

The Cana Miracle

by Art Katz

The miracle at Cana is a demonstration of Jesus' glory and a reminder of the church's need to move beyond sentimentality and conventionality in order to fulfill its mandate.

Duration: 55:36

Scripture: John 2:1-11, John 4:14, John 7:37-38, John 15:16

Topics: "Cana Miracle"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by sharing that he had a theme in his spirit that led him to study the first miracle of Jesus at Cana in John chapter 2. He mentions a prophetic school they have every summer where they discuss and interpret New Testament texts. The speaker reflects on the significance of the first miracle and how it relates to the last, suggesting that there is a tension of agreement between the two. He emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the first of anything because it often holds insights about what will come at the end.

Transcript

so exalted a spiritual atmosphere as this, in which I wondered if I was going to be called upon. Well, I can enjoy that, just to be silent. Well, John and I greet you from Macedonia and Sofia, Bulgaria, and the Ukraine, 10 cities in 10 nights, with 150 to 300 mile trip each day, for which I am recovering from sitting in the back of the van and having my frame rattled over the bumpiest roads you can imagine, and then a solid weekend in Russia, was it? 20 hour train ride from the Ukraine to St. Petersburg, and then by car, five hours to our destination, and then after the weekend, another train ride through the night to St. Petersburg, and then picked up by some Christians and put up and brought to the airport, and then a flight from St. Petersburg to Frankfurt, and Frankfurt to London, and here we are.

So I can well afford not to be called on. But, last night, somewhere in the night hours or the early morning hours, there was just a theme just moving through my spirit, a text, so I finally had to get up and jot a few notes, and I think that's the message for this morning. You can turn with me to John chapter two, the first miracle of Jesus at Cana.

We have a prophetic school of our own every summer, a little different in format. We sit around a very large table and interact over the word. So I'm not inviting you to interrupt me, but maybe at some point we can open for some discussion because I don't have it down, Pat.

I just have some suggestions, and this, as every text, is inexhaustible, and we have the richest time interacting over a text, and invariably, something of a creative, Holy Ghost kind takes place, and we're privileged to see things that we had not considered before. So Lord, let it be that now as well. If this is on your heart, Lord, for a beginning, a point of beginning, you know the end from the beginning, so we give you all of your precious liberty to take, to begin us and to escort us through this brief time, and make it memorable and significant.

In Jesus' name, we ask it. So on the third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine, and Jesus said to her, women, what concern is that to you and to me? I'm not too happy for my text here. King James, I think, is a little better. How does it say it? What is that to me, something like that? Eh? Uh-huh.

Woman, what have I to do with thee? Probably the translators felt that that was too crude, a censure of the mother of Jesus coming from the Lord that we would have difficulty reconciling that with the nice way in which we like to consider him, and so they soften it, but my propensity is to like it hard and to take it direct, just as it comes in the authorized version that Paul used, King James. I like that. What have I to do with thee is pregnant with meaning because thee is more than just a woman.

Thee is all women, that is to say, something in that gender that always wants to do the right thing and to accommodate and to make nice and to see that it comes out with a happy ending. Praise God that there's more than one gender in the earth, for I wouldn't want to be ruled by that mentality, nor would I want to be ruled by a male mentality, so somehow it's in the interaction between these dispositions that the right way is to be found. What have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.

His mother saith unto his servants, whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Well, whatever we can say about Mary, if that's all she ever said, that's enough. That's enough to celebrate her for time immemorial.

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. No matter what it is, if he says it, you do it, and in fact, that is the foundation for this whole miracle. He was to say something, and he was going to say something of an ungainly kind, totally impractical, doesn't make any sense, doesn't commend itself to the hearers, but they did it, and because they did it, we obtained the first miracle.

It's not only because it's first that it's deserving of our attention, but because what is first is often, if not invariably, some insight and statement about the last. I have this feeling, and I think I share it with Watchman Nee, there may be others who have sensed that first and last are in a remarkable tension of agreement, that this is not first because it just happened first, it's first because it has to strike a certain note, a certain theme in view of that which shall conclude what begins here. So we need to take a special interest in the first miracle, in the first statement, in the first church, in the first of anything, because it has everything to do with that which comes at the end.

And I'm not sure what that significance is, but I suspect it's there, and that the Lord wants us to burrow in and dig it out. So I love dwelling on every phrase, every word, that's why I don't want this softened. If it sounds harsh, there's a reason for that, because there's something in the Lord that is standing against conventionality and sentimentality and consideration for man at the expense of God.

He's the jealous son of the Father, and he will not allow any kind of a word or thought or tone, particularly at the beginning, that would in any way compromise, reduce, or affect the whole thing that he's about. My hour is not yet come. Don't give me this stuff.

I'm not here to work things that will please the crowd or to accommodate the need of men. Don't intrude, don't bring that earthly, worldly, human, sentimental, female dimension into the thing for which I stand. That's the way I would read it.

That's the way I would like to read it. Now, I trust you ladies are not being offended, but even if you were, we have to get, you see that little collision between mother and son, well, I've used the word pregnant already, speaks volumes, and it's a note perhaps that needs to be struck from the very beginning, because there's something in mothers. I know I have a Jewish mother myself, and who has passed away recently in her 96th year, and 10 days before her death, finally called upon the Lord.

But for 38 years before that, so as long as I've been a believer, she has been giving me fits. There was no greater disappointment than that her son should come back from Jerusalem in 1964 as a believer in Jesus. And if she could in any way, what shall I say, nullify, negate, or tone down anything that came with that kind of commitment, she would.

Because there's something in women, something in mothers, something in Jewish mothers that militates against God, that wants to soft-soap things. And so it is a note of accommodation to man. And the ironic thing is that if we concede to that, we're not really doing man's service.

There's a jealousy for God that will not brook any kind of compromise that redounds to man's best interest at the end. I don't know why I'm this way, but so long as I've been a believer, and particularly in more recent years, I can almost conduct a vendetta, a campaign against sentimentality. Sentimentality is the last refuge of humanism, but it's clothed and disguised as being well-meaning, well-intending, but I want to tell you, it is just as subversive of the purposes of God as outright and direct opposition.

What makes it yet more dangerous is that it appears to be nice. Probably my greatest collision now is over the issue of Israel with those that take a benign, benevolent, sentimental view of Israel that wants to see it so much to succeed, which actually would impede the glory of God if it did. Just like Peter, let this be far from you, Lord.

Wasn't that nice? Isn't that a nice sentiment? That's the kind of sentiment that would win a B'nai B'rith Man of the Year Award, but Jesus knew it for what it was, the deadliest assault upon his purpose. My hour has not yet come. It's remarkable how much, both from his mother and his dearest disciple, is an assault against the purpose of God coming in the name and spirit of that which is well-meaning and sentimental.

Let this be far from you, Lord. They have no wine. My hour is not yet, and is he ever jealous for that hour? So what's the instruction for us? We need equally to be, and to be equally as guarded against the insidious and subtle attacks upon the faith and upon truth and the purposes of God that are more deadly because they seem to be nice.

And if you stand against it, it will seem very abrasive and very unmannerly and unchristian. So you see what the translators want to do? They want to tone down because they don't want us to be offended by being unable to reconcile a brusque, is this English language okay for you guys? B-R-U-S-Q-U-E is the way we spell it in America. A brusque response of Jesus to a mother that we cannot reconcile because we

think he ought to be nice.

But if the Lord said it, it's got to be good and it's got to be right. However much, it stops us momentarily in our tracks. Maybe it's even redemptive to have our own notion of Jesus confronted from time to time lest it would lapse into something that is nice itself but not true about who and what he is in himself as the Son of God and God.

That's why I like the judgments of God. Praise God for them. Or we'd all be a bunch of sappy, sentimental, I don't know what.

We would not be anything worth for the world to note. But the judgments, they bring us up short. How do we reconcile that? And that God himself has performed it and speaks about himself as a God of wrath.

How do we reconcile that with the nice way in which we like to consider him? Because the way in which we like to consider him is the way in which we like to consider ourselves and be considered. So when the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, they have no wine. His mother, after receiving that reprimand or the rebuke, said to the servants, whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

Now standing there were six stone jars, water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding 20 or 30 gallons. Jesus said to them, fill the jars with water and they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, now draw some out and take it to the chief steward.

So they took it. And 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 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 best until now.

Jesus did this, the first of his signs in King of Galilee and revealed his glory and the disciples believed in him. After this, he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, his disciples and the remainder a few days. So what is the big deal? What is the significance of this miracle? Was it in the end finally a condescension to his mother to see that they would have wine? And not only would they have wine, but they would have the best wine? Is that the whole point? Such a minor note for so great a son of God, is that how he is to commence his public ministry? There's got to be something more.

And I'm avid to find it. Well, what I think the interpreters don't know is that all of that water, six stone pots with so many gallons in each is more than just for the washing of hands. It says for purification, but you know what a mikvah is? Where women go after their monthly period into a kind of a small pool and bathe.

And that's cleansing from impurity. And I'm remembering my first visit to St. Petersburg was then Leningrad and we went to the synagogue and they showed us in the basement that they had rigged up the mikvah, M-I-K-V-A-H, so that there would be flowing water. And I somehow remembered that early this morning, that unless there's flowing water, it's not considered a valid source of cleansing.

And that's why these six stone jars are full, so that when it's time for the employment of that water for purification, there's enough volume of water to flow. I don't know how they did it. They didn't have valves, they didn't have pumps, but I'm imagining that's why those six stone jars stood.

Six, what about that? Why not five jars or four or eight? Six is the number of men. And this miracle takes place on the third day. Shouldn't we consider the significance of these numbers? On the third day,

Hawkins back reminds me of that remark in Hosea on chapter six.

Come, let us return to the Lord, for it is he who has torn and he will heal us. He has struck us down and he will bind us up. After two days, he will revive us.

And on the third day, he will raise us up that we may live before him. Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His appearing is as sure as the dawn.

You guys know that Israel is coming to the commencement of the third day? But there's a tearing that yet is part, a necessary part of the nation's experience. He will tear, he will rip, he will judge, he will bring expulsion and judgment then. But on the third day, he will raise us up.

So on the third day is this miracle. But I can't help but think that this is more than just an accidental number, but somehow a significance that we should not miss. Because the six stone pots have for me as a Jewish believer, a melancholy note.

Can you just picture them? This is a statement of Judaism. This is a statement, well, there's the Jewish Judaism, but there are Gentile equivalents of religion in the world that is ceremonial, that is traditional and stagnant. And yet the miracle takes place through the employment of these six stone pots.

I have never asked until the early morning hours in England this morning why the servants who drew out the water could not have brought it directly to the table as wine. Why the necessity for this additional senseless act of drawing the water out, evidently there was a well outside the building and they had to draw it up from its depths and bring it and fill up those stone pots to the brim and then draw out some and that became the wine. Why couldn't they, having drawn the water, brought it directly to the table in the process of which it would have become wine? No, it only becomes wine when it's added to what already is, that is ceremonial and stagnant.

And when it reaches the brim in a new way by the addition of these waters, then it becomes wine but not before. If you never heard anything good before this, you're hearing it now. Now, this has a special significance for me because when this trip is over that began in Macedonia and went on through all those nations, I am not returning to Minnesota, I am going to New York because the Lord has made clear a few months ago that I am to lay aside all ministry to the church in the world because I've been in recent months to India, Chile, Brazil, Israel itself, other nations, Canada, Mexico, I can't even keep up.

You're to lay all that down. I've got books in every language, many languages, I'm sorry, many languages, not every language although I think that they deserve it. And when the Lord says to a man as prolific and as widely traveled as this to the church, cease from your activity to the church and move to New York and give yourself an exclusive attention to the Jewish community of New York, then I can well agree with the brother at whose church I first shared this, a Jewish brother whom I had led to the Lord and was an elder in our community for many years and now a pastor, took the microphone when I finished and he got up and he said, arts call to New York City, or to the Jewish community of New York City is a bell tolling for all the church.

It means that the times of the Gentiles is close to being fulfilled and the Lord is turning in earnest now in full attention to the Jewish people and sending a Jewish servant and making that his exclusive attention. You can pray for me. I have no program, no agenda.

I just rented an apartment on the day before I left for this trip. A thousand dollars a month. How are you gonna afford that art? I can't.

But it's considered a reasonable bargain in New York City. So, I'm suspecting that not the least of the purposes to which I'm being called to the Jewish community of New York is not only to communicate something to them, which of course they desperately need, but to receive something from them, which I desperately need. Because after all, before my conversion, I was a secular Marxist, ex-Marxist atheist who was bar mitzvahed at the age of 13 so that my mother could cry her appropriate tear or two.

But other than that, I do not have a substantial acquaintance with the Jewish tradition and inheritance that my people have cultivated, nurtured and preserved through the millennia. And I think somehow, if I'm going to be related to them, I need to have this kind of familiarity. But more than that, I'm a bridge between the Jewish community and the church.

And the church desperately needs some dimension of understanding about this people that they could not of themselves have. It's really remarkable. As many Jews as are around us, London has at least 300,000.

There is little actual contact between Christians and Jews. We know of them, they're there somehow, but we don't have any contact, any relationship. We don't go to their synagogues.

We would feel self-conscious if we did. And yet the church has a mandate toward the Jew, which if it's not fulfilled, that people remain both in their ignorance and in their potential death. So this issue of some knowledge, some familiarity, some increased impetus toward them is important.

Well, Art, what can we possibly glean from unbelieving Jews? Much in every way. Even though their waters are stagnant, they're still waters. Even though it's ceremonial, it goes back to an earlier and biblical requirement that has been transmuted through the generations till it becomes stone pots, partially filled.

But somehow the Lord's use of them encourages me to believe that far from knocking those stone pots down, which was his possibility, he employs them. And except they be employed, there's no water turning to wine. So what shall we say about other ceremonial pots that are around us that are called Christendom or Christianity or the denominations or other aspects of things that we would, as being the sharp cutting edge and the spirit people of God, that we would either ignore or condemn, that God says, no, neither have I destroyed those pots nor have I neglected them, but I have employed them and transmuted what was stagnant into wine by the addition of something that requires my servants to go out and to draw up from the deeps water and fill it to the brim and then draw off.

This speaks to me, I don't know if it speaks to you. This not only is therefore significant to my own relationship with the Jewish community, but it's significant for the avant-garde segment of the church, which I'm assuming you are because you almost didn't call on me, the really spiritual segment of the church whose tendency would be either to ignore or to condemn the more traditional and historic aspects of the church that in really, in truth, it's not an exaggeration to say that they could be represented by the number six, being men, institutional, and being stone pots, which is cold, foreboding, not at all inviting, and only partially filled and what they're filled with is stagnant. If that's not a description not only of contemporary Judaism, but the contemporary Christendom, I don't know what is.

So there's a wedding here. It's interesting that neither the bride nor the groom are at all referred to in the text. That gives me the liberty to say that if this is on the third day, it's really a kind of symbolic suggestion

of a wedding that is soon to come for a wife that has been unfaithful to the bridegroom that is going to be restored and that is to be taken back again into bridal relationship on the third day.

Okay. Huh? More about that? I don't know that I can. You help me.

But I'm getting Holy Ghost chills if that helps. And we need to know that. Dear saints, the issue of the Jews of Israel, God's purposes with them in the last days and their entry into the millennial destiny, which is the third day or a seventh day.

By the way, I'm told that these weddings of old were seven days long. We don't know on which day Jesus came with his disciples, but the fact that the wine had run out indicates that they were probably at the end of their celebration of the number seven, which is completion, and Israel. And I'm not speaking now about the present political state.

I'm talking about a nation of dispersed Jews over the face of the earth, many of whom are in your London, where my own mother comes from in the East End, the White Chapel, and where I'll be seeing my Uncle Harry Saturday after I'm finished with you and before I go to Wales, where I'll be meeting with a rabbi who teaches Judaism at the University of Wales. So, I don't know what the Lord's gonna say after this, but it won't hurt if I find myself repeating myself and amplifying that you need to know, as believers, you need to have a component of your faith, central to your faith, that has an anticipation of a glorious consummation for a nation who has shamed its Lord and blasphemed his name in every nation where we have been cast. But in the end, not because of our virtue or because of our deserving, but because our God is by his nature merciful, we shall be restored, and there shall be a wedding.

There shall be a reunion and a taking again of a wife who has gone a-hooring after other gods to come back to her husband in a celebration that perhaps provided the setting for this miracle because Jesus was wanting to say from the very commencement of his ministry something of the symbolic importance of the people of Israel for the church of all generations, particularly at the end, something at the first that will be significant for us at the end. Now, here's what I'm thinking. Because we have lacked this kind of understanding that has to come to us prophetically, we have not gone out and let down our buckets and drawn up waters from the deep.

We are, for the want of the true appropriation or understanding of the significance of Israel, we have not let our own buckets down. And we have condemned ourselves to a certain kind of shallowness and superficiality for the want of having the commandment from the Lord to fill those stone jars. Because we have ignored what those stone jars represent and have not understood that as servants of God, we ought to complete and bring those stagnant waters up to the brim by something that only we can bring as servants of God of the waters of life if we will draw it up from the deeps.

We have not drawn it up because we have not had a vehicle, a purpose for the drawing up. That is to say, the church is not the church in any apostolic and prophetic sense until it has come into its relationship with Israel and the Jew that compels it to be what it must. We have condemned ourselves to a kind of shallowness in the indifference and the loss of the relationship with this people that God intends as normative for us and the Lord demonstrates in his very first miracle.

There's a whatsoever he saith unto you that we need to hear. I want in this new call to New York to draw up waters from the deep and add it to the stagnant thing that now exists because when it reaches the brim, something is turned to wine and makes the wedding a really festive occasion and becomes the wine

that God has saved for the last, which is the best. We are the issuer of servants who will do whatsoever he saith, and I don't know why it is, but since the call to New York, that haunting verse out of Revelation about virgins undefiled who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth is very much the same as this.

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. It does not commend itself to our reason, to our logic. The only thing that it commends is that he said it.

So this first miracle is only because he said something, but because he said it, his servants did it, and that constituted the miracle. I think that the Lord is wanting a reiteration of this miracle at the end as it was given at the first, and it will take servants like myself who are hearing the Lord say, go to New York. Go to the Jewish community in London.

Go to a synagogue in your locality. Make contact with this people. Seek me in a way that contact with them will compel you to draw up my waters from the deep that for which you have not had an incentive till now.

So long as you are the center of your own spiritual preoccupation and concern, you don't have the incentive that I intend that will compel you to draw up things from the deep. You need to have an object of concern beyond and other than yourself, which I have intended from the first in my own wisdom that the Jewish people and Israel should be. See how speculative I am? See how I'm just playing with this text and rolling it over in my spirit and what is God saying here? But so far, I like what I'm considering.

And I'm putting it in the context of my own call to New York and what God is wanting for me to obtain as well as to extend. And I know this about my people. I know what I was before I was saved.

Formidable, difficult, intimidating, threatening, intellectual, powerful, impressive people that would, by every reckoning, keep ordinary Christians at arm's length in order to deal with them, in order to relate to them, in order to be for them what God intends will require from us something that no other demand would ever make. And that's in perfect keeping with the whole harmony of New Testament scripture of where Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Why that priority? To the Jew first.

Jesus himself. To wait in Jerusalem until he'd be endued with power. And then, beginning at Jerusalem, and not to Samaria, the uttermost corner of the world, it's always beginning at Jerusalem, to the Jew first.

There's something about the centrality of this people in their chosenness that also makes them, ironically, as they have been mistreated by Christian history, as enemies of the gospel, Paul says, for your sake. You know that verse in Romans chapter 11? I know they're tough. I was tough myself.

But we need that toughness. We need that opposition. They are the enemies for your sake.

Why? Because else we become patsy saints. We become predictable. We become a little closed in culture, speaking to ourselves in familiar accents and ways that warms the cockles of our hearts but touches nothing outside of us.

We need this challenging presence that happens to be also in London and in Sofia, Bulgaria, and in every city that we were, in the Ukraine and in Russia, Jewish presence. I've met them in Japan. Where are they not in their disbursement in the world as the judgment of God while at the same time constituting for the church in the world a presence that cannot be ignored and ought not to be ignored? Those stone pots are

there.

Jesus had not brushed them down and said, they're finished, they're archaic, they're of old dispensation. Now the new is coming and I'm going to institute that with my first miracle. Hey, you guys.

Let's be instructed by the text. He did not destroy them. He could have and that would have been a statement for all time that Judaism is defunct, it's finished, there's no value to be had in it at all.

I'm doing a new thing, that's why I have come and nothing like that. Far from destroying, he not only observes and almost to say honors in a melancholy way those vestigial stone pots sit standing there six in number but employs them. Go and fill those pots is a strenuous word.

They were only partially filled. So you imagine the amount of water that had to be pumped or drawn up and then lifted up and deposited in each of those six pots before it reached the brim and if it didn't reach the brim, no miracle. Don't say, well, it's more or less filled, Lord.

I'm out of breath and I'm not in the condition I once was and isn't that enough? No, up right to the brim. You know, if you ever go to a Jewish Shabbat, an Orthodox Shabbat when they have kiddush which is what has become for us the Lord's table, the wine and the bread. What I observed in Brooklyn when I attended one of these Lubavitcher Hasidic Shabbats, these are the ultra-Orthodox Jews, is that the cup is on a plate or a little saucer and the man is pouring the wine and I'm wanting to steady his arm saying, hey, you're getting perilously close to the brim, enough now but I can't restrain him.

My Jewish sense of economy has got to go because he overflows the cup and then I said later, I asked, why did he do that? They say, they always do that because if it does not overflow and drip into the saucer, it's considered invalid. Now, I know you British saints, very reserved, you know, so much utilitarian, so much invested for so much obtained, put the pot on and you know, but there's something lavish in God. There's something outpoured in God which is his very character.

It's what he is in himself and what he demonstrated at the cross. So right to the brim is almost to say overflowing and you can draw out. So I'm pondering this text in the context of my own call to the Jews in New York City which is perfectly prophetically appropriate.

Why do you say that Art? Because the prophet always draws from the ingredients of his own life and experience. His experience is almost a textbook, almost a text itself and that he has to relate that to what he finds in the word. You know, of all the places that I've traveled in the world and served, nowhere have I been treated more rudely, more disrespectfully than England, particularly when my subject is Israel and the Jew.

I've had experiences that I shake my head in disbelief. Even treated me when I spoke on Romans 11 in the mystery of Israel and the Jew, Israel and the church. When men got up the elders and left the room without even so much as a prayer to conclude the service.

As if I had brought some horrific, ungainly heresy of the most terrible kind that they could not even acknowledge and say thank you but no thank you. One elder had to stand behind to serve the tea and as I dangled my cup I said to him, you dear man, you need to tell your colleagues that they are in threat of judgment because they're not obliged to agree with my particular interpretation of Romans 11 but they have to acknowledge that it was a biblical presentation. But to leave as they did without even a word of concluding prayer or thank you or no thank you puts them in jeopardy before God.

Well, I've traveled all over the world but I've never, and this is more than one episode, there's something in Great Britain, maybe because it's great, maybe because Brit is the Hebrew word for covenant, maybe because there's a lingering British Israelitism where Great Britain or members of it think that they are the real Israel of God. Maybe because the restoration movement thinks that restoration has nothing to do with the Jew and with Israel but the church. Well, for this and for all the reasons, this much is true, I know, there is a deep and particular powerful resistance within the church on things pertaining to the Jew.

And yet God is wanting to say to the church of Great Britain that has one of the largest Jewish communities in the world where already that Jewish community like that of France and Germany has been instructed by leading voices among them to learn another language, pack your bags and be prepared to move. Because already the signs are coming of an anti-Semitic kind as for example, the vandalism and the burning of the synagogue in Wales where we are going. Unprecedented that a synagogue in Wales should be burned and that the Jewish community of Wales has elected and has already sent its prized religious objects to Israel for safekeeping.

What? It's not safe in the United Kingdom? Well, you know that Jews were expelled here in the 13th century and anti-Semitism is just under the surface of your life. So I think that there's something imperative that the church, that the Lord wants the church to note that God is not finished with this people and however they are removed from his present purposes and have not glimpsed his Messiah in the church that purports to represent him and that they continue in their ceremonial way to continue in a kind of melancholy thing represented by six stone pots, God is not finished with them and that something must come to them from the church who are his servants and will do whatsoever he saith and fill those pots by relationship, by bringing some dimension, some measure of the things that only you can draw out from God when you go down into the deeps that will fill and transmute that stagnant water into living waters and even into wine. And if you'll do that for the Jews, what shall we say then about other Judaic forms of religion that are symbolized by the number of six? Methodism in whose building we're now conducting this meeting and the Baptist church and other of the state denominations, even the Pentecostal denominations are doubly dead and my own tendency, and if you'll do that for the Jews, what shall we say then about other Judaic forms of religion that are symbolized by the number of six? Methodism in whose building we're now conducting this meeting and the Baptist church and other of the state denominations, even the Pentecostal denominations are doubly dead and my own tendency would be to scorn them and to look away from them if not actually to knock those stone pots down.

But the Lord is saying that's not an attitude that reveals me or serves my purposes. Far from ignoring or destroying, the new wine that must come must come through them when something will be added to what is already stagnant by what only you can draw forth and bring to the brim. It's a totally different way of looking upon institutional Christendom and Judaism in ways that we would ordinarily scorn it and reject it.

And I'm just suggesting it as an interpretation of this text and that we don't go down deep enough, often enough in order to fill these pots to the brim. We have become a society that talks only to itself in terms that it enjoys and appreciates, but look at us, what's the effect of it and how deep are we going if we have not an incentive of this kind? This is ultimate incentive for ultimate going down. I can't wait to get to New York, not so much to begin with the Jews, but to go down, to seek the Lord, to seek a deeper sense of himself and a knowledge of himself and of his way that when the contact does come, just a word out of my mouth or even just my presence will do something to arrest the attention of Jews who have long ago written us off as not deserving of their consideration.

We went to the synagogue in Sofia, Bulgaria on Saturday morning on Shabbat and sat in the back row and I guess we must have been a bit conspicuous and there's one Jew there who was davening, which means they bow, they go like this because it says with all your heart and all your soul, all your body, all your spirit. And so he was davening, looking at us out of the corner of his eye. Finally we had to go and we had hardly gone out of the building, he chased us out onto the sidewalk and wanted to know who we were and why were we there and one word leading to another and invited us the next day to visit his new Hasidic ultra-Orthodox headquarters in a neighborhood in Sofia, which we did.

And he showed us the entire building and he had prepared refreshments for us and prayed over those refreshments and I'm sitting right alongside him and went who are you? Well I've written a few books and I let him know that I'm a Jewish believer and one thing or another like that and then I said do you mind if we pray? Can I pray for you? Well he says in whose name are you going to pray? I'm gonna pray in the name of the God of Isaac, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, okay. And then I pray a prayer by the Holy Spirit. It wasn't mechanical, it wasn't religious, it wasn't polite, it wasn't obligatory.

It was creative, it was fresh, it was flowing, it was anointed, it was life-giving. I prayed for the Lord to bless the man and bless that outpost. Yes, they're not preaching Christ but they're bringing secular Jews to an awareness of God per se as God.

It's a step in the right direction. I blessed him in his work. They have a school for children and I blessed his safety because when we talked about growing antisemitism, the man is from Israel.

He said the other day, now that you mention it, I was walking in the street and I passed the school and some of the older students saw me with my hat and beard and came over and began mocking and calling me names like nothing I have ever heard and they began to throw stones at me and so I prayed for his protection and God willing, if the Lord should provide the occasion, I'll see that man again. I'll be in touch with his movement which I have already made contact over the last 30 years in Brooklyn, this Hasidic movement. So I'm saying all that to say this, they need something from us that only we can supply if indeed we ourselves have labored to go deep and bring up a source that they have never seen nor considered and that they cannot dismiss as being quote Christian, it's the waters of life but you've got to go down for it and because we have not had them as an incentive, we have not gone down and the shallowness of our present Christianity reveals it even in our best well-meaning intention because something is wanting that God by his wisdom had determined from the first that we would be in a relationship with that people though they are the enemies of the gospel and maybe all the more reason because they are the enemies that would have compelled us to a line of inquiry, of search, of examination, of reading, of study, of prayer, of seeking the Lord that no other people would have compelled.

So I would say the Lord is really calling you to be the church but you cannot be it without a regard for them and that this regard will compel you to send your buckets down often and deeply and to bring up something that will transmute what they already have only in part and that is stagnant waiting your addition and when that comes to the brim, there's a wine, a new wine that is the fit celebration for the wedding that takes place on the third day and last seven days which is the figure of the millennium, a prophetic interpretation of a New Testament text. So Lord, I like what I'm hearing out of my mouth and you've saved this best wine for last. You didn't say this in Russia, you didn't say it in the Ukraine, you didn't say it in Bulgaria or Macedonia, you're saying it here, here in this nation where I have received more insult, more rejection because I bear this burden and this message than anywhere else in the world.

There's something in England, there's something in Great Britain that's intransigent and stiff against the Jew. I don't know why Lord, you know it but I would say that the true church in the nation must not share that characteristic. Rather, it must have the respect and even the esteem for those melancholy six stone pots and not ignore them or what they represent but know that except that we work through them and add to them the new wine, my God, that really celebrates you because the text says that in this beginning of miracles that Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory and his disciples believed on him that there's something in the last days both for those who believe upon you and the manifestation of your glory that waits for a miracle of this kind and it's something that only your servants can perform.

They've got to let the buckets down, they've got to fill to the brim, they've got to draw off because whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. So my God, we thank you that what was expressed at the first has unparalleled significance for that which is now at the end. Let these children, hearing this word, receive it not just as instruction but as mandate as if you yourself are saying, do it, do it, let down your bucket, search me, seek me in a new way because this people will require that of you and fill up their pot, visit them, make contact, be in relationship, open new doors of contact and bring something that will glorify me and my disciples will believe on me.

So I bless this church, Lord, what is represented in this room and those who received this word through the recording, thank you my God that this is that hour that calls for a reiteration of what was at the first by those who are your servants now and are hearing you through servants that what you're saying, they will do, thank you my God. That saves us from airy and phantasmal spirituality. This is actual, this is specific and this is performable.

May we hear your heart and perform it to the everlasting praise of your glory and that many might believe on you and we thank and give you praise in Jesus' name, amen.

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