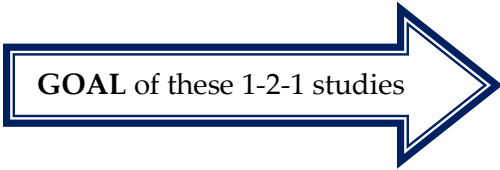


Summary Sheet for John 6 vs 1-71

...to accompany Notes 13-14



GOAL of these 1-2-1 studies

Come to Jesus who alone brings eternal & satisfying rescue and beware of the offence its nature causes

Context – how does this chapter fit in?

In ch 5 Jesus showed himself to be equal with God the Father, with authority to give life and to judge. One of the big questions we're left with at the end of ch 5 is: 'What has Jesus come to do NOW – to give life or to judge?'

Jesus now goes on to identify himself as the true Rescuer who is able to give life, and presses home the implications of his identity and his rescue.

But ch 5 also left us asking the question, 'Why are some of the Jews rejecting the Messiah?' As Jesus explains the nature of his rescue operation, many of the Jews who had been following him start to walk away...

Impact on us

Jesus has come to bring God's rescue that is more permanent and satisfying than anything in history. But it's according to God's agenda, not ours. Jesus brings what is best and what we need but for now it's more spiritual rather than material, political or supernaturally spectacular and not religiously earned. It's available to everyone, but only through Jesus. Will we welcome the rescue Jesus offers, or prefer one of our own making?

How John writes to make his point

Jesus claimed in ch 5 that the Old Testament bore witness about him (5v39). That point is now illustrated by a succession of references to the Exodus - Jesus is the one who God his Father spoke about in the Old Testament. The Old Testament rescue of God's people – the Exodus - was accompanied by signs and wonders to help God's people know and trust him as the God who would faithfully and securely complete their rescue.

John now records similar events - full of Exodus overtones - in ch 6 to show that Jesus is this promised Rescuer, God himself, come to finally and fully rescue and lead his people. He includes several comparisons between the '*manna*' (bread) that came in Moses' time to the bread Jesus gives – superior in every way.

John also draws our attention to the misunderstanding, offence and rejection of many who had followed Jesus. Some believe but many walk away from Jesus - just like the many Old Testament Jews who grumbled against God and so never entered the promised land... They were unable to accept Jesus' true identity and the true nature of his rescue mission that meant dependence on him as the sacrificial Passover lamb of God was the only way to be rescued.

Structure

6 vs 1-21 - The signs: evidence that Jesus has come to perform God's rescue.

6 vs 22-40 - Why did the crowds follow Jesus? Motives exposed, signs explained, and an invitation extended.

6 vs 41-51 - The scandal of Jesus' identity - "*How does he now say 'I came down from heaven'?*"

6 vs 52-59 - The scandal of Jesus' rescue - "*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*"

6 vs 60-71 - The scandal of people's response – *many walk away...*

Trip hazard and red herring alert - Some argue against a miraculous feeding and walking on water, eg arguing the boy's generosity prompted a huge bring and share lunch. The text makes clear these are miracles – eg v9, 13-14. Some argue that the communion/eucharist is the way to 'eat' Jesus' flesh and drink his blood in v53-56 but the image is metaphorical referring to coming to Jesus in belief. Compare v40 and v54 and see v63.

John's references to the Old Testament and why they matter

-The Passover Feast

This was an annual festival instituted by God to ensure that His people remembered their miraculous rescue from Egypt under Moses' leadership. Every year, at the time of the feast, the killing and eating of the Passover lamb would remind God's people of this event. The mention of 'eating flesh and blood' in connection with the Passover would conjure up images of this lamb, sacrificed in the place of people.

-Manna

The miraculous provision of bread – called 'manna' – sustained the Israelites day by day. (Exodus 16v14)

-The Prophet

In Deuteronomy 18vs15-18, God promised Israel a new prophet 'like Moses' who would lead them as Moses had done.

-Walking on water

The rescue of the Exodus involved two miraculous partings of water (Exodus 14 & Joshua 3vs13-16).

Around the time of the exile, when Israel was driven away from the Promised Land, God promised a new rescue which would take the form of a new Exodus under a new leader (Isaiah 11vs15-16) – at this time God himself would lead his people across the water to safety.

- Jesus' words to his disciples in John 6 v20, "It is I" are literally, "I AM" – the name for God in the Old Testament (Exodus 3).

-Grumbling

One of the most notable characteristics of the Jews during the Exodus period was their constant refusal to trust God for their rescue. Instead of trusting they grumbled, against Moses and against God (Exodus 16vs2, 7, 12).

-*'They will all be taught by God'*

This quote from Isaiah 54v13 pictures the people of God, redeemed by the Suffering Servant, standing in God's presence and being taught by his word of truth. The point is that those who truly belong to God will listen to Jesus.

Some questions to consider – vs 1-40

Opener: What would we most like Jesus to do for us?

Considering the text1: What do the two miracles (signs) in v1-21 show us about Jesus?

Considering the text2: What references are there in the passage to the time when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt (in particular v4, 11, 14, 19-20)? How do these references (plus Deuteronomy 18vs15-22 & Isaiah 11vs15-16) help us see what these signs are telling us about Jesus' mission on earth?

Considering the text3: What are the contrasts between the crowd's expectations of rescue and Rescuer and the true rescue that Jesus brings?

One to keep chewing on: In what ways do and people generally expect an earthly, materialistic rescue today instead of a spiritual one concerned with the future? Why is Jesus' rescue better?

...vs 41-71

Opener: What aspects of Jesus' teaching do we and our friends find difficult to stomach?

Considering the text1: Why are the Jews grumbling in v41-42? How does Jesus explain their refusal to accept him in v44-46?

Considering the text2: How does the 'bread' Jesus brings compare to the 'manna'/bread in the Old Testament? (Look at vs 47-51 & 53-58)

Considering the text3: By the end of ch 6, what are the various responses to what Jesus has been saying? (The crowd, the disciples, the Twelve)

Ones to keep chewing on: Why do so many disciples take offence at what Jesus has been saying? Where do we see people today turning away from Jesus, offended by his teaching about the need to depend on him and his death alone?