

John 6vs1-40

SATISFACTION!

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John 6 vs 1-40

Setting the scene...

We are going to start with a trip back to the Old Testament book of Exodus 16 vs 4-8.

Moses is with the people of Israel out in the wilderness, having been able to leave the land of Egypt with God's assistance.

Let's begin by looking at the parallels between Exodus 16 and what we are about to see in John 6:

Read Exodus 16 vs 4-8: *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." 6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, 7 and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?" 8 And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD."*

1. They both take place at Passover time. The Passover was a ceremony in the Jewish calendar when all the Jews looked back and remembered God's rescue of his people from Egypt. They still do today!
2. They both took place in the desert.
3. They both involve God miraculously feeding his people. In the desert God fed his people so that they could make it to the Promised Land. In John, Jesus miraculously feeds his people and tells them he is giving them bread that lasts to eternal life!
4. They both are set up as a "**test**". In the desert God 'tested' his people to see if they would depend on him to bring them to the Promised Land. In John, Jesus tells Philip that this is a "**test**".
5. They both involve God's people grumbling - lots!!
Grumble! Grumble! Grumble!!

Thousands of hungry people fed!!

Now read John 6 vs 1-15: *After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. 2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. 3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." 13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. 14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.*

What is Jesus doing here...?

Firstly, he is feeding his people miraculously, just as God did through Moses at Passover time. This is intended to make us see Jesus as God's new rescuer- the Prophet like Moses for whom God's people were waiting.

- Jesus is doing all this at Passover time:

Read v 4: *Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.*

- It's a period when the entire national consciousness is about being :
 - a) Rescued
 - b) Saved
 - c) Fed
- He does it as a "**test**" to see if God's people will rely on God rather than grumbling at God!

Before we go any further we ought to consider an important side issue:

- Is the feeding of the 5000 a miracle that can be explained away?
 - Some unbelieving Bible scholars have tried to explain away this miracle ...by suggesting that what really happened was that the small boy got his packed lunch out and shared it ...so that all the others who had food with them were prompted to share theirs too!!

- Let's look at what the passage actually says:

Read v 13: *So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.*

Read v 24: *So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.*

Read v 26: *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."*

- What happened must have been BIG enough for the crowds to want more from Jesus.
- It's hardly likely that they all stayed out overnight and then chased him around the next day as if it had all been an elaborate *BRING & SHARE* lunch!!

So Jesus is perfectly clear – he had fed them with “the loaves”.

Back to the story!

Read vs 14-15: *When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, “This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!”¹⁵ Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.*

Can you understand why they said what they said and did in these verses?

Just as Moses had saved them, here was Moses’ “**Prophet**” doing just the same ...hence vs 14-15 make complete sense!

But what does Jesus do?

v 15 **...Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.**

What is he doing by withdrawing and NOT being a political Messiah...come to sack the Romans?

- But - would it not be a distraction from his message of eternal salvation if he had become a political figure?
- “Man” would have Jesus “sort out” today’s world and all its issues – the political Jesus!

- This tells us Jesus did not come to set up a political “state”, not to be a politician sorting out the political problems of this world.
- He has come to rescue, save and feed his people for eternity!

It must have “thrown/confused” the disciples when he withdrew – it surely dumbfounded them!

Jesus walks on water!!

This is a miracle for the disciples’ benefit!

Read vs 16 – 21: *When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17 got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. 20 But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” 21 Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.*

- All (bar Matthew) were experienced fishermen – yet (v 19) they ‘**were frightened!**

Read v 20: *But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.”*

Read v 21: *Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.*

- He takes them straight across the sea to the other side “**immediately!**”
- Once again, some “liberal” Biblical scholars suggest that what Jesus did was to walk out on a sand spit sticking out into the sea of Galilee.
- Can we really believe that!? Remember, the disciples were experienced fishermen!

As the Son of God - through whom all things were made - he sorts out the water in the same way as God did for Moses when the sea was divided.

It’s a new rescue for God’s people...and when? At Passover!

Jesus is the Bread of life

We close by reading John 6 vs 22-40 - Jesus here spells out both what he HAS come to do AND what he has NOT come to do!

Read vs 22-40: *On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23 Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.*

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." 28 Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." 30 So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

There are three more things Jesus has NOT come for...

Read vs 26-27: *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not labour for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."*

Firstly – he has NOT come to pay our mortgage!

There is something much more important than that!

What is so shocking about vs 26-27?

- Just as in v 15 Jesus refuses to be made into a political Messiah come to sort out our political problems...
- ...so here he refuses to be a food-providing Messiah come to sort out our material problems.

What were the people looking for? FOOD....but Jesus wants the crowd to put their focus on the right thing – *Eternity*.

- Their bread will “*perish*” – his bread endures to eternal life.
- And remember this was an agrarian subsistence society that focused on their daily need, and this is a group of people who haven’t eaten since the day before ...when he fed the 5000!

Jesus has NOT come simply to sort out our daily material needs – but our eternal position.

- How does this compare with our usual daily prayers for health, work, wealth, relationships, property, need for a job etc...?

In vs 28-29 Jesus goes even further:

Read vs 28-29: *Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?”* ²⁹ *Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”*

So...

Secondly – he has NOT come to make us religious!

- God would hate that!
- It seems that Jesus’ work is not about getting us to DO religious works!!

Man wants to work to get right with God – just look at this crowd! We see this in all other religions.

But Jesus is NOT interested in our religious works for him

- God does not want them, and he doesn’t like them
- God is not interested in them
- God did not ask for them

What does it mean to do the work of God? There's only one answer.....

TO BELIEVE IN JESUS!

Thirdly – Jesus has NOT come to perform endless signs and wonders on demand! He is no Paul Daniels!!

Read v 30: *So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?”*

We know that Jesus has already said that he has not come to perform signs and wonders at the demand of men. YET still they keep asking for more and more signs!.....How DARE they!!! He has just fed the 5,000!!!

So Jesus has not come:

- As a political Messiah to sort out the problems of the world
- With a material agenda to feed the world
- With a religious programme to make us “religious”
- ...Or as a ‘party trick’ magician from God

What then HAS he come to do?Something much better!!

- Look at v 35 – this is one of the most famous and crucial sayings of Jesus the Saviour....THIS is the work of God:

Read v 35: *Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”*

What has he come to do? He deals in ETERNITY.

Physical and material things – food, property, money, possessions - they will all perish – just like the bread Moses fed the people of Israel with in the desert.

BUT Jesus has come to give us a living... lasting... relationship with God!

This is BOTH absolutely satisfying:

v 35: **“*whoever comes to me shall not hunger*”**

And ETERNALLY rewarding:

v 35: **“*and whoever believes in me shall never thirst*”**

The content of vs 32 -34 makes plain what he means:

Read vs 32-34: *Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”*

- The people honoured Moses as their rescuer...yet it was NOT Moses but GOD who fed the Israelites in the desert!
- This suggests it is not about “the good old days”... venerating MOSES ...nor about the perishable bread with which he fed Israel.
- It simply wasn't Moses, O people of Israel - it was GOD! And God gives food that lasts forever and is eternally satisfying.

vs 36-40 spell this out further:

Read vs 36-40: *“But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”*

What is the WILL of God? Just look again at v 40:

Read v 40: *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”*

- It is about Eternal Life

Summarising vs 37 -40...

- Jesus is on earth to do the will of God
- A God who has, and calls, HIS people...
- ...who Jesus has come to gather for Eternity.

Let's pause and think about the WORK of God and the WILL of God. His work is that we believe in Jesus.

Jesus' work is NOT to...

- Meet our material needs
- Give us religious / charitable works to do by which we might be saved
- Recruit us to a political party
- Perform signs and wonders on demand

God's WILL is that we come to Jesus and be satisfied in and with him forever!

Conclusion

As we close: what is the work and will of God? Just let's look again at Jesus' message:

Read v 35: *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."*

Read v 40: *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."*

Gathering God's people for eternity.....

- it's hardly an easy or popular speech designed to immortalise a man, is it!?
- It is hardly the work of a self-promoting delusional, is it!?

As you read and study this passage we hope you are still interested in studying further....because look what John writes in John 6 v 66:

Read 6 v 66: *After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.*

Why?

- Because he would not do what they wanted him to do...
- ...or he was not what they wanted him to be!

Coming next...

What Jesus says in the next study is so offensive that thousands turn away from him...

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¹ After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. ² And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. ³ Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. ⁵ Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii^[a] would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. ¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

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²² On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. ²³ Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

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