

take out from them and carry to the director of the feast. They did so, and found that it was wine. The hospitable home had now plenty and to spare, but the wonder would be with regard to Him who had wrought the miracle. How all who were there would tell the wonderful story, and how eagerly others would hear it.

But why would Jesus make wine? Remember that wine was the common drink of the country. Not the strong drink of to-day, but the light wine of the country, and they used to mix that with two or three times its bulk of water. There was not drunkenness. There were no open saloons or bars. There was not strong drink on every hand. Did Jesus live in our land and our time, He would have nothing to do with wine, but He just adapted Himself to the innocent practices of the land and time when He was on earth with regard to food and drink.

1. Jesus' first miracle was to make glad a home. He loves the simple, pure joy of home.

2. Jesus should not only be invited to every wedding, but made a constant dweller in every home.

3. Jesus cares for even our temporal wants, and these should ever be taken to Him.

2 Sept.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple.

Les. John 2: 13-25.
Mem. vs. 13-15.

Gol. Text John 2: 16.
Catechism Q. 91.

Jesus was moving rapidly about. He had come to the Jordan to His baptism and temptation. After two months He had returned to Gallilee and performed the miracle at Cana, as we learned in last lesson.

Only a few days later we find Him, in the present lesson, back at Jerusalem at the Passover feast.

Going to the temple, He found that a great many wrong things were done in this way about the temple. Jews from distant parts of that land, and Jews from foreign lands, could not bring animals for sacrifice. They would have to buy them in Jerusalem. To supply these there sprang up quite a trade in cattle and sheep.

The sellers, like butchers in a market, were anxious to get the best place for selling, and crowded up until they had their stalls in the courtyard of the temple itself.

Again those who came from other countries would not have the Jewish half-shekel to pay their offering at temple, and money changers were a great convenience. These, too, had worked their way in. They were often dishonest, and would take advantage of the ignorance of strangers and charge them more than they ought to, so, a place of worship, this part of it was, as Christ says, "a house of merchandise."

He saw the wrongs and abuses in the temple. He had no doubt often seen them before and mourned over them, but He had not on these other times felt that it was His time to interfere. But now He has begun His public work as the Son of God, and He has a right to drive the wrong out of His Father's house.

He picks up some cords, makes a small light whip, drives out the sheep and oxen. He is but One; the traders are many, but they do not dare resist Him. The cattle go crowding and thronging into the street. The owners follow them. There is something in the young man from Nazareth that makes them afraid. Their consciences, too, tell them they are guilty, and they go out to look after their cattle as best they can in the narrow, crowded streets of the city.

The money tables, too, where the money changers sit and often cheat strangers, these he upsets and the money goes rolling over the stone floor. They quickly gather up their scattered money and slink quietly out, glad to get away from that piercing eye and that accusing voice, that makes them feel so guilty and mean.

The priests and scribes, the rulers of the temple, look on and wonder what strange young man that is that takes so much upon Himself. Then they ask Him why He does this, what authority He has for it, and He says to them in substance: Put me to death, destroy my body, and in three days I will arise again. This will show me to be God, as well as man, and will show my right to do what I am doing. He called His body a temple, and they did not understand what He meant.

The Jews perhaps forgot all about that, but when, two or three years after, He rose from the dead, His disciples remembered these words.

He did a good many other miracles at this passover feast. We are not told what they were, but a good many people believed in Him.

This was at the beginning of His public ministry, and once again at its close, two or three years later, He found that the traders were back again, as bad as before, and again He drove them out.

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EDITOR: REV. E. SCOTT.

Office, Y.M.C.A. Building, Montreal.