

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In Galilee of the Gentiles, Isaiah promised, a great Light would be seen by those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death. This Light, the Prophet promised, would be the Glory of the Lord. The people dwelt in deep darkness, which is in the shadow of death. And that darkness covered the earth.

To the Christian, the Words seem clear. The Prophet is describing Jesus. As we process during the Great Vigil of Easter, we sing about that Light: *Lumen Christi* – “The Light of Christ!” We confess that He is the Light promised of Old, the Light that would be seen by those in the darkness of death that covers the earth. He is the Hope of the Ages, the Promised One in whom the Patriarchs and Prophets trusted, Isaiah’s Lord.

He is the Light, the Prophet declares, upon Whom is the Spirit of the Lord. He is the Light, Isaiah foretells, who will preach Good Tidings to the poor, heal the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound. But the Prophet does not stop there.

He is the Light that will comfort those who mourn, give them beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, and a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. He comes to heal and to bless and to save. And He, the Light, shall boast in the glory of the Gentiles. The Promised Light is not just Savior of the Jews. He is Savior of the Nations.

And there, in Cana, there, in an otherwise unimportant town at an unidentified Jewish wedding, there in humble circumstance, did the Promised Light shine. A miracle marked the presence of the Promised One. It was a fairly mundane situation, marked by human *faux pas*. They didn’t order enough wine. It was the kind of situation, we might reason, that didn’t warrant bothering God about. But it is exactly there, in the routine things, in the humble things, in the day-to-day things of your life, in which God manifests Himself.

In the middle of the wedding reception, they were out of wine. Mary was there. Jesus and His disciples were invited. Mary, in faith, trusting in her Son, said “They have no wine.” It was a confession that Mary believed the Psalmist: The eyes of all wait upon Thee... Thou openest Thine Hand, and satisfiest the desires of every living thing.” The Hand that the Psalmist describes belongs to the Lord, the Son of Mary, the One who is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works.

So there, there in Cana, did the Lord Who Provides give the beginning of signs. There did He manifest His Glory. He did so not from the mountaintop, although He would do that. He did so not from the midst of the skies, although they were rent and torn open at His birth. He did so not from the pinnacle of the Temple, although He knew that treacherous height. He did so in the midst of an unsuspecting multitude among people of modest means. And even then, He sought no credit. He worked a miracle. He let the bridegroom take the credit.

The One circumcised to place Himself under the very Law given through Him filled the Law to the brim. The washing required by the Law, the ceremonial washing which could but remove external dirt. So those waterpots, and the Law they served, were only able to accuse. They were

an inflexible reminder that everyone who entered was dirty. But by their washing true cleanliness was not possible. That's how the Law works. Consider the Words of the Apostle: "Let love be without hypocrisy... be kindly affectionate to one another... in honor giving preference to one another."

Peer into those perfect Words, and consider your reflection in them. True love is without hypocrisy, so by those little "white lies" you have told, reasoning that they were kinder than the truth, you have broken the Law. To be "kindly affectionate" precludes anger or becoming annoyed with others. And to give preference to one another in honor means putting others first, against which your flesh rails. So pass before those waterpots, O Sinner, and hear them cry out "Dirty! Dirty!"

But do not despair. For the Lord of Love, the One who is truly without hypocrisy, the One who truly loves you, the One who took the lowest place, He set aside the Old by filling the vessels of the Law with the miraculous wine of the New. In Him, in the Promised Light, in the One upon whom the Holy Spirit descended and remained, in Him is there a New Testament, a better Testament.

And it is not according to the Old. For in His Testament of Life the Law is not be external, written on tablets of stone. In the New Testament the Law is written in the hearts and minds of the people of God, and He is their God, and He remembers their sins no more.

So as those empty, dead vessels of the Old were brought to life by the wine of the New, so too is it with your heart, with your soul. For into you God poured not wine, but His Spirit. He took a dead vessel, a sinner, and brought you to life by washing, not from stone waterpots, but from the Baptismal Font. But just like the wine at Cana, your filling has a source. He fills you with life by giving up His own life.

"My hour has not yet come", He told His mother. But His hour would come, from the sixth hour till the ninth hour on that day of the shadow of darkness, on that day of death. There He rendered the life, the holy, perfect, blameless life, that fulfilled the Law for you. There He who is Life Himself gave up His life, and He Himself filled a stone vessel, the garden tomb.

But just as He gave those waterpots new meaning, so too that tomb. He emptied the tomb. He rose to new life. He rendered the tomb but a portal, a door, a gate, that leads you, you redeemed by Him, you who believe in Him, you who believe as did Mary - that He is the Lord that satisfies the desires of every living thing, for you He made the tomb a door to heaven. His hour did come. And on the third day He changed time and eternity by defeating death for you. Like the unworthy bridegroom of Cana, Christ lets you receive the credit for His miraculous work.

On Easter morning, the Light shined. He was seen by those who dwelt in the shadow of death, and those who believe in Him are sundered from the darkness and bask in His Light. Cana only pointed to a New and Better Wedding, the Wedding Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end. And He who is the Lamb is the Bridegroom, who makes you His holy, spotless, chaste, pure and perfect Bride. The wedding garment He vests you in as you are baptized is the brilliant garment of praise of those healed, those freed, by Christ the Light of the World.

At Cana He worked a miracle. But His miracles have not ceased. Dead sinners are brought to life. A New and Better Washing brings the fruits of His empty tomb to you. In Christ you have comfort. In Christ you have consolation. For He is the true Bridegroom, Incarnate to redeem for Himself a Bride. And as He worked at Cana, so does He still work today.

While the banquet master did not know where the wine was from, you know. Your Savior works in the routine things, in the humble things, in the day-to-day things like words and water, bread and wine. For He has indeed kept the good wine until now, the New and Better Wine, the Wine that is His Blood, the Blood of the New Testament, the Blood He bids you drink this day, by which you have life, because God remembers your sins no more.

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