

Joh 6:10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

Joh 6:11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.
(NKJV)

The other accounts give another detail, stating that the crowd sat down in groups of fifty and 100, so there were several people there.

Joh 6:12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."

Joh 6:13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

Common rabbinic theme is that we're not wasteful.

Twelve baskets - two interpretations - small baskets carried by disciples

- 12 baskets represent twelve tribes, and 7 baskets from 4000 represent the 7 nations

Joh 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

The Prophet is from the Old Testament Deut. 18:15-19

we'll find out later that the people are wrong, this is not another Moses, this is one greater than Moses.

Joh 6:15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Joh 6:16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea,

Joh 6:17 got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.

Joh 6:18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.

Here John condenses the account so that it's confusing. It sounds like Jesus left to the mountain and then at evening the disciples got into the boat and left.

From the other Gospel accounts we see that Jesus had actually taught the people until evening, which would be why he'd be concerned about them being hungry.

When he sees the way the crowd is heading, he orders the disciples to leave without him, probably so they wouldn't get caught up in the frenzy of kingship and kingdom.

After he sends the disciples away, then he deals with the crowd and departs to the mountain alone.

Matthew adds the detail the he did so in order to pray

Joh 6:19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.

Joh 6:20 But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."

another way of translating "It is I" is also "I am"

Joh 6:21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land

where they were going.

John once again leaves out some details: Peter walking on the water, the storm being stilled; the disciples worshipping.

Mark adds an interesting detail, saying that they were amazed and beside themselves with wonder because they did not comprehend the miracle of the loaves because their hearts were hardened.

Why would comprehending the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand caused them to be less filled with confusion at the calming of the storm and wind?

Baal - god of wind, rain, storm

Jesus is God over Baal just as He was able to provide the bread like God did in the desert.

Psalm 89:8-9

Psalm 93:3-4

What about the boat immediately arriving where it was going?

- 1. another miracle**
- 2. they were so distracted that it seemed like they got there immediately**
- 3. they were nearly there already**
- 4. another reference point back to the deity of Jesus as seen in:**

Psalm 107:23-30

Joh 6:22 On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that

Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone--

Joh 6:23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks--

Joh 6:24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

Joh 6:25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

Joh 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

Joh 6:27 "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

Joh 6:28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

Joh 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

If you're reading in some of other Gospels, you'll notice that they disregard this entire segment and go straight to another section. Luke even doesn't mention the walking on the water and goes straight into Peter's confession at Caesari Philipi.

For John, these conversations are the heart of the section because they provide the commentary and explanation of the significance of what has happened.

Notice that John has basically strung together three different conversations about being the bread of life. vs. 25-46; 47-59; and 60-70.

Notice the typical Jesus pattern of John in verses 25-26 - he ignores the question of the crowd and instead gives them the answer they need, not what they asked.

He tells them that they're not looking for him because they believe in the miracles but because they liked the idea of getting free food, of using Jesus for what they can get out of him, be it bread or a king to free them from Rome. He appeals to them to a different kind

of relationship with him, one that leads to eternal life.

setting a seal on a thing means that it bears the mark of being the authentic and real thing. Notice that when they ask about what they need to do (salvation through good works) he tells them that the only good work sufficient is faith in Him.

Joh 6:30 Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?"

Joh 6:31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

They reject this unless he's willing to perform a sign for them and mention the bread again, challenging him to do something else like Moses.

Joh 6:32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

Joh 6:33 "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

Jesus' reply is another example of the "greater than" idea. Just as Jesus has proclaimed himself to be greater than Jacob, greater than Abraham, greater than Jonah, greater than Solomon, greater than John the Baptist, greater than the temple, here he is greater than Moses because Moses didn't actually give them bread from heaven but Jesus did. Also, since God gave them the manna and then Jesus multiplied the bread, then Jesus must be God.

Now he's going to show the significance of the feeding - that it represents the provision of God as we go through the wilderness of life - that we must take the bread of heaven, the bread the God sends to sustain us, and that bread is speaking to them.

Joh 6:34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

verse 34 is supposed to make you think back to the woman at the well who made the very same request, just about Living water instead of the bread of life.

Joh 6:35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

We should recognize this as a reference back to a challenge and a prophecy from Isaiah 55:1-4 - "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you-The sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people. (NKJV)

Can you name all the "I am's" of Jesus?

- 1. bread of life**
- 2. light of the world**
- 3. door or gate of the sheep**
- 4. the good shepherd**
- 5. the resurrection and the life**

6. way, truth and the life
7. the true vine
8. the son of god
9. alpha and omega - Revelation
10. the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star - Revelation
11. a worm and not a man - Psalm 22

Joh 6:36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

Joh 6:37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

It sounds like they're doing all they can without compromising our free will. God is trying to give people to the Son (more on that in a few verses) and the Son promises to accept any who come as a result of being given.

Yet, we all know of many people from that time until now who have rejected this. Either God didn't want many people to be saved, or there's another factor or factors involved that is interfering, but more about that later....

Joh 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Joh 6:39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

Joh 6:40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

So what is the will of God? That everyone should come to repentance and faith in the Son and have everlasting life and that none who have been saved, who have been given to the Son by the Father (see v. 44 below) should be lost.

This same idea is also found in Paul:

I Timothy 2:1-4, where God is described as one "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" and in Peter

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

and even when Peter talks about Paul,

2 Peter 3:15 "and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you," and even further back in Ezekiel

33:11 - "Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'

Joh 6:41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."

Joh 6:42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

Joh 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.

Complaining and murmuring - these are words that should ring a bell with you about the children of Israel wandering in the wilderness (the miracle took place in a deserted and

lonely place, get the connection?) and how they were always murmuring and grumbling and complaining against Moses but ultimately against God because of their lack of faith in Him. The same thing is happening again thousands of years later.

These complainers and murmurers simply cannot accept that Jesus is anything other than just a common hometown boy like the rest of them, despite the signs they have seen and the pronouncements that Jesus has made.

Joh 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Calvinists in the crowd love verses like 6:44 to prove that we're spiritually dead and that we can't accept the Gospel message and salvation unless we're first predestined by God to do so.

The Armenians and Wesleyans in the crowd also believe this; the difference is that they believe that a person has a choice to accept or reject that salvation once he's been made spiritually sensitive and able by the Spirit to make the choice. (The technical term for that is "quickenings.")

All that leads to two basic questions that are at the heart of many a Denominational discussion and split:

1. Can you resist this call? If grace is a free gift that is not dependent on the works of an individual ("lest any man should boast"), then is or isn't the act of accepting that free gift a "work" that makes salvation dependent on us instead of the grace of God?
2. Can you accept this call and then reject it or lose it later? It seems clear from Scripture that your salvation can't be taken away, but can you choose to give it away?

As we've said so many times before, how you answer those two questions determine whether you're a Calvinist or an Armenian and to what extent you're willing to extend eternal security of your salvation.

What we have is a classic Biblical paradox. We have two statements (the will of God to save the elect versus the free will of man) and two concepts (the Son won't lose any that the Father has given versus persevering unto the end and not falling away) that cannot both be true and yet both are true because both are presented as truth in our ultimate source of truth. The skeptics in the crowd will point to this as an example of how the Bible is the work of man and isn't inspired or infallible or a unified Word of God that doesn't contradict itself.

However, consider this: these paradoxes can point to our belief that the Bible is the work of God, not man and that it is inspired and infallible and unified because they show that it is the thoughts of one who is on a completely different and higher plane of thinking than we.

Isaiah 55:8-9 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." (NKJV)

Joh 6:45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Joh 6:46 "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.

If the people who shall be saved have heard and learned from God but nobody has seen God, then the way they have heard and learned is through the Spirit of God who both sustains and indwells the saved and also quickens and appeals to the unsaved.

In verse 46 Jesus says another of those things that tend to get him trouble, stating once again that He has seen God and has come from God.

Joh 6:47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

Joh 6:48 "I am the bread of life.

Joh 6:49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

Joh 6:50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.

Joh 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

Joh 6:52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

Now, they knew that he wasn't speaking literally. The concept of eating and drinking someone or something was not unique to Jesus and it wasn't the first time they'd heard about something like that. To be quarreling among yourselves about such a thing is a way of showing that they were just refusing to actually to listen to Jesus and were rejecting him by arguing just for the sake of arguing rather than accepting the message or the messenger. And this is also in line with the prophecy of Scripture that is quoted later in John and Matthew to show that the people refused to understand was their minds and hearts had been hardened and dulled by God so that they couldn't accept it:

Isaiah 6:9-10 - And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' "Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed." (NKJV)

This could bring us right back to the free will question, but let's move on.....

Joh 6:53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

Joh 6:54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

Joh 6:56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

Joh 6:57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

Joh 6:58 "This is the bread which came down from heaven--not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

Joh 6:59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

What are we to make of all this? No wonder they complained in verse 60 that it was a hard saying. First off, this is not something to be taken literally, so we're not to become cannibals, but it's no wonder that this was a charge brought against the early Christians. It is not a proof text for transubstantiation. It is not a direct reference to the liturgy of Communion, although John may have, at the time of his writing, had a concept of Communion in mind.

What is it then? Ever hear the story about the two flies on the knife handle? You are what you eat. When you eat something you take it inside you and digest and dissolve it and use it to nourish and sustain you and keep you alive and moving. You absorb it and it becomes part of you.

That is what it means to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. This relationship with

him isn't just a quick run up to the altar once and then a quick sprinkling of water and then you're done. Notice that this is in the present imperfect tense, meaning an action that is done, not once, but continually. This means to take in Jesus and His teachings and Commandments so completely and thoroughly that He becomes part of you and you become what you eat.

(John 6:60) Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" (NKJV)

Remember, when this was first heard, the disciples and would-be disciples didn't have the advantage of knowing the full story and of having the entire New Testament at their disposal and of having a 2000-year hindsight. No wonder they were disturbed.

Joh 6:61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you?"

Joh 6:62 "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"

Joh 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Joh 6:64 "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

Joh 6:65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

Joh 6:66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Joh 6:67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

This is the closest that we'll see to Jesus being discouraged. The way the question is worded in the original indicates an expectation that they'd say that they did want to leave. We'd phrase it something like, "You want to go away too, don't you?"

Joh 6:68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Joh 6:69 "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Joh 6:70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

Joh 6:71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Once again, John uses some super-condensing to keep his story moving. The other Gospels have left out all these conversations about the bread of life and have eventually moved to Caesari Phillipi where Jesus asked the disciples who the people said he was and then who they thought he was and Peters answers that he's "The Christ, the Son of the living God," then Jesus tells Peter that the church will be built upon him and Jesus tells them about he upcoming crucifixion which Peter rejects and gets the harsh rebuke of being Satan.

John skips all of this with just one word, the "also" in verse 69, and then uses the thought of "Get thee behind me, Satan" to look ahead to the identification of Judas.