

SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

FIRST SIGN (2:1-11)

A Wedding in Cana of Galilee

By Arlen L. Chirwood

The first recorded sign in John's gospel, stated to have been *the beginning of signs* in Christ's previous earthly ministry (v. 11), occurred *AFTER six days ON the seventh day* (cf. 1:29, 35, 43; 2:1). And the seventh day, the seventh 1,000-year period, is *EXACTLY* when the events which this sign foreshadows will occur (ref. a previous pamphlet in this series, Part II of the four-part introduction.).

This first sign is *NOT* about events occurring during a marriage *per se* but about events occurring during festivities following the marriage. This sign foreshadows both the nation's restoration (a nation which, at this time, will already be God's wife) and the wedding festivities which follow.

That to which the sign points *will occur AFTER Man's Day has run its course*, a day which will last 6,000 years; *it will occur AFTER God has completed His dealings with Israel during Man's Day; it will occur NOT ONLY AFTER the present dispensation has run its course BUT ALSO AFTER the last seven years of the previous dispensation* (Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week) have run their course, completing Man's Day; and *it will occur AFTER Gentile world power has been put down and destroyed*, in accord with Dan. 2:44, 45; 7:23-28; 8:23-25; 9:27; 11:36-45; Rev. 19:11-21.

The things which these marriage festivities foreshadow *will occur AFTER Israel's repentance has been effected; they will occur DURING the Lord's Day, at the very beginning of the Messianic Era; and they will mark the BEGINNING point of Israel coming into a com-*

plete realization of the reason God called the nation into existence three and one-half millenniums ago.

Two Wedding Festivals

Two separate wedding festivals will occur at the end of Man's Day. One will occur *in heaven*, having to do with *Christ and His bride* (Rev. 19:7-9); and the other will occur *on earth*, having to do with *God and Israel* (John 2:1ff). The former is *the first thing* seen occurring in the Book of Revelation at the end of six days, on the seventh day; and the latter is *the first thing* seen occurring in John's gospel at the end of six days, on the seventh day.

The wedding festivities seen in Rev. 19:7-9 will occur *in heaven* immediately preceding Christ's return, and the wedding festivities foreshadowed by John 2:1ff will occur *on earth* shortly after Christ has returned. And the Tribulation *will serve a dual purpose* in the preceding respect.

Judgments During the Tribulation

The judgments seen within the seven-sealed scroll (Rev. 5ff) — judgments occurring during and immediately following the Tribulation — have to do *with the redemption of the inheritance*, in the antitype of Boaz redeeming the inheritance at the gate of the city in Ruth chapter four. And, as in the type in the Book of Ruth, the bride, previously singled out through events at the judgment seat (Ruth 3:6ff; Rev. 1-3), will become Christ's wife through His subsequent redemption of the inheritance.

Then, with the marriage occurring in this manner, *the festivities surrounding the marriage* are seen occurring in heaven immediately before Christ returns to the earth to complete the redemption of the inheritance, resulting in the previously revealed bride becoming His wife.

And these same judgments effecting the redemption of the inheritance and the marriage of Christ and His bride, will also serve two purposes relative to Israel. These judgments *will NOT ONLY*

result in Israel's repentance being effected *BUT* they will, as well (as with Christ and His bride), result in the remarriage of God and Israel.

The nation will be brought through such dire straits during this time *that the Jewish people will be left WITHOUT a place to turn OTHER THAN to the God of their fathers. THIS is the place* to which God brought the Israelites in Egypt during Moses' day, under the persecution of a past Assyrian (Ex. 3:1ff; cf. Isa. 52:4). And, in complete keeping with later promises (Lev. 26:40-42; II Chron. 7:14 [God's actions toward His people *NEVER change*, in complete accord with *His unchangeable, eternal Word*]), God *THEN* sent a deliverer to His people.

EXACTLY as during the persecution under a past Assyrian in the type in Exodus, when the Israelites have been brought to the end of themselves and do that stated in the first part of Lev. 26:40-42 or II Chron. 7:14 (*repent, confess their iniquity*), *God will THEN do EXACTLY what He has stated in the latter part of these verses (forgive their sin, and heal their land).*

And, as in the type in Exodus, God will, at THAT time, send the Deliverer — the One greater than Moses — to bring that which He has promised to pass.

Through the judgments of the Tribulation, Israel's repentance will be effected, allowing for cleansing of the nation's harlotry and allowing for that foreshadowed by the first sign in John's gospel — an event to occur following Israel's cleansing, on the seventh day, during the seventh millennium, during the earth's coming Sabbath. And, as wedding festivities will occur in heaven in association with the bride becoming Christ's wife, wedding festivities will also subsequently occur on earth in association with Israel being restored as the wife of Jehovah.

(For additional information concerning type-antitype teachings pertaining to the seven-sealed scroll in Rev. 5, as it would relate *to the earth, Israel, and the Church* — as these judgments have to do with *the redemption of the inheritance* [redemption of the earth, with the government changing hands] *and marriage* [Christ and His bride, God and Israel] — refer to the author's books, *Ruth*, Ch. IX, and *The Time of the End*, Chs. VIII, IX.

Also, for additional information concerning the judgments within the seven-sealed scroll resulting in Israel's repentance and subsequent restoration, again refer to the author's book, *The Time of the End*, Chs. X-XIX.)

In Cana of Galilee

"Cana" is a name found in John's gospel alone (2:1, 11; 4:46; 21:2), except for the probable reference to this village through the statement, "Simon the Canaanite" (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18).

(The use of "Canaanite" could refer to either a village in the land of Canaan or to the land itself ["Canaan" is an ancient name which covers all the land west of the Jordan, later called "Palestine" by the Romans (cf. Num. 34:1-12; Joel 3:4)]. But, since Simon is singled out as a "Canaanite" in both gospels, among others from the land of Canaan, it would be far more likely that the reference would be to the village of Cana rather than to the land of Canaan.

Also, the only two places in the New Testament where the land of Canaan is specifically referenced [Acts 7:11; 13:19], a slightly different spelling of "Canaan" appears in the Greek text — *Chanaan*, as opposed to *Kanaan*, the root form from which the Greek word *Kananites* ["Canaanite"] is derived in Matt. 10:4 and Mark 3:18.)

The site of Cana of Galilee, however, is unknown today. Galilee formed the northern part of the land of Canaan, and two sites north of Nazareth have, at times, been regarded by archaeologists as the place where Cana existed 2,000 years ago.

But all that can be known for sure about the location of Cana of Galilee at the time of Christ's first coming is that this village would have been located in the proximity of Capernaum (John 2:12), which was on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The meaning of the word "Cana" in the Hebrew text (*kana* [or *qana*]) has to do centrally with the thought of *jealousy*. And, since the wedding festivities in John chapter two foreshadow wedding festivities surrounding the restoration of Israel, such a meaning would be *very fitting* for the location of the festivities forming this first sign.

"Jealousy" has to do with *exacting exclusive devotion*, and in the case of "God and Israel," it would have to do with *God expecting/requiring devotion of this nature from His wife*. Actions emanating from jealousy, in this respect, have to do with *being watchful, being careful to guard one's rights, with a rival's influence in view*.

The relationship existing between God and Israel in this respect, where the Hebrew word *kana* is used, can be seen in verses such as:

"Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth:

Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God...*" (Deut. 5:8, 9a).

"Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you;

For *the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you...*" (Deut. 6:14, 15a).

"Thus saith the Lord God of hosts; *I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy*.

And I am sore displeased with the heathen [the Gentiles] that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction" (Zech. 1:14b, 15).

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; *I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury*.

Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain" (Zech. 8:2, 3; cf. Isa. 2:1-5).

God's jealousy surrounding Israel has to do with any departure the nation might take from the proper Husband-wife relationship which the Husband Himself had established and set forth. And Israel, in her dispersion among the nations (having committed all types of departures — e.g., going after other gods, committing harlotry with the nations), has taken God's jealousy, resulting in His fury, to a point where

His wrath will be poured out without measure in order to effect repentance on the part of His adulterous wife, resulting in restoration.

This is the central thought behind the exhibition of God's wrath during Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week. This wrath will fall centrally upon Israel, though the nations will feel this wrath as well. The nations will feel God's wrath during this time, NOT ONLY for reasons given in verses such as Gen. 12:3 and Zech. 1:15 BUT because the Jewish people will be scattered among the nations, occupying the position seen in Rev. 17:1, 15 (existing as a people part and parcel with the nations of the earth).

God's manifested wrath during this time will have to do with a jealous God being brought to a particular place, through His adulterous wife's disobedience. And God will manifest His wrath as seen in Revelation chapters six through the opening verses of chapter nineteen — a wrath previously revealed by prophet after prophet throughout the Old Testament.

And, through God's sovereign control of all things, His wrath toward His adulterous wife is seen resulting in that for which this wrath will have been manifested.

Israel's harlotry is seen reaching an apex during Daniel's Seventieth Week. And at that time — resulting from God's wrath, bringing the Jewish people to the end of themselves and to the place of repentance — the nation's harlotry will be brought to an end.

ONLY AFTER Israel has repented can the events foreshadowed in John 2:1ff occur.

In this respect, it is very fitting that the first sign in John's gospel occurs in "Cana of Galilee." This sign, through the location of the event, depicts the jealous nature of God toward Israel; and, as an ultimate outcome of God's jealousy toward Israel, matters will be brought to pass EXACTLY after the manner seen in the sign.