mary had a list in her mind of numerous "whatevers" that had come to pass and produced miracles of provision for her family, and probably other people also. This, and this alone, can explain Mary's confident, "Do whatever he tells you."

**We read in Jn.2v4. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."**

Scholars inform us that the use of "woman" does not imply censure or disrespect, and that in the language of that day it was a respectful and affectionate form of address. Jesus used this very word from the cross, when in Jn.19v26., He tenderly entrusted His heartbroken mother to the care of John. Jesus also used "woman" to address His dedicated disciple and friend Mary Magdalene, when she was so distressed, before she realised that He was risen from the dead, and the angels had also addressed her in the same way. Jn.20v13,15. Jesus addressed His mother in the same way as he did the Syrophenician woman, Mt.15v28., and the Samaritan woman. Jn.4v21. No kind of disrespect was intended, but, on the contrary, it was expressed with gentleness, kindness, tenderness, affection and concern, and the best Greek writers use it in this sense. Paul uses it in 1Cor.7v16., to speak to believing Christian wives. However, the use of "gunai," (woman) instead of "meter" (mother) does indicate that Mary could no longer exercise maternal authority over Jesus in His Messianic work.

"What have I to do with thee?" "Ti emoi kai soi;" means literally, "What is it to me and to thee?" these words were kindly spoken, for Jesus was full of grace, Jn.1v14. Lk.4v22., but they did contain a gentle warning that Jesus was now under orders from His heavenly Father, not His mother. Jesus said in Jn.5v19,30., that it was the Father who did the miracles, and that He only did what the Father revealed to Him, and never worked miracles on His own initiative. This is confirmed by Christ's words, "mine hour is not yet come," "oupo hekei he hora mou," Jesus followed out exactly the Father's plan and timing. "Mine hour," often marked a time of special crisis, and is used especially in regard to Christ's death. See Jn.7v30. 8v20. 12v23. 13v1. 17v1.. Here in

Jn.2v4., Jesus was telling Mary that He had to follow out the exact timing for the miracle. Before Jesus went to the feast He had been shown that the wine would run out, and that the Father would perform a miracle, and the timing and details of what He must do had been shown to Him. The Father had revealed to Jesus in a vision the exact scene in the in the room when the miracle would take place, and Jesus could not act until this took place. "Mine hour," on this occasion was the actual fulfilment of this vision, the hour for Christ's first public sign that confirmed His Messiahship.

Christ's statement, "Mine hour is not yet come," indicated to Mary that Jesus would perform a miracle, but at the time revealed by the Father. Mary's words to the servants in Jn.2v5., "Do whatever he tells you," proves that she knew that it was just a question of the timing of the miracle, there was no doubt in her mind that the miracle would take place. Mary was a real woman of faith; her victory over the dreadful spiritual condition of Nazareth was a truly great achievement. This was almost certainly due to the impact of living in the same house as Jesus, His life, presence, and prayers had inspired and transfigured her faith and spiritual life. Mary knew well, by experience in her home, that God revealed events to her Son before they happened, and she had seen His prophetic working of miracles ministry meet the material needs of their family. However, it seems that these miracles had only been known by Mary, for it appears from Is.39v1-3., that they were hidden from everyone else.

It appears that these miracles of provision were concealed from the rest of the family, for Mary's other children did not believe in Jesus, we read in **Jn.7v5., "For neither did His brethren believe in Him."** We read in **Mk.3v21., "When His family heard about this, they went out to seize Him, for they said, He is out of His mind,"** they came to lay hold of Jesus and forcibly take Him home. **See Mk.3v31-35.** We read in **Ps.69v8,9., "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; v9. Because zeal for Your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me." (NKJ)** Christ's brothers and sisters treated Jesus like a stranger and alien, because He was consumed by love for God, and they were not prepared to stand with Jesus against the ungodly, who verbally attacked and reproached Jesus at Nazareth, and the evil religious leaders who opposed the ministry of Jesus.

In Jn.2v5., "Do whatever He tells you," is, "hoti an legei humin poiesate," "legei," is the present active subjunctive of "lego," 3004, to say, to speak; and "poiesate," is the aorist active imperative of "poieo," 4160, to make or do. Mary's instructions to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you," speak volumes. Mary took hold of the promise implied in Jn.2v4., in the "not yet," "oupo," in "mine hour is not yet come," and directed the servants in positive faith. As A. T. Robertson says, "This mother knew her Son." This was obviously not Mary's first expression of faith in Jesus. However, her faith that Jesus could miraculously provide wine seems to have come later than the events in the Temple when Jesus was twelve. As we have said before, Mary's faith was almost certainly the result of living with Jesus and seeing Him miraculously provide for her large family at Nazareth, when they had no finances for food and wine. Mary had a large family for we read in Mt.13v55,56., and Mk.6v3., that Mary had four sons besides Jesus, these were, James, Joses, Judas and Simon, and at least three daughters, "and His sisters, are they not all with us?" "All" means that Mary had given birth to more than two daughters.

**Thayer** states that in Jn.2v17., "house," "oikos," 3624, is used not only for a house, tent, and building, including the tabernacle and house of God; it is also used, "of the inmates of a house, all the persons forming one family, a household, the family of God, used of the ecclesia of Christ, used of the congregation of the Old and New Testaments." **End of quote.**

**Jesus was not just concerned about a building, He was consumed by zeal for us, and all the family of God,** and it brought terrible opposition upon Him, from people and the powers of darkness. He lived His whole life consumed by a desire to save and bless us. Blessed be His holy Name!

Mary had recovered from her failure to understand our Lord's words in the temple at twelve, now, eighteen years later, she had positive faith in the ability of Jesus to perform a remarkable miracle and provide wine for the feast, through our Lord's influence Mary had become a truly great woman of faith.

Jesus told the servants to fill up the water pots with water. In Jn.2v6., "water pots," is "hudriai," and is derived from "hudor," water," (the papyri use it for pots or pans that hold money or bread as well as water). These stone jars were kept full of water at a feast and were used for the ceremonial cleansing of the hands, "after the Jews' manner of purifying." Mk.1v44. 7v3. {"Purifying," is the noun "katharismos," 2512, it occurs in Mk.1v44. Lk.2v22. 5v14. Jn.2v6. 3v35. Heb.1v3. 2Pet.1v9., it is derived from "katharizo," 2511, to cleanse, to purify. Jesus has purged us from our sins through His precious blood, and the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. Heb.1v3. Acts.15v9. Titus.2v14. 3v5. Heb.9v23. 1Pet.1v18-20. Rev.1v5. 5v9. 12v10,11. Jesus turns the tasteless water of our lives into wine.} Some scholars say that we cannot be sure what "firkins," "metretas," means, others say it probably stands for the Jewish "bath," a liquid measure of about seven and a half gallons; others say that it could stand for the Attic measure, which was nine and a half gallons. **So each of these six large water-jars ("hudria") held between 20 to 30 gallons, and they were filled full ("gemizo") up to the brim ("heos ano") with water ("hudatos").**

In John.2v8., we read that Jesus commanded the servants, to draw some of the wine out and take it to the governor of the feast. This indicates that the miracle had been performed immediately. Jesus did not even

approach the water pots, and so any possibility of collusion, or deception, was completely ruled out. The miracle was performed humbly and quietly; there was no ostentation, egotism, boastfulness, or show of self-importance by Jesus. This was Christ's practice, and it is a lesson to all who God graces with His gifts of power. The governor was the person who presided over the marriage feast, and was in charge of the entertainment, and gave directions to the servants. Thayer says that the word for "governor" is "architriklinos," 755, and that he was, "the superintendent of the dining room, a table master. It differs from toastmaster ("sumposiarches"), who was one of the guests selected by lot to prescribe to the rest the mode of drinking. The table master was to place in order the tables and the couches, to arrange the courses, to taste the food and wine beforehand, and so forth." End of quote.

The word "architriklinos," originally signified someone who was head over three couches, this later came to be applied to the governor or steward of a feast. The "triklinos" was a room "oikos," with three couches, "kline," for the feast.

Some have said that it was only the water that was carried to the governor of the feast and the guests that was turned to wine, and that the water was changed to wine as it was taken to them, but why should we limit the miracle? Jesus gave the marriage feast 120 to 150 gallons of the very best wine to demonstrate God's "much more" giving. God the Father and the Lord Jesus may also have intended the surplus to be sold as a present to the young couple, the Godhead is kind and thoughtful like that. Wine of this quality was certainly valuable, as it is today.

After the table master has tasted the wine He called the bridegroom to Him and asked why he had kept the best wine until the last, because it was common practice to bring out the inferior wine last, ("the worse" "ton elasso," the less, the inferior). "Oinos," signifies that it was real wine. Unlike John the Baptist, Jesus socialised with ordinary people, and was viciously attacked for it. Mt.11v19. Lk.7v34. However, Jesus would certainly condemn the drunkenness and considerable family distress that is caused by the misuse of intoxicating drink. Paul states that Christians should walk in love and consider others, and social drinking of intoxicating liquor is dangerous, and drunkards will not inherit God's kingdom. We should not indulge in things that cause others to sin. 1Cor.8v10. Rom.14v15. The verbs "methusko," 3182, and "methuo," 3184, are derived from "methe," 3178, wine. "Methusko," means, to drink wine, to intoxicate, to make or get drunk, to become intoxicated, however, Adam Clark says that "methusko," can be used of drinking wine, without the thought of inebriation, and states that the verb is used in this way in the Septuagint. Gen.43v34. Song of Solomon.5v1. Is.58v11. Hag.1v6. "Methusko," occurs in Lk.12v45. 21v34. Jn.2v10. Eph.5v18. 1Thes.5v7. Mt.24v49-51. Rom.13v13. 1Cor.5v11. 6v10. Gal.5v21.

The turning of the water to wine was Christ's first public sign, but John states that Jesus did many more signs in the presence of His disciples, than those which He records. John selects a small number of outstanding signs out of the immense number of signs that Jesus performed, so that faith might be confirmed and established in those who desired it. We read in Jn.20v30,31., "And truly Jesus did many other signs ("polla alla semeia,") in the presence of His disciples ("enopion ton matheton"), which are not written in this book; v31 but these are written that you may believe ("the present active subjunctive of "pisteuo," "that you may keep on believing") that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." (NKJ)

However, many Jews rejected these mighty signs, we read in Jn.12v37-43., "But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, (the negative imperfect active of "pisteuo," "they kept on not believing on Him," they wilfully rejected the light and signs that God gave to them). v38. That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" v39. Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: v40. "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them." v41. These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. v42. Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; v43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. (NKJ)

We read in Jn.20v30., that Jesus did "many other signs," "polla alla semeia," which are not recorded in the Gospels, there are also great numbers of signs and wonders which are not described in detail, but are referred to in general statements. See Jn.2v23.4v45. 12v37. Jesus healed the multitudes. Mt.4v24.8v16.12v13.14v14. 15v30. 19v2. 21v14. Lk.6v18,19. John states that he has made a very small selection of the immense number of miracles that were performed by Jesus "in the presence of the disciples," "enopion ton matheton." John declares that His Gospel accounts "have been written" ("gegraptai," the perfect passive indicative of "grapho"), to Christians, so "that you may believe," ("hina pisteuete," "hina" and the present active subjunctive of "pisteuo," 4100, "that you may keep on believing"), that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," "Iesous estin ho Christos ho huios tou theou." Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. Jn.1v1-18. John then states a further purpose in writing His gospel, "and that believing you may have life in His name," "kai hina pisteuontes zoen echete en toi onomati autou." John uses the present participle of "pisteuo," 4100, "pisteuontes," (keep on continuing to believe), and the present active subjunctive "echete" (keep on having), to show that a constant abiding in Jesus, and faith in Jesus, continually produces the life ("zoen") of God in our lives and souls. John's Gospel has certainly fulfilled the purpose that John intended; it has inspired and strengthened believers

throughout all the centuries of Church History. The message is that eternal life, so often mentioned in this Gospel, can only be found in Jesus. John adds an Epilogue in Chapter 21, which gives a beautiful picture of the risen Christ and His dealings with His apostles, and in particular with John and Peter.

John concludes by stating in Jn.21v25., "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. Amen." Robertson comments on this verse, "This is, of course, natural hyperbole, but graphically pictures for us the vastness of the work and words of Jesus from which the author has made a small selection <Jn.20v30.> and by which he has produced what is, all things considered, the greatest of all the books produced by man, the eternal gospel from the eagle who soars to the very heavens and gives us a glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." **End of quote.**

We agree with Robertson's sentiments about the Gospel of John. However, Robertson is almost certainly incorrect when he says that John's statement is "natural hyperbole," it is quite likely that John was not just thinking of the details about the earthly life of Jesus, and the enormous number of sermons and teachings, and countless gifts of power and revelation that Jesus manifested during His life. However, John could also have been thinking, as in Jn.1v1-5., of the unlimited activities that Jesus experienced with the Father and Holy Spirit in pre-Creation eternity, and the activities and interventions of Jesus in angelic and human History since the start of Creation. It is impossible for anyone to write a History about the eternal life of God, even eternity would not give enough time, and the universe, never mind the world, would not contain the books that could be written.

#### **Daniel's amazing vision of the Ancient of Days and the last judgement. Dan.7v9-14.**

We read in Dan.7v9,10., "I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient of Days (God the Father) sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, and the hair of His head hair like the purest whitest wool. His throne was like the fiery flame, and its wheels like burning fire. v10. A river of fire flowed forth from before Him. Millions of angels ministered to Him, and hundreds of millions of people rose up and stood before Him, waiting to be judged. The judge was seated, the court began its session, and the books were opened."

Here we see God's amazing activity at the last judgement, He directs millions of angels, and judges hundreds of millions of life Histories of people, all at the same time. God's amazing and immense workload is not confined just to the last judgement; it is an everyday reality today. God weighs and records every thought and act of His Creation, He directs and hears the reports of untold millions of angels. We stand in astonished awe, praise and worship, at the phenomenal workload and suffering that God daily endures for the sake of His Creation. God's totally dedicated sacrificial love for His Creation cannot be measured. In Rom.11v33-36., Paul glories in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom and knowledge "O bathos", and says that His judgements are unsearchable "anexerauneta," and His ways are past tracing out "anexichniastoi." Some of God's wisdom and ways are plain and clear to us, others are quite beyond us, and even great angelic minds cannot trace and search out some of the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom and knowledge. If God's angels cannot comprehend the works and ways of God, we can be quite sure that it would be impossible task for all the world's authors to write about all the works and activities that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit do in one day, never mind a History of their Divine lives. **John's statement that the world would not contain the books about the eternal life of Jesus is not just "natural hyperbole," it is a statement of fact.**

#### **NOTE:**

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