

1-16-22 St. Peter Lutheran Church, John 2:1-11 “A Servant’s Eye View”

*The next day there was a wedding celebration in the village of Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus’ mother told him, “They have no more wine.” “Dear woman, that’s not our problem,” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.” But his mother told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Standing nearby were six stone water jars, used for Jewish ceremonial washing. Each could hold twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” When the jars had been filled, he said, “Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies.” So the servants followed his instructions. When the master of ceremonies tasted the water that was now wine, not knowing where it had come from (though, of course, the servants knew), he called the bridegroom over. “A host always serves the best wine first,” he said. “Then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!” This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*

My name is Elias. I am a servant of Jeremiah of Cana who had a great wedding celebration. Of course, all weddings are great celebrations, lasting several days. But there were some things that really puzzled me, actually amazed me and while I am waiting here for the market place to open, I wanted to tell you about it.

Well, it is amazing that Jeremiah finally found a wife. I mean not to disparage him but he was really picky and could never seem to settle on the right woman. Some other countries have couples falling in love and then getting married. I suppose that was in the equation somewhere, but he seemed more than others to be looking for the exact right woman to be his wife. Muriel was that woman. And all of us in the household slaves really like her. She is not demanding but kind. She is a believer in

God and for some reason, people who believe in God and live out their faith are kinder people. She makes you want to be loyal to her.

Wedding celebrations are like anywhere. It takes a lot of time and resources for the planning and execution of a wedding. Remember now, we are talking about feasting and celebrating for several days. Seldom does one see divorce, so for a marriage to last it was to be a deep commitment of both people and so it was with Jeremiah and Muriel. Jeremiah needs Muriel to help him be less demanding of his servants. We all like him, but he has high expectations. Fortunately, most of the servants get along and we've got a pretty good steward. His job is not easy. He has to make sure there's always enough of everything to run a house and that includes food, clothing, water, wine, oil, and the list goes on.

Wedding guests are invited and are expected to show up, dressed in the proper clothing, and participate in the banquet. If extra guests show up, it would be inhospitable to deny their participation if they have come with a wedding garment. You then just have to stretch the food and the wine.

The song is easy to stretch. People sing and play their instruments, stories are told, and family reunions occur. Some places have annual family reunions but when you live a distance from a relative or many relatives, it is difficult to see them very often unless there is a bar mitzvah, a wedding, or a funeral. The last of those is difficult because everyone is so sad.

But at all three, people catch up. Occasionally, they may have written letters, but that is the only communication we have. Ah, look at that sunrise. It is so beautiful over the landscape.

Back to the wedding. We had guests from Nazareth, five miles south of here. The carpenter's son, Jesus, and his mother, Mary, plus some of Jesus' disciples came along. I have not heard much about this Jesus except that he is a carpenter's son and

is a very religious person. He recently began teaching disciples and was calling them to follow. Quite a few came with him that we did not expect.

In any case, the wedding celebration was in full swing. Servants have to run around and get food and drink, help people find places to sleep, and so forth. We don't have time to lean back and even laugh. Someone will surely say, 'Bring me food' or 'Bring me wine.' We passed out so much wine that it was nearly gone and the steward was beside himself.

Jesus' mother, Mary, saw how distraught the man was and knew that he would likely be disciplined for not having enough, embarrassing the house of Jeremiah and Muriel. It would be a slap in their faces and she did not want it to happen in this happy time.

The town of Cana is small and not near any great wineries so our steward was in a pickle. Mary said to her son, not just seven feet from where I was standing, "Do something, Jesus. Help them out."

He didn't seem to be as concerned as she was. He was enjoying the wedding and had just congratulated Jeremiah and Muriel and gave them His blessing. That was actually pretty neat and gave the wedding an almost sacramental sense, more holy than it already was.

Anyway, Jesus heard his mother and said: "Dear woman, that's not our problem ... My time has not yet come." She didn't take 'no' for an answer. She said to those of us standing nearby, "Do whatever he tells you." He rolled his eyes a bit and said to us: "Fill these six stone jars with water."

Now these are good size jars, thirty gallons capacity each. They were used for Jewish ceremonial washing. I worked with five other servants filling the jars. I wasn't sure why we needed all that water, but He told us to do so and we did.

Then something strange happened. He then said to us: "Now dip some out, and take it to the master of ceremonies." That's the steward. I looked down and the water

looked different. It was a deep red and a beautiful aroma came off of it, an aroma of the finest wine. I had heard the teaching of the Jewish people about Messiah that when he comes, it will be a time of plenty when wine will flow like water and wheat will overflow in bushels. I wondered if this Jesus was the Messiah and they just didn't know it yet.

I dipped some out and took it to the master steward as Jesus told us to do. The steward tasted it and smiled with his eyes shut. "Ah, Jeremiah, JEREMIAH, come over. Try this." Jeremiah drank and smiled, saying, "A host always serves the best wine first, then, when everyone has had a lot to drink, he brings out the less expensive wine. But you have kept the best until now!" Everyone was blessed by that and we didn't tell anyone what happened because who would believe us?

Here I am telling you. Do you believe me? It is something to think about, a sign that this Jesus is a worker of miracles. As to messiah, we will have to wait on that and watch Him carefully. There is one other thing before I go as the market is opening. When He looked us in the eyes after telling one of us to take it to the steward, I felt a warmth that made me want to kneel and worship this man, to give him the very best I could offer. He gave a blessing that was shared and not hoarded like the manna of old that turned to dry rot. Jesus shared a miracle so that a wedding celebration would work out. I was blessed in that I could be the deliverer of this wonderful wine. Blessed to be a blessing, like father Abraham. Has Jesus recently done a miracle in your life? His disciples were talking right after the report came back and began to have faith in Jesus. What things has Jesus done that caused you to have faith in Him? And you can ask yourself, just like He changed the water to wine, what is something you want Jesus to change in your life? I must now go and buy produce for Jeremiah and Muriel's home. God bless you today my friends. God bless you. AMEN