

The whole region was alive with talk about a young rabbi who was said to be doing many “miracles” in the region around Cana and also in Jerusalem. I am always amazed at how quickly news travels these days and also how strange some of it is. Seriously now, they are saying that this young rabbi attended a wedding in Cana the last time he and his followers were in the area and that he changed water into wine! Not just any wine but the best wine they had ever tasted. And, not only that but there was more than enough for everyone. They say he took six, six ritual jars of water (you know they hold 20 to 30 gallons each) and he changed the water into the best wine they had ever tasted. This comes from some of those who attended the wedding – I wonder how much wine they had before this happened!

Then comes the news from Jerusalem that he almost caused a riot in the Temple when he was there. Seems like he was upset with the corruption he found in the Temple there among the money changers and animal sellers. Now we all know they charge far more than the animals would cost elsewhere and the money changers have such a high exchange rate to turn Roman coins into Temple ones – it is outrageous. Word is he turned the place upside-down. I mean can you see a young rabbi turning over the tables. He literally drove some of these sellers out of the Temple with a whip. I can just see a young rabbi chasing these old men with a whip – wish I had been there. Of course this made him popular with the common people and very unpopular with the Temple authorities and priests. Seriously now, what was he thinking? Causing such a commotion. There are some powerful men in the Temple priesthood. They have even reported that he said “if the Temple were destroyed he would rebuild it in three days.” No one could accomplish a feat such as that.

There is another rumor, a rumor that he walked through Samaria and that he spent time in a Samaritan village and talked with a woman there. Do you know how much Samaritans and Jews hate each other? Most of us walk around Samaria and avoid it all together. Why would he go through Samaria and then talk to a woman, a woman of poor reputation too? Seriously now, any rabbi would know better. Rumor is she has had five husbands and the man she is living with now is not her husband. You would think he would know better than engage in such conversations, and alone at Jacob’s well. I won’t even go into what he is said to have said about places of worship. And then word is that he stayed in the village for two days. He would have to eat their food, even go into their homes. Seriously now, what is this young rabbi thinking?

Now normally I would just pass all of this off as gossip and rumor. You all know how most people (none of you) exaggerate things. At first I thought, maybe one of his followers had a few wineskins with him at the wedding and shared what he had when the wine ran out. You know how stories gain a life of their own. Why by next year it will be 12 jars of water into wine rather than six! And the uproar in Jerusalem may be a little loud shouting but driving people out with a whip, seriously now!

I mean this is what I would have thought until my son came down sick. I didn’t think much about it at first. A simple childhood cold or flu, something he would get over quickly in a few days. However, he continued to get worse. The doctor came, examined him, took us into the other room and shook his head and spoke softly to us. He said there was nothing else he could do. He said we should prepare for the worst to happen. There was nothing he could do. Nothing we could do.

I began to wonder. If this man can change water into wine could he not heal my son? Word was that he was back in the region. Cana is not that far from where I lived in Capernaum. It would not be too far out of his way to come and heal my son. So I set out to find him and bring him back with me. He was my last hope.

He was not at all what I had expected, although I am not sure what I expected. He was surrounded by so many people. Rich, poor, men, women and even children were around him, touching him. I wondered if I would be able to get close. Humble is a good word to describe him. He didn't seem to be in a hurry. He stopped and talked with everyone that came by. He seemed genuinely interested in everything going on around him. Everyone seemed to be so important to him. I wondered if he would have anything to do with me, an official in the royal palace. I mean, the rumor that he threw out those in the Temple, would he equate me with them? My dress certainly gives me away. But there was no other option, my son was sick.

He did not turn me away. In fact, he looked straight into my eyes. I could feel his compassion and understanding as he looked at me. I could not turn my eyes away from his. He then said something about my wanting to see "signs and miracles." I didn't want to see any signs or miracles. I didn't want him to change water into wine or anything like that. I just wanted him to come back with me to my house and heal my son. You know what he told me? He simply told me to go home and my son would live. "Go home, your son lives." Was this a test of faith? I am not sure why I believed him but I did. There was confidence, authority and assurance in the words he spoke. His look was so full of compassion. I took him at his word and started home. My heart was beating so fast. I left and headed for home.

While I was on the way I saw one of my servants come running towards me. My son must have died. I was sure he was bringing bad news. Why else would he be running to find me? As he came up to me he was breathless and he said, "Your son is well." I questioned him when and he said it was at about 1 p.m. the day before. This was the exact time Jesus had told me that he would live. I began to cry. I hardly was able to believe my servant but I know he would not lie. The words the young rabbi spoke had come true. I now believe all the stories about him.

I will believe whatever they tell me about him. The water into wine. The clearing out of the Temple. His concern for the Samaritans. Seriously now, my son lives because of him. I can't stop telling my story. Telling about how he simply spoke the word and my son lived. How I looked into his eyes and saw a compassion that I have never seen in another human. They say he is God's son – I agree – once you have looked into his eyes you will discover a love beyond anything you can imagine. Because of him I have a belief that all things are possible. Because of him I now know the love of God. Because of him the deep spiritual hunger of my soul is filled. Because of him I have tasted living water.

Seriously now, my prayer is that you too may know him as I now know him.