

John 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

Analysis

The six stone water jars 'after the manner of the purifying of the Jews' held water for ritual washing. Each contained 20-30 gallons—120-180 gallons total. The stone material indicated these were for purification use. Jesus transforms vessels of ceremonial cleansing into containers of celebratory wine. The old covenant's cleansing rituals give way to new covenant abundance. Water for washing becomes wine for rejoicing.

Historical Context

Jewish purity laws required ritual hand washing before meals. Stone vessels were preferred because they didn't contract ritual impurity like clay. The six jars (one short of seven, the number of completion) may symbolize the incompleteness of the old covenant that Jesus fulfills.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the transformation of purification water into wine picture the relationship between law and grace?
2. What 'stone jars' of religious ritual might need to be filled with Christ's new wine in your life?

Interlinear Text

ἦσαν	δὲ	ἐκεῖ	ὕδρια	λίθιναι	ἕξ	κείμεναι	κατὰ	τὸν
there were	And	there	waterpots	of stone	six	set	after	G3588
G2258	G1161	G1563	G5201	G3035	G1803	G2749	G2596	
καθαρισμὸν	τῶν	Ἰουδαίων	χωροῦσαι	ἀνὰ				
the manner of the purifying	G3588	of the Jews	containing	apiece				
G2512		G2453	G5562	G303				
μετρητὰς	δύο	ἢ	τρεῖς					
firkins	two	or	three					
G3355	G1417	G2228	G5140					

Additional Cross-References

John 3:25 (Parallel theme): Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

Hebrews 9:10 (Parallel theme): Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

Ephesians 5:26 (Parallel theme): That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Hebrews 6:2 (Parallel theme): Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 9:19 (Parallel theme): For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with

water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Hebrews 10:22 (Parallel theme): Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

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