

## John 6:1-40

**Why was the crowd initially following Jesus (v. 2)?** They had previously seen Him heal people and they wanted to see more miracles.

**When Jesus saw the great crowd coming toward Him, what did He ask Philip (v. 5)?** *"Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?"* **Why did Jesus ask Philip that question (v. 6)?** In order to test him.....and then to educate him.

**How did Philip answer Jesus' question (v. 7)?** Even if we could find a place to buy the bread, we don't have enough money to buy it. Philip put his mental calculator to work and concluded that the situation was hopeless. We often limit God the same way when we, like Phillip, can't foresee the possibility of a supernatural answer.

**What was the solution to their dilemma (vv. 9-13)?** It started with prayer.....followed by the miraculous provision of food starting from 5 loaves and 2 fish and ending with an abundance of 12 basketfuls of leftovers.

**What was the response of the people (v. 14)?** The people themselves recognized that it was a miracle. Then people recalled Moses' prediction that a Prophet like him would arise (Deuteronomy 18:15). Moses had fed the people. Moses had led them out of bondage. Jesus had fed the people. Jesus could lead the people out of the hated Roman bondage.<sup>1</sup>

**Why did Jesus withdraw by Himself (v. 15)?** To defuse the crowd. Having witnessed the miracle first-hand, the people wanted to forcefully make Him their political, worldly king. But Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. It is a spiritual kingdom. He would not have the kingdom without the Cross.

**Why were the disciples terrified at the sight of Jesus walking on the water (v. 19)?** Mark reports that the disciples thought Jesus was a ghost (Mark 6:49). John simply describes them as terrified or frightened. After all, nobody walks on water! **What did Jesus say to them (v. 20)?** "It is I; do not be afraid." The words "It is I" are literally "I AM." (See comments below).

**When they realized that it was the Lord Jesus, what did they do (v. 21)?** They welcomed Him into the boat. Immediately they found themselves at their destination. Here another miracle is stated but not explained. They did not have to row any farther. The Lord Jesus brought them to dry land instantly.<sup>2</sup>

**According to Jesus, why were the people now looking for Him (v. 26)?** Not because He was the miracle-working Messiah, but because He could fill their stomachs.

**What does it tell you about the people when they asked Jesus the question, "What must we do to do the works God requires" (v. 28)?** They thought they needed to earn God's favor by doing something. They were performance oriented when it came to pleasing God. They knew nothing of the concept of grace. There is something within the fallen nature of human beings that makes working for eternal life more attractive than receiving it as a gift. That thing is called pride.<sup>3</sup>

**How did Jesus answer the question (v. 29)?** *"Believe in the one He has sent."* The only "work" that God requires of people for salvation is "faith in His Son." Jesus commands us not to do, but to trust. If we want to do the work of God, it begins with trusting Jesus. This is one of the most important verses in the Bible. It refutes the idea of a works-based salvation. Jesus' reply was a flat contradiction of the idea that people can earn salvation with their good deeds alone.

**What did the people ask Jesus for next (v. 30)?** One day previously, they had seen the Lord Jesus feed five thousand men with five loaves and two fish. On the very next day, they came to Him and asked Him for some sign that would prove His claims to be the Son of God. Like most unbelievers, they wanted to see first, and then they would believe. *".....that we may see it, and believe You."* But this is not God's order. God says to sinners, "If you believe, then you will see." Faith must always come first.<sup>4</sup>

**What was their rationale (v. 31)?** They implied that Moses called down food from heaven; the Lord was not as great as Moses, because He had only multiplied *existing* food!<sup>5</sup>

They suggested that producing bread from heaven like Moses did might convince them. No matter what Jesus did, the unbelievers always demanded more.

**How did Jesus respond to their request (vv. 32-33)?** First of all, it was *not* Moses who gave them the manna, but God. Secondly, the manna was not the true spiritual bread from heaven. The manna was literal food, designed for the physical body, but it had no value beyond this life. It was not intended for the whole world but only for Israel. The true bread comes down from heaven and gives life to men—not just to one nation but to all the world.<sup>6</sup>

**How did Jesus respond when the people decided they wanted the bread he offered (v. 35)?** *I am the Bread of Life*. The food of which He spoke refers to a Person, not a commodity. And once a person comes to Jesus and believes, their spiritual hunger and thirst will be eternally satisfied. Christ was bread for the world.

Note: Verse 35 is the first of the seven “I AM” statements of Jesus when He proclaims, “*I am the Bread of Life*.”

**Where do we find the origin of the “I AM” statements?** Exodus 3:14-15: God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.....This is My name forever.” In the Greek translation of the Bible (the Septuagint), the “I AM” of Exodus 3:14 and the “I AM” of John 6:35 are the same Greek words: *Ego eimi*. When Jesus says “I AM” He is declaring Himself to be God.

Application: **In what ways is Jesus your Bread of Life?**

**Jesus then rebuked the crowd for their lack of faith. What was His message to them (v. 36)?** They had the great privilege of seeing Him and yet they did not believe. Seeing does not necessarily lead to believing (cf. v. 30).<sup>7</sup>

**What is the message of v. 37?** This verse is very important because it states in a few words two of the most important teachings in the Bible. The first is that God has given certain ones to Christ and that all those whom He has given will be saved.....a picture of God’s electing grace. The other is the teaching of man’s responsibility or free will.....in order to be saved, a man must come to the Lord Jesus and accept Him by faith.

God makes a universal offer—that if any person will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will be saved (John 3:16). God does not save men against their will. A person must come to Him in repentance and faith. Then God will save him. No one who comes to God through Christ will be driven away.

The human mind cannot reconcile these two teachings. However, we should believe them even if we cannot understand them. They are Biblical teachings and are clearly stated here.<sup>8</sup>

**What is the will of the Father that Jesus stated (v. 39)?** Christ has a firm hold on the true believer. He/she cannot lose their salvation but will be kept until the resurrection when they will be raised and taken home to heaven

**What was the promise of v. 40?** One who looks to and believes in Jesus for salvation has his/her eternal destiny secured (cf. Romans 8:28-30). He/she has eternal life (John 6:47) and will be raised at the last day (cf. vv. 39, 44, 54).<sup>9</sup> This promise is secured by God’s will. This is a clear presentation of the pathway to salvation.

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin A. Blum, “John,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 294.

<sup>2</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1501.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, Notes on John, 2023 Edition (published by <http://planobiblechapel.org/soniclight/>), 184.

<sup>4</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1502.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Edwin A. Blum, “John,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 296.

<sup>8</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer’s Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*, ed. Arthur Farstad (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 1502.

<sup>9</sup> Edwin A. Blum, “John,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*: J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 296.