

Yochanan ~ Part 4

The **Gospel of Yochanan** is planned as a kind of treasure hunt, with careful and sometimes cryptic clues laid out for us to follow. Now that he's set the scene with the opening stories about **Yochanan the Baptist** and **Yeshua's** early followers, he gives us the first clue, telling us that it's the first one, so we know where we are. He will tell us about the second one, too, two chapters later; from then on, we're on our own, and he wants us to use our initiative and imagination in following the clues to the very end. I won't spoil it for you by telling you the answer at the moment, but if you wanted to sit down and read right through the **Gospel**, you might be able to work it out for yourself.

The word he uses for 'clue' is 'sign' (verse 11). He is setting up a series of signposts to take us through his story. The signs are all occasions when **Yeshua** did, you might say, what he'd just promised **Nathanael** that he would do. There are moments when, to people who watch with at least a little **faith**, the angels of **God** are going up and coming down at the place where **Yeshua** is. There are moments when heaven is opened, when the transforming power of God's love bursts into the present world.

That's why it simply won't do, despite what some people have said, to see the things that **Yeshua** did, and the stories about them in this **Gospel** and the other ones, as pleasant but imaginary legends - things that didn't actually happen but which '**illustrate**' some supposedly deeper, more '**spiritual**' truth. The whole point of the '**signs**' is that they are moments when heaven and earth intersect each other. (That's what the **Jews** believed happened in the **Temple**.) The point is not that they are stories that couldn't have happened in real life, but that they point away from earth to a heavenly reality.

Whatever people today may think actually happened - and the more you get to know about **Yeshua**, the more you realize that this sort of thing was precisely what you should expect with Him around - we should be in no doubt that what **Yochanan** badly wants to tell us is that with these events the life of heaven came down to earth. That's why one of the motto texts for the whole **Gospel** is 'the **Word** became flesh' (1:14).

The present story has all the elements that we shall come to know well as we work through the **Gospel**. It is about transformation: the different dimensions of reality that come into being when **Yeshua** is present and when, as **Miryam** tells the servants, people do whatever **Yeshua** tells them. ¹

I thought this introduction might be helpful for our new followers.

The First Sign: Turning Water into Wine

2¹ On Tuesday, there was a wedding at Kanah in the Galil, and the mother of Yeshua (Miryam) was there. 2 Yeshua, too, was invited to the wedding, along with His talmidim. 3 The wine ran out, and Yeshua's mother said to Him, "They have no more wine." 4 Yeshua replied, "Mother, why should that concern Me - or you? My time hasn't come yet." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

Mother, why should that concern me - or you? Literally, "What to **Me** and to you, woman?" This translates into **Greek** a **Hebrew** idiom found several times in the **Tanakh**, and we are thereby reminded of the **Hebraic** roots necessary to proper understanding of the **Brit Hadasah**. The meaning of this idiom is flexible; renderings include: "What do we have in common?" "Why do you involve me?" "You must not tell me what to do," "Why turn to me?" "Your concern is not mine." **Yeshua's** comment is meant to aid her in the transition from seeing **Him** as her child to seeing **Him** as her **Lord**, to keep her from undue pride, and to indicate that

¹ Tom Wright, John for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-10

He as Lord sovereignly determines when **He** will intervene in human affairs - **He** does not perform miracles on demand merely to impress **His** friends, or even to give *Naches* (a Yiddish word that means "the kind of joy a mother feels") to **His** mother.

⁶ Now six stone water jars were standing there for the Jewish ceremonial washings, each with a capacity of twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Yeshua told them, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. ⁸ He said, "Now draw some out, and take it to the man in charge of the banquet," and they took it. ⁹ The man in charge tasted the water; it had now turned into wine! He did not know where it had come from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew. So, he called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone else serves the good wine first and the poorer wine after people have drunk freely. But you have kept the good wine until now!"¹¹ This, the first of Yeshua's miraculous signs, He did at Kanah in the Galil; He manifested His glory, and His talmidim came to trust in Him.

Yeshua's comment is meant to aid her in the transition from seeing **Him** as her child to seeing **Him** as her **Lord**, to keep her from undue pride, and to indicate that **He as Lord** sovereignly determines when **He** will intervene in human affairs - **He** does not perform miracles on demand merely to impress **His** friends, or even to give **Naches** (a **Yiddish** word that means "the kind of joy a mother feels") to his mother.

¹² Afterward, He, His mother and brothers, and His talmidim went down to K'far-Nachum and stayed there a few days. ²

K'far-Nachum (Capernaum) was about 15 miles northeast of **Kanah** and could be reached in a day's journey. *K'far-Nachum* served as **Yeshua's** headquarters after **Yochanan the Immerser's** imprisonment.

You might be feeling overwhelmed by the chaotic demands of family life, where the pressure to host and create perfect gatherings can be intense. Remember the wedding at **Kanah** when **Yeshua** turned water into wine - **He** transformed a mundane moment into a miraculous celebration. This week, consider inviting friends over for a simple meal and focus on fellowship rather than perfection. Let go of perfectionism and embrace the joy of sharing time together. As you enjoy this time, share a testimony of **God's** provision in your life, just like the master of the banquet marveled at the wine.

In our next post, we will continue to explore the **Gospel of Yochanan**.

² Yochanan 2:1-12 (CJB)