

EXPLANATION OF 43RD BIBLEBOOK

JOHN 6 (A.D. 70-95)

INTRODUCTION

John 6 describes Jesus Christ rejected in Galilee after feeding the five thousand.

OUTLINE

(I) 6:1-15. The miraculous sign of multiplying bread and fishes.

- a. The location and time (6:1-4).
- b. Testing the faith of his disciples (6:5-9).
- c. The multiplication of bread and fish (6:10-15).

(II) 6:16-25. The miraculous sign of walking on water.

(III) 6:26-29. Work for food that endures.

(IV) 6:30-35. Whoever comes to Jesus will never suffer hunger.

(V) 6:36-46. Whoever God gives to Jesus will come to Jesus.

- a. God's predestination.
- b. Man's responsibility.
- c. The perseverance of believers is taught in the whole Bible.

(VI) 6:47-59. Whoever eats his body and drinks his blood will have life.

- a. These words may not be interpreted literally.
- b. Flesh and blood are symbols of the body and soul of Jesus.
- c. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood are symbols of receiving and assimilating Jesus Christ.
- d. The life of God in Christ is given to believers.

(VII) 6:60-71. Jesus is also rejected in Galilee.

- a. Disciples who drop out (6:60-66).
- b. Disciples who persevere (6:67-71).

EXPLANATION

(I) 6:1-15. The miraculous sign of multiplying bread and fishes.

a. The location and time (6:1-4).

6:1. After these things Jesus went away (viaa) to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, (that is, the Sea of Tiberias).

6:2. And a vast crowd was following (viaa) him, because they were viewing (viia) the miraculous signs which he was performing (viia) upon the sick.

6:3. So Jesus went up (viaa) on the mountain and there he was sitting (viin) with his disciples.

6:4. Now the Passover Feast of the Jews was (viia) near (i.e. approaching).

Location: Bethsaida Julias. The Great Galilean Ministry is described in Matthew 4:12 to 15:20, Mark 1:14 to 7:23 and Luke 4:14 to 9:17. John records the first miraculous sign (4:43-54) and the last miraculous sign (6:1-15) performed in the Great Galilean Ministry of Jesus Christ. The miracle-sign in John 6:1-13 took place about one year after the miraculous sign in John 5:1-15¹. In John chapter 5 the Jews *rejected Jesus in Judea* and in John chapter 6 the Jews *rejected Jesus in Galilee*.

Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee, "to a town called Bethsaida" (which means 'house of fish')², probably Bethsaida Julias, which lies south-east of where the river Jordan flows into the Sea of Galilee. A comparison between Mark 6:45,53 with John 6:17 shows that there was another Bethsaida close to Capernaum on the plain of Gennesaret. The Sea of Kinnereth³ or the Lake of Gennesaret⁴ was also called the Sea of Tiberias (6:1). Tiberias was a city on the western shore founded by Herod Antipas in A.D. 22.

A great crowd of people followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he had performed on the sick. The people went out to see the sensational worker of miracles. Jesus went up on the mountain. The disciples had just returned from a missionary trip and Jesus took them to a lonely place to rest⁵. On the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, about one and a half kilometres south of Bethsaida was a small plain with a hill behind it. It was Spring and there was plenty of green grass to sit on.

Time: the third Passover. The Jewish Passover Feast was near. The first Passover feast was in April A.D. 27 (2:13), the second Passover Feast in April A.D. 28 (5:1) and the third Passover Feast in April A.D. 29 (6:4). The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was in October A.D. 29 (7:2,37) and the Jewish Feast of the Dedication of the Temple in December A.D. 29 (10:22-23). The fourth Passover Feast was in April A.D. 30 during which Jesus Christ was crucified.

Besides the Bible, the Roman historian, Tacitus, records the execution of Christ by order of Pontius Pilate in Judea in the reign of Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)⁶. People who deny that Jesus was crucified simply close their eyes for all the historical facts!

¹ cf. the Passover in John 6:4 with the Passover in John 5:1

² Luke 9:10

³ Numbers 34:11

⁴ Luke 5:1

⁵ Mark 6:30-31

⁶ Annals 15,44

b. Testing the faith of his disciples (6:5-9).

6:5. So when Jesus lifted up (vpaa) (his) eyes and observed (vpad) that a large crowd was coming (vipn) toward him, he said (vipa) to Philip, “How (“with which means”, not: “where”)⁷ shall we buy (vsaa) bread so that these may eat (vsaa)?”

6:6. This he was saying (viia) to test (vppa) him, for he himself knew (by intuition and reflexion) (vila) what he was about (viia+) to do (+vnpa).

6:7. Philip answered (viao) him, “Bread for two hundred denarii (about eight months wages) would not be sufficient (vipa) for them so that each might receive (vsaa) a little⁸!”

6:8. One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said (vipa) to him,

6:9. “There is (vipa) a young lad here⁹ who has (vipa) five barley loaves and two fishes, but what are (vipa) these for so many?”

Jesus and his disciples were at a lonely place, but a great crowd of people followed them. There were five thousand men and besides them very many women and children! Mark writes that the great crowd looked like sheep without a shepherd, The disciples wanted to send the crowd away to buy their own food, but Jesus told the disciples to feed the crowd¹⁰.

Jesus tested Philip to see whether he just looked at the problem in a human way or whether he would begin to understand that this situation happened in order to point the crowd of people to Jesus and what Jesus could do. He gave Philip an opportunity to show if he had sympathy for the crowd of hungry people and if he had learned the meaning of the miracles of Jesus as ‘signs’. The miracles as signs intended to point to the majesty, power and glory of Jesus, to his willingness and ability to supply every need of people.

But instead of *exercising faith* in what Jesus Christ could do Philip *calculated* as people on earth do! He remarked that they had between them just two hundred denarii and one denarius was equal to the wages for one day. How could such an amount feed such a great crowd of people? Philip forgot that the power of Jesus surpassed every possible calculation! It did not occur to Philip that if Jesus had the ability to supply abundant wine at the wedding at Cana, he would be just as able to furnish bread here.

Also Andrew began to calculate. He had found a boy with five barley loaves and two fishes, but remarked that this would not go very far either. All the disciples of Jesus *still looked at the situation and argued rationally*. All of them calculated and doubted whether there could be any solution for this problem! None of the disciples remembered the previous miracles of Jesus. No one exercised faith in the ability of Jesus!

Philip calculated and Andrew rationalised instead of exercising faith in what Jesus Christ could do! How often do Christians look at the situation and argue rationally, *instead of looking at Jesus Christ and believing that he could do the humanly impossible?* Jesus is not dependent on the physical world that he created. If he created the whole universe (1:3), changed water into wine (2:1-11) and multiplied bread and fish (6:1-13), then he could do anything he wanted!

c. The multiplication of bread and fish (6:10-15).

6:10. Jesus said (viaa), “Make (vmaa)(imperative) the people sit down (vnaa).” Now there was (viia) plenty of grass in that place. The men then sat down (viaa), in number about five thousand.

6:11. Jesus then took (viaa) the loaves, and when he had given thanks (vpaa) distributed (viaa) (them) to those who were seated (vppn); (he did) the same with the fishes, as much as they wanted¹¹ (viia).

6:12. When they were all filled (i.e. had eaten their fill)(viap), he said (vipa) to his disciples, “Gather (vmaa) (imperative) the leftover pieces, so that nothing goes lost (i.e. is wasted)(vpaa).”

6:13. So they gathered (picked up)(viaa) (them) and filled (viaa) twelve baskets with the pieces from the five barley loaves that were left over (viaa) by those who had eaten (vpaa).

6:14. So when the people saw (vpaa) the miraculous sign which he had done (viaa), they were saying (viia), “This is (vipa) truly the Prophet who is to come (vppn) into the world.”

6:15. Now when Jesus knew (by observation)¹² (vpaa) that they were about (vipa+) to come (+vnpn) and take him by force (seize)(+vnpa) in order that they might make (vsaa) him king, he withdrew (viaa) again to the mountain by himself.

⁷ G: pothen

⁸ G: brachu tí

⁹ G: hóde

¹⁰ Mark 6:34-37

¹¹ G: theló éthelon (imperfect)

¹² G: ginóskó

The people (literally) reclined on their sides in groups of hundreds and fifties¹³ on the green grass. There were about five thousand men, besides women and children¹⁴. Jesus first prayed: he gave thanks¹⁵ for what they possessed (6:11). Mark says he asked a blessing¹⁶, that is, he called down God's gracious power¹⁷. John takes for granted that his readers were acquainted with the other three Gospels. The people ate until they were completely satisfied¹⁸. The pieces of bread and fish that were left over filled twelve baskets (6:13)!

Not creation, but transformation. In John chapter 2 Jesus did not create wine, but changed water into wine. In John chapter 6, he did not create bread and fish, but multiplied it to a great number of bread and fish. The purpose of the first coming of Jesus was not to create, but to change and to transform creation and to multiply the little into a great abundance (cf. 10:10b)!

Miracle and sign. While 'a miracle' points to the sensational act in the physical world, 'a sign' points to the spiritual world and the Person performing the act! Performing a sign was another way of proclaiming the good news about Jesus Christ (20:30-31; cf. 2:11; 6:14,30). But the people did not understand the sign or its message. They rightly saw Jesus as the Prophet who is to come into the world¹⁹, but wrongly as a political messiah-king that would free the Jews from Roman oppression (cf. 18:36). They wanted to make Jesus king (of the Jews) by force, but Jesus sent his disciples by boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee²⁰ and withdrew to a mountain by himself.

(II) 6:16-25. The miraculous sign of walking on water.

6:16. And when evening came (viad), his disciples went down (viaa) to the sea.

6:17. And after they got into (vpaa) the boat and were in the process of crossing (or: trying to cross)(conative) (viin) to the other side of the Sea of Capernaum. It had already become (vila) dark and Jesus had not yet²¹ come (vila) to them.

6:18. Because a strong wind was blowing (vppa), the sea was becoming aroused (grew rough)(viip).

6:19. When they had rowed²² (vpra) twenty-five or thirty stadia (five to six kilometres), they saw (vipa) Jesus walking (vppa) on the sea and coming (vppn) close to the boat, and they became terrified (viao).

6:20. But he said (vipa) to them, "It is I²³ (vipa); stop being frightened (vmprn)(imperative)."

6:21. Then they were willing (viia) to take (vnaa) him into the boat, and all at once the boat was on (reached) (viad) the land (shore) where they were going (heading) (viia).

6:22. The next day the crowd that had been standing (stayed) (vpra) on the opposite shore of the sea perceived²⁴ (viaa) that no other²⁵ boat had been there (viia) except one, and that Jesus had not entered (viaa) the boat together with his disciples, but that his disciples had departed (viaa) alone (in that one boat).

6:23. However, boats from Tiberias came (i.e. landed)(viaa) near the place where they had eaten (viaa) the bread after the Lord had given thanks (vpaa).

6:24. So when the crowd knew (realised)²⁶ (viaa) that neither Jesus nor his disciples were (vipa) there, they embarked (viaa) in the boats and came (viaa) to Capernaum, searching (vppa) Jesus.

6:25. When they found (vpaa) him on the other side of the sea, they said (viaa) him. "Rabbi, when did you come (get) (vira) here?"

Four miracles. These miraculous signs are also recorded in Matthew 14:22-33 and Mark 6:45-52.

During the storm in the darkness the disciples were completely safe, because Jesus on the mountain was praying for them²⁷. During the fourth watch of the night (03.00-06.00 hours) the disciples had rowed about five to six kilometres (a stadium was about 192 metres). The disciples thought that it was a ghost about to pass them by and they cried in terror²⁸. But Jesus said to them, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then Peter walked on the water towards Jesus²⁹. When Jesus appeared on the Sea of Galilee, the boat was still in the middle of the lake³⁰, but when he climbed into boat with them, the wind died down³¹ and the boat immediately reached the shore (6:21)!

¹³ Mark 6:40

¹⁴ Matthew 14:21

¹⁵ G: eucharisteó

¹⁶ G: eulogéó

¹⁷ Mark 6:41

¹⁸ Mark 6:42

¹⁹ Deuteronomy 18:15-18

²⁰ Mark 6:45-46

²¹ G: oupó

²² G: elaunó

²³ G: egó eimi

²⁴ G: horaó, eidon

²⁵ G: allos

²⁶ G: oida, eiden

²⁷ Mark 6:46

²⁸ Mark 6:49-50

²⁹ Matthew 14:28-31

³⁰ Mark 6:47

³¹ Marcus 6:51

Thus, Jesus performed four miracles:

- Jesus overcame gravity and walked on water (6:19).
- Jesus let Peter overcome gravity and walk on water³².
- Jesus had power over the forces of nature and calmed the storm³³.
- Jesus had power over space, distance and time and brought the boat immediately to the shore (6:21).

Capernaum. The crowd had seen that Jesus and disciples had come to the eastern shore in one boat and that Jesus had sent them away to the north-western shore, before he himself went up a mountainside alone to pray³⁴. The next day the crowd saw that Jesus had also gone (6:24), presumably to the western shore, but how they did not know. Ship owners at Tiberias on the south-western shore had somehow got wind that there was a crowd on the north-eastern shore and that they could do business. They shipped many to the north-western shore close to Capernaum, the headquarters of Jesus during his Great Galilean Ministry.

The people at Gennesaret sent word to all the surrounding country that Jesus was there. They brought their sick and he healed them³⁵. The people asked when Jesus had come there (6:25), but he declined to answer, otherwise they might have used more force to make him king.

(III) 6:26-29. Work for food that endures.

6:26. Jesus answered (viao) and said (viaa), “I tell (vipa) you the truth, you are looking (vipa) for me, not because you saw³⁶ (viaa) miraculous signs, but because you ate (viaa) of the loaves and had your fill (viap).

6:27. Work (vmnpn)(imperative), not for food that spoils again and again (vppn), but for food that always endures (vppa) to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give (vifa) you. On him God the Father has once for all placed his seal of approval (viaa).”

6:28. Then they said (viaa) to him, “What must we do (vspa) to work (carry out)³⁷ (vspn) the works of God?”

6:29. Jesus answered (viao) and said (viaa) to them, “This always is (vipa) the work of God: that you continually believe (vspa) the one he has sent (viaa).”

Working for food that spoils. The Jews were looking for Jesus because of the miracle they saw and the benefit they derived from it. They regarded Jesus as a miracle worker in a literal, materialistic and political sense. They only saw *the miracle*, but not *the sign*. They did not understand that the signs point to Jesus Christ as the spiritual Messiah. They saw the miracle of multiplying the bread, but they failed to see that Jesus Christ is the Bread of life (6:35)! *They marvelled at the miracle, but the miracle did not bring them to believe in Jesus Christ!*

The words: “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life” is a ‘mashal’ or a saying with a hidden meaning (cf. 2:19). Just as the Samaritan woman did not understand his saying about *the living water*, so the Jews did not understand his saying about *the food that endures to eternal life*. They both gave a literal interpretation to the water and the food. The food that spoils is ordinary food, which can never fill the heart, always perishes and has no abiding value. It includes their chasing after materialistic and political aspirations.

Working for food that endures. The food that endures is Jesus Christ himself, who gives himself as a sacrifice of atonement for sins. This food produces and sustains eternal life! God the Father has put his seal of approval on Jesus Christ, that is, he has by means of all the witnesses mentioned in chapter 5 and the signs performed in chapter 6 certified that Jesus Christ is genuinely the Messiah, the Son of God (6:27)³⁸.

The Jews believed that *they* had to do the works of the law in order to earn eternal life. But Jesus says that *God* is doing a work in them, namely giving them salvation. Salvation is a gift which God gives by grace and which man receives by faith³⁹. Salvation is always God’s sovereign work of grace in the heart, mind and will of people (cf. 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 4:10,14; 5:21; 6:27,32-33,37,39,44,51,54,65; 8:12,36; 10:7,9; 11:25,51-52; 14:2,3,6; 15:5; 17:2,6,9,12,24; 18:9). Therefore, Jesus urges the Jews not to simply work for material things, but to endeavour to receive eternal life from him. *Faith is not a work, but an action of receiving what God gives.*

‘Working for the food that endures’ is to actively believe and receive Jesus Christ; it is to make every effort to enter through the narrow door⁴⁰; it is to vigorously lay hold of the Kingdom of God⁴¹.

(IV) 6:30-35. Whoever comes to Jesus will never suffer hunger.

³² Matthew 14:28-31

³³ Matthew 14:32

³⁴ Mark 6:45-46

³⁵ Matthew 14:34-36

³⁶ G: horaó, eidon

³⁷ G: ergazomai

³⁸ cf. Ephesians 1:13

³⁹ Ephesians 2:8-9

⁴⁰ Luke 13:24

⁴¹ Matthew 11:12

6:30. So they said (viaa) to him, “What are you doing (vipa) as a miraculous sign, in order that we may see (vsaa) and believe (vsaa) in you? What are you working (vipn)?”

6:31. Our fathers ate (viaa) the manna in the desert; as it is (vipa+) written (+vprp): “Bread out of heaven he gave (viaa) them to eat (vnaa).”

6:32. Jesus said (viaa) to them, “I tell (vipa) you the truth, it was not Moses who had given (vira) to you the bread out of heaven, but it is my Father who is *continually* giving (vipa) you the real bread out of heaven.

6:33. For the bread of God is *always* (vipa) he who comes down (vppa) out of heaven and gives (vppa) life to the world.”

6:34. So they said (viaa) to him, Sir (Lord), *always* give (vmaa)(imperative) to us this bread.”

6:35. Jesus said (viaa) to them, “I AM *always*⁴² (vipa) the bread of life. He who comes (vppn) to me will certainly never (double negative) get hungry (vsaa), and he who believes (vppa) in me will certainly never (double negative) get thirsty (vifa).

The credentials of Jesus Christ. The Jews believed that the credentials of their great prophet Moses were that *he* miraculously gave manna to their forefathers from heaven. So now the Jews demanded from Jesus another miraculous sign to prove his credentials, but *they* determined what these credentials should look like! Jesus should also perform a miraculous sign from heaven. Jesus had already performed a miraculous sign: the multiplication of the five loaves of bread and two fishes (6:1-13), but the Jews did not believe that those credentials were enough. They said that Moses had produced bread *from heaven*, while Jesus had only produced bread from *this earth*. Moses had performed a *heavenly sign*, while Jesus had only performed an *earthly sign*!

Jesus answered that it was not Moses, but God his Father who gave their forefathers bread from heaven. Then Jesus gave the Jews a much deeper answer: the real bread that God gives from heaven is not *material* bread that spoils like manna, but is *spiritual* bread consisting of the Person who comes from heaven and gives eternal life, not just to Israel, but to the whole world (6:32-33)!

The shadow and the reality. The Jews were still thinking literalistic of material bread and would gladly receive such bread without having to work for it every day (6:34)! The Jews believed in *the type or shadow*: the material bread that fell out of a physical heaven, that had to be picked up every day and that spoiled by the next day⁴³. But Jesus spoke about *the antitype or the actual reality*: the spiritual bread consisting of the Saviour that came heaven of God, out of the presence of God.

Jesus said, “I AM the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty” (6:35). The action of coming to Jesus and believing in him results in receiving eternal life now and physical resurrection in the last day (6:40). Later Jesus uses the symbols of eating of his body and drinking his blood to express exactly the same truth (6:54). By both symbols Jesus invites people to have a personal relationship with him by coming to him and believing in him, or in other words, by receiving him (the Spirit of Jesus) into their hearts and lives. *The ‘I AM’ expresses that Jesus is the Mediator who embodies and mediates all the facets of God’s salvation* (cf. 4:25-26; 6:35; 8:12,24,28; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 13:19-20; 14:6; 15:1,5). This is the first ‘I AM’.

(V) 6:36-46. Whoever God gives to Jesus will come to Jesus.

6:36. But as I said (viaa) to you, (although) you have seen (vira) (me)⁴⁴, (yet) you persist in unbelief (vipa).

6:37. All that the Father gives (vipa) to me will certainly come (vifa) to be face to face to me, and whoever comes (vppn) to be face to face to me, I will in no way (double negative) cast out (vsaa).

6:38. For I have come down (vira) from heaven not to do (vspa) my will, but the will of him who sent (vpaa) me.

6:39. Now this *always* is (vipa) the will of him who sent (vpaa) me, that of all (the whole company) he has *effectively* given (vira) to me I shall not lose (vsaa) (anything) out of it (that company), but raise it (that whole company) up (vsaa) on the last day.

6:40. For this is *always* (vipa) the will of my Father that everyone who *continues* to look (vppa) to the Son and *persists* to believe (vppa) in him shall have (vspa) eternal life, and I will *certainly* raise (vifa) him up at the last day.

6:41. So the Jews were murmuring (grumbling) (viia) about him because he said (viaa), “I AM (vipa) the bread that came down (vpaa) from heaven.”

6:42. They were saying (viia), “Is (vipa) this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know⁴⁵ (vira)? How can he now say (vipa), “I have come down (vira) out of heaven?”

6:43. Jesus answered (viao) and said (viaa) to them, “Stop murmuring (vmpa)(imperative) among yourselves.

6:44. No one can (vipn) come (vnaa) to me unless the Father who sent (vpaa) me *once for all* draws (vsaa) him, and I will *certainly* raise (vifa) him up at the last day.

6:45. It is (vipa+) written (+vprp) in the Prophets: “And they shall (vifd) all be taught by God.” Everyone who *once for all* listens to (hears, obeys)(vpaa) the Father and *once for all* learns (vpaa) from him, comes (vipn) to be face to face to me.

⁴² G: egó eimi

⁴³ Exodus 16:1-20; Psalm 78:23-32

⁴⁴ cf. 1 John 1:1-3

⁴⁵ G: oida

6:46. Not that anyone has seen (vira) the Father, except the one who is (vppa) from God; he has seen (vira) the Father⁴⁶.

a. God's predestination.

Sovereign divine election before the creation of the world. God the Father gives people to Jesus in a sovereign way. In John 6:37, Jesus says, “*All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away*” (cf. 17:2,6,9,24). “It is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all that he has given me” (6:39). There is complete harmony and co-operation between God the Father and God the Son. All those people that God the Father gives, God the Son welcomes. In this verse *Jesus emphasises God's sovereign choice* to give certain people to Jesus. This verse speaks of *sovereign divine election before the creation of the world*.

Also the apostle Paul says, “For those God *foreknew (elected)* he also *predestined* to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. God foreknew certain people and predestined them for a certain purpose and both happen before the creation of the world. “God *chose* them in Jesus Christ before the creation of the world ... and *predestined* them through Jesus Christ to be adopted as God's sons (and daughters), ... in accordance with his own pleasure and will and with the purpose that they will be to the praise of his glorious grace⁴⁷. “From the beginning (before time in history) God chose them to be saved through the sanctifying work (regeneration) of the Spirit and through their faith in the truth. He called them (in time in history) through the proclamation of the gospel so that they might share in the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ⁴⁸. God “once for all saved them and called them ..., not because of anything they have done, but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to them in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time”. Now (in time) through the appearing (since the first coming) of ... Jesus Christ (his death and resurrection) this grace has been revealed⁴⁹. “God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his”⁵⁰.

Sovereign election (of the remnant) is evident in Old Testament history⁵¹ and in New Testament history. Also sovereign hardening (of the rest) is evident in salvation history⁵². Natural “Israel experienced a hardening in part”⁵³ Therefore, “not all who are descended from (natural) Israel are (God's Israel, the chosen remnant)”⁵⁴.

Sovereign divine drawing and teaching within the history of this world. God the Father irresistibly draws people to Jesus. Jesus says, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” (6:44; cf. 6:65). Here Jesus emphasises God's *sovereign divine (election,) drawing and teaching that is carried out in the history of the world*.

‘To draw’ means much more than ‘to give knowledge and moral influence’. The Father does not merely give knowledge (of himself and of the gospel), beckon and advise people, but he draws them irresistibly to Jesus Christ! The same word ‘to draw’ is used in the following passages:

- after his crucifixion, Jesus would irresistibly draw people from all over the world to himself (12:32)
- the sword of Peter is actually drawn out of its sheath (18:10)
- the net full of big fishes is actually drawn or dragged ashore (21:6,11)
- Paul and Silas are dragged into the forum⁵⁵
- Paul is dragged out of the temple (21:30)
- the rich people drag the poor people before their judgement-seats⁵⁶.

It is clear that Jesus is speaking of the irresistible way in which God the Father is drawing people to Jesus Christ! These people will come to Jesus Christ and they will believe in him⁵⁷. They shall have eternal life and they shall be physically resurrected in the last day (6:40). Jesus Christ will never drive them away and he will preserve them so that not a single one of them is lost (cf. 10:28; 17:12; 18:9)⁵⁸.

In John 6:45, Jesus says, “They will all be taught by God. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me”. With respect to the way people are being saved, God's teaching and man's listening are not simply placed side by side. The Bible teaches that it is always God *who takes the initiative and who is in control from the beginning to the end. God the Father must draw before people can come to Jesus. God the Father must teach before people can listen and learn*. God's predestination to draw certain people includes these people's responsibility to listen and to learn. The negative side is that unless God the Father draws, no one can come to Jesus! Unless the Father

⁴⁶ cf. Matthew 11:25-27

⁴⁷ Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-6

⁴⁸ 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

⁴⁹ 2 Timothy 1:9-10

⁵⁰ 2 Timothy 2:19

⁵¹ 1 Kings 19:18 (Romans 11:4); Isaiah 1:9 (Romans 9:29); Isaiah 10:22-23 (Romans 9:27-28)

⁵² Romans 11:5-7

⁵³ Romans 11:25. The other part belongs to the elected believing remnant.

⁵⁴ Romans 9:6; 1 Corinthians 10:18; Galatians 6:14-16

⁵⁵ Acts 16:19

⁵⁶ James 2:6

⁵⁷ cf. Acts 13:48; Philippians 1:29

⁵⁸ cf. Hebrews 13:5-6

teaches, no one can hear and learn. The positive side is that whoever the Father draws will definitely come to Jesus, will listen and learn, and will certainly be saved! God's grace always conquers. It does what it has purposed to do. *God's grace is irresistible.*

Also the apostle Paul says that the people God foreknew (elected) and predestined before time, he also effectively calls in time. And those he called he also mercifully and graciously justifies by faith⁵⁹.

b. Man's responsibility.

However, *when God draws people, he deals with them as responsible beings* and not as puppets on a string. He powerfully influences their mind, will, emotions, yes their entire human personality⁶⁰ so that these begin to function in their own right. People really listen, understand, are deeply moved, become convinced, accept the message by faith, hold onto the message, continually clean their hearts from thorns and thistles and bear fruit with perseverance⁶¹. God the Father draws people in such a powerful way that these people accept him by a living faith. God's predestination does not exclude, but includes human responsibility! Nevertheless, both at the beginning and throughout the entire process of being saved, the initiative and power is ever from God! This drawing-power of God is very real, strong and effective. God himself wields it! In this whole process, the power to carry out this human responsibility comes from above, from *God who works in the believers to will and to act according to what God always purposed*⁶². With true believers God's drawing is irresistible. His grace will conquer!

Jesus says, "They will all be taught by God. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me" (6:45). The prophets in the Old Testament already prophesied God's gracious and irresistible teaching. The prophets proclaimed that during the future messianic age (the New Testament period) all true citizens of God's Kingdom would be effectively taught by God⁶³. It is the responsibility of God in the first place to teach (to reveal the truth, to enlighten/convince the mind (16:8), touch/convict the heart⁶⁴ and move the will⁶⁵). And it is the responsibility of man in the second place to hear and believe⁶⁶. Through the proclamation of the good news God draws people to Jesus Christ who is the only One who has seen God the Father and has come from God the Father to make him known to the world (6:46; cf. 1:18; 5:37)⁶⁷. The word 'all' in this context refers to every one of God's people: those who actually listen to God the Father, actually learn from him and actually come to Jesus Christ. However, the words 'listen', 'learn' and 'come', which refer to man's responsibility, do not weaken God's irresistible drawing in any way!

As we have seen above, God's teaching and man's listening are not simply placed side by side. The Bible teaches that it is always *God who takes the initiative and who is in control from the beginning to the end*. God the Father must draw before people can come to Jesus. God the Father must teach before people can listen and learn.

In John 6:36, Jesus says to the Jews following the law of Moses, "You have seen me *and still you do not believe!*" In this verse *Jesus emphasises man's responsibility to respond* when they hear the gospel. Many who listened to Jesus that day, heard the gospel and even saw the miracles of Jesus, and yet refused to believe! Jesus clearly places the blame upon these unbelievers themselves as people who are fully responsible for their choices and actions. This verse speaks of human responsibility⁶⁸! Man must come to Jesus and believe in Jesus (6:40).

c. The perseverance of Christians.

True believers will persevere to the end. In John 6:39-40, Jesus says that the will of God the Father is that Jesus loses nobody of all the people that God the Father has given to him (18:9), right up to the second coming⁶⁹ when he will raise their bodies from the dead. He says, that the will of God the Father is that every person who looks to God the Son and believes in him, shall have eternal life and their bodies shall be raised from the dead at the second coming. In these verses *Jesus emphasises that true believers will persevere until the end!* 'The last day' (6:40) is the day of the second coming of Jesus Christ, when the resurrection and the final judgement will take place.

The assurance of perseverance does not exclude human responsibility. *The truth concerning the perseverance of Christians is in John 6:39 viewed from the point of view of divine predestination and in verse 40 from the point of view of human responsibility.* From God's point of view, all Christians collectively are given to Jesus Christ (cf. 10:29) and he preserves them to the end! He cannot and will not fail in his task! From man's point of view, every Christian individually has the responsibility to have an abiding trust in Jesus Christ alone (cf. 3:16). *Thus, the assurance of perseverance does not exclude human responsibility. Without human exertion there can be no assurance of salvation!*

The perseverance of believers is taught in the whole Bible. Jesus gives Christians:

⁵⁹ Romans 9:30

⁶⁰ cf. Mark 4:26-29

⁶¹ cf. Mark 4:1-20

⁶² Philippians 2:12-13; cf. 1:6

⁶³ Isaiah 54:13; Jeremiah 31:33-34

⁶⁴ Acts 2:37-38

⁶⁵ Philippians 2:13

⁶⁶ cf. Romans 10:14-17

⁶⁷ Matthew 11:27

⁶⁸ cf. Romans 2:5-6

⁶⁹ Philippians 1:6

- *never-ending life*
- *they will never perish*
- *and nobody will snatch them out of his hand (10:28)!*

God effectively calls, justifies and finally glorifies all the people that he has chosen from all eternity⁷⁰! God's gifts and call are irrevocable⁷¹! God, who began a good work in Christians, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ's second coming⁷²! God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription, "The Lord knows those who are his"⁷³. God has given us an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade, which is kept in heaven for us and his power shields Christians until the last day⁷⁴.

Thus, the Bible promises that:

- God's plan cannot be changed
- God's calling cannot be revoked
- our inheritance from God cannot be defiled
- God's foundation cannot be shaken
- God's seal cannot be broken
- and our life in God cannot perish.

The truth of the preservation and thus perseverance of Christians is surely implied in the term eternal life.

d. The two natures of Jesus Christ.

The Jews who began to grumble (6:41-43) were probably the Jewish leaders from the synagogue at Capernaum where Jesus was teaching. They demanded that Jesus show his credentials by performing a miraculous sign from heaven. They adamantly refused to believe that Jesus had come from God and had taken on the human nature through the Virgin Mary. They persisted to regard Jesus as an ordinary human being with a human father and mother.

The Gospel of Luke emphasises the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, without a human father. Jesus Christ thus has a human nature⁷⁵. The Gospel of John emphasises the supplementary fact that Jesus Christ came from God the Father in heaven (6:38). Jesus Christ thus has a divine nature (6:46). Jesus Christ is thus *not simply a human being like all other human beings*.

(VI) 6:47-59. Whoever eats his body and drinks his blood will have life.

6:47. I tell (vipa) you the truth, he who believes (vppa) has (vipa) everlasting life.

6:48. I always am⁷⁶ (vipa) the bread of life.

6:49. Your fathers *once* ate (viaa) the manna in the desert and (yet) they died (in physical sense)(viaa).

6:50. But this is (vipa) the bread that *continually* comes down (vppa) from heaven, so that whoever *once for all* eats (vsaa) of him (in spiritual sense: is born-again) will not die (in eternal sense)(vsaa). (This is meant in spiritual sense as: again and again this Bread will regenerate people from heaven, as in Galatians 4:26; and permanently dwell in believers as in 14:16-17).

6:51. I AM⁷⁷ (vipa) the *continual* living (vppa) bread that *once for all* (in history) came down (vpaa) out of heaven. If anyone *once for all* eats (vsaa) from this bread (in spiritual sense: is born again), he will *certainly* live (vifa) forever (the eternal sense). The bread which I will give (vifa) for (the sake of) the life of the world ('the world' as in 3:16) is (vipa) my flesh.

6:52. The Jews were then wrangling (fighting a war of words)(viin) among themselves, saying (vppa), "How can (vipn) this man give (vnaa) to us his flesh to eat (vnaa)?"

6:53. Jesus said (viaa) to them, "I tell (vipa) you the truth, if you do not eat (vsaa) the flesh of the Son of Man and drink (vsaa) his blood (in spiritual sense: is born again, as in 3:3), you never have (vipa) life in yourselves (in spiritual sense: are not born again).

6:54. Whoever *continually* eats (vppa) my flesh and *continually* drinks (vppa) my blood (in spiritual sense: *continually* believes in me, *continually* remains in me, as in 6:40 and 15:5), *continually* has (vipa) eternal life (in spiritual sense, as in 5:24 and 10:28) and I will *certainly* raise (vifa) him up (in physical sense: resurrection) at the last day.

6:55. For my flesh is (vipa) real food and my blood is (vipa) real drink (in spiritual sense, as in 15:5).

6:56. Whoever *continually* eats (vppa) my flesh and *continually* drinks (vppa) my blood *continually* remains (vipa) in me, and I in him (in spiritual sense, as in 15:5 and 7).

6:57. Just as the living (vppa) Father *once for all* (in history) sent (viaa) me and I *continually* live (vipa) because of the Father, so also the one who *continually* eats (vppa) me, he indeed will *certainly* live (vifa) because of me (in spiritual sense, as in 6:40 and 54).

6:58. This is (vipa) the bread that *once for all* (in history) came down (vpaa) out of heaven (i.e. at the incarnation). It is not like (the bread or manna which) the fathers *once* (in Old Testament history) ate (viaa) and died (viaa). He who *continually* eats (vppa) this bread will *certainly* live (vifa) to eternity (in spiritual sense, as in 6:54)."

6:59. These things he said (viaa) while teaching (vppa) in the synagogue in Capernaum.

⁷⁰ Romans 8:28-33

⁷¹ Romans 9:29

⁷² Philippians 1:6

⁷³ 2 Timothy 2:19

⁷⁴ 1 Peter 1:4-5

⁷⁵ Luke 1:26-35

⁷⁶ G: egó eimi

⁷⁷ G: egó eimi

a. These words may not be interpreted literally.

Several times Jesus uses a ‘mashal’, that is, a saying with hidden meaning:

Jesus came *once for all* in history during his incarnation. “I AM the *continual* living bread which *once for all* in history at his first coming came down from heaven to complete and perfect the work of salvation⁷⁸.” Thus, Jesus Christ came once in history in human nature to accomplish his work of salvation.

Jesus comes *continually* throughout the New Testament period. “I AM the *continual* living bread which *continually* throughout the New Testament history comes down from heaven through the Holy Spirit to *again and again* regenerate people on earth⁷⁹ and to permanently dwell with and in believers (as in 14:16-17).” Thus, Jesus Christ continually throughout history comes in the Holy Spirit to apply his completed work of salvation in the lives of people.

Believers *once for all* eat the Bread of Life. “If anyone *once for all* in his life eats of this bread (in spiritual sense: he receives Jesus Christ into his heart and life as in 1:12-13, or is born-again as in 3:3-8), he will have eternal life (as in 3:16, he is justified) and will be resurrected at the last day (as in 6:40).” Thus, people need to receive him into their hearts and lives in order to be born again (to be justified).

Believers *continually* eat the Bread of Life. “If anyone *continually* throughout his life eats of this bread (in spiritual sense: he persists to believe and perseveres to remain in Jesus Christ, as in 6:40 and 15:5), he continually possesses the regenerate life (he is continually sanctified and continually bears fruit).”

Thus, believers need to remain in Jesus continually in order to be transformed and bear fruit (to be sanctified). Many people have taken these words of Jesus in a more or less literal way and have failed to understand what he was saying. The Jews certainly interpreted the words of Jesus literally, as if he had intended that in some way or other people must partake of his physical body. To the Jews drinking blood was very repulsive. And the ceremonial law says that God sets his face against anybody who eats blood⁸⁰. Jesus Christ certainly did not advocate cannibalism.

While the Jews persisted to think in literal terms (literal manna falling from the sky), Jesus Christ taught that he is the genuine spiritual ‘bread’ that comes from God in heaven (6:48-50).

b. Flesh and blood are symbols of the body and soul of Jesus.

These words are a ‘mashal’, that is, a hidden saying or riddle:

- as in John 2:19-20 (destroying and raising the temple)
- as in John 3:3-4 (born from Spirit and water)
- as in John 4:10-11 (drinking the living water).
- as in John 6:47-58 (eating his flesh and drinking his blood).

The Jews interpreted these words of Jesus literally! The Jews even argued among themselves about the statements of Jesus (6:52).

The words of a ‘mashal’ may not be interpreted literally. They certainly do not refer to the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper. The expression ‘coming to Jesus’ is a symbol of ‘believing in Jesus’ (6:35). And the words ‘flesh’ and ‘blood’ are symbols of Christ’s ‘body’ and ‘soul or life’, a symbol of Jesus ‘himself’ as he has revealed himself in the Bible (6:57).

If the Jews had studied the Bible, they would have been able to recognise the symbolism in what Jesus was saying. “The Bible says, “For the life of a creature is in the blood”⁸¹. The blood was not viewed literally as a magical substance, but symbolically as *the seat of life*. It represented *the soul*. The Bible continues to say, “It is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life”⁸². Just as a lamb had to shed his life-blood and die in order to make atonement for the life of the sinner in the Old Testament, so Jesus Christ had to shed his life-blood and die, in order to make atonement for the sins of all people who believe in him. The shedding of the blood of Jesus, that is, the shedding of his soul or life, was the punishment for our sins and satisfied God’s holy anger against our sins. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important event in human history.

The words “which he *will give* for the life of the world” (6:51) refers to his crucifixion which would happen one and a half years after he spoke these words. ‘The world’ (cf. 1:9-10) is here:

- the world of lost people, estranged from the life of God, laden with sin, subject to God’s righteous judgement, that is in need of salvation (1:10c; 3:19)
- the world without distinction of race, nationality or language (4:42) (1:29; 3:16; 3:17; 4:42; 6:33,51; 8:12; 9:5; 11:52; 12:32)⁸³
- It does not refer to the world as the realm of evil (7:7)
- or the world as every single person that has ever lived.

c. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood are symbols of receiving and assimilating Jesus Christ.

⁷⁸ as in Hebrews 10:10 and 14

⁷⁹ as in Galatians 4:26

⁸⁰ Leviticus 17:10

⁸¹ Leviticus 17:11a

⁸² Leviticus 17:11b; cf. Hebrews 9:22

⁸³ 1 John 2:2; 4:14-15

They are symbols of spiritually receiving Jesus by faith, not simply into the mind, but also into the heart and into one's whole life. The results of doing this are that the believers will remain spiritually in Jesus and Jesus will remain spiritually (through his Spirit) in the believer (6:56). Literally this would be impossible! 'Remaining in Jesus' is remaining in the Body of Jesus and begins when a believer through rebirth by the Spirit is incorporated into the Body of Christ⁸⁴. 'Jesus remaining in the believer' also begins at rebirth by the Spirit when the person believes and receives Jesus Christ into his heart and life (1:12-13)⁸⁵. From then onwards the Holy Spirit continues forever to live in the believer (14:16-17)⁸⁶.

A comparison between John 6:54 and John 6:40 very clearly show that that these words must be understood spiritually. 'Eating his flesh' and 'drinking his blood' are symbols for 'looking at Jesus' and 'believing in Jesus', because they both result in having eternal life now (5:24-25) and participating in the physical resurrection in the last days (5:28-29). Thus, those that participate in Jesus Christ will live forever (6:51; cf. 11:25-26)!

Just as food and drink are offered and accepted, so also the sacrifice of Christ is offered to believers and accepted by them. Just as the human body assimilates food and drink, so the human soul assimilates the sacrifice of Christ. The flesh and blood of Jesus is symbolic of the sacrifice of atonement of Jesus on the cross. Eating his body and drinking his blood is symbolic for accepting the truth about Jesus Christ as the only atonement for sins.

People cannot live by eating only ordinary bread (6:49)⁸⁷. People who continue to eat physical bread (continue to live only for materialism) will perish (6:58). Man can also not live by just 'tasting' the bread that gives eternal life⁸⁸. This bread must be 'eaten': it must be accepted, and received in the heart and life. In ordinary words it means that people must *persistently* believe in Jesus Christ (6:40,47). The word 'believe' is written in the *continuous* present tense!

Thus, in John chapter 6 the word 'to believe' is expressed in symbolic terms as 'eating' the crucified Lord, that is, as receiving him in your heart and whole life. People who do this will be rescued from this transitory world and will live forever! The parallelism in verse 35 shows that Jesus intended to say that *coming* to him means *believing* in him! We can very easily see that Jesus meant his words to be understood symbolically by comparing verse 54 with verse 40. While verse 54 speaks of *eating* the flesh and *drinking* the blood of Jesus (symbolic language) and verse 40 speaks of *looking* at Jesus and *believing* in him (straightforward language), the result in both is exactly the same: having eternal life and being raised up in the last day (cf. also verse 56: remaining in him and he remaining in us)! These are all spiritual concepts and prove that this passage does not deal with literal concepts, but with spiritual concepts.

Finally, in verse 63, Jesus teaches clearly that he is speaking not of literal things, but of spiritual things, by saying, "The spirit gives life, but the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life". He says, that his flesh as such, that is, his literal physical body, cannot benefit them. He means that people must stop thinking that he was asking them to literally eat his body or to literally drink his blood. It is his spirit or person in the act of giving his body to be broken and his blood to be shed on the cross that gives the believer everlasting life. He means, also the words and sayings he says to them are not simply literal, but are spiritual and give spiritual life to those who accept them.

d. The life of God in Christ is given to believers.

Just as Jesus Christ lives because of the Father, so the one who feeds on Jesus will live because of Jesus (6:57). From all eternity God the Father has given to God the Son the same divine attributes – here eternal life (cf. 5:26). "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life"⁸⁹.

(VII) 6:60-71. Jesus is also rejected in Galilee.

a. Disciples who drop out (6:60-66).

6:60. So many of his disciples (followers in the crowd), having heard (vpaa) (this), said (viaa), "Hard (to accept) is (vipa) this message. Who can (vipn) listen to (vnpa) it?"

6:61. Now when Jesus knew (by intuition)⁹⁰ (vpra) within himself that his disciples were murmuring (vipa) about this, he said (viaa) to them, "Does this ensnare (cause to stumble, offend) (vipa) you?"

6:62. Then what if you see (vspa) the Son of Man ascend (vppa) to where he was (viia) before?

6:63. The spirit (i.e. the spirit or person of Jesus in the act of giving his body and shedding his blood) is (vipa) that which makes alive (vppa); the flesh (the body of Jesus in a literal sense) is of no value (vipa) at all (i.e. if you think that Jesus spoke about literally eating his body)! The words which I have spoken (vira) to you are (vipa) spirit (i.e. have only spiritual meaning) and they are (vipa) life (i.e. they refer to giving eternal spiritual life).

⁸⁴ Acts 11:14-18; 15:7-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

⁸⁵ Revelation 3:20

⁸⁶ Romans 8:9-10; 2 Corinthians 6:19-20

⁸⁷ Matthew 4:4

⁸⁸ cf. Hebrews 6:4-5

⁸⁹ 1 John 5:11-12

⁹⁰ G: oida

(Or: the Spirit is the Life-giver; the physical body of Jesus is not the life-giver. The words of Jesus are the words of the Spirit and it is that teaching that gives eternal spiritual life).

6:64. But there are (vipa) some of you who *persistently* do not believe (vipa).” For Jesus had known⁹¹ (vila) from the beginning who were (vipa) those that did not believe (vppa) and who he was (vipa) that would deliver him up (betray him)⁹² (vpfa).

6:65. And he was saying (viia), “Therefore I said (vira) to you that no one can (vipn) come (vnaa) to (be face to face) to me unless (if not) it has been (vspa+) effectively given (+vprp) to him by the Father.”

6:66. As a result, many of his disciples once for all turned (viaa) to the things lying behind them and were no longer following (viia) him.

The reaction of the Jewish religious leaders and teachers was to ask questions deriving from unbelief, self-sufficiency and tradition (6:28,30,31). They grumbled against Jesus and denigrated him (6:41-42). And they fought a war of words among themselves (6:52).

This had an effect on the reaction of the crowd that followed Jesus. They viewed the teaching of Jesus about eating his flesh and drinking his blood as too hard to understand and to accept (6:60). Jesus knew the heart of these people (cf. 2:25) and asked (literally), “Do these words cause you to stumble and fall into the trap of sin?” It was not the words of Jesus, but the wicked attitude of their own heart that caused them to respond with unbelief and rebellion to the words of Jesus⁹³. No-one had seen Jesus come from God in heaven (cf. 6:46). Would they respond differently if they would see him ascend to heaven (6:62)?

Finally Jesus teaches clearly that he is speaking not of literal things, but of spiritual things, by saying, “The spirit (of Jesus, here not the Holy Spirit) gives life, but the flesh (the body of Jesus) counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit (have spiritual meaning) and they are life” (6:63). He says, that his *flesh* as such, that is, *his literal physical body*, cannot benefit them. He means that they must stop thinking that he was asking them to literally eat his body or to literally drink his blood. It is his *spirit* or *his whole person* in the act of giving his body to be broken and his blood to be shed on the cross that gives the believer everlasting life. Also the words and sayings which Jesus Christ is saying to them are not simply literal dead letters, but are spiritual words that give eternal life to those who accept them⁹⁴!

Jesus knows from the beginning which people would not *persistently and continuously* believe in him and also which person would betray him (6:64). The verb ‘to believe’ is again in the present continuous tense:

- Genuine believers believe persistently and continuously
- Some will only believe with their mind, as the demons do⁹⁵.
- Others will only believe for a time and then fall away, because they were never born again and their faith was never genuine⁹⁶.

That is why Jesus says, “No one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him” (6:65). Thus, once again Jesus emphasises that salvation is pure sovereign grace of God! From then on many former followers of Jesus turned (literally) to the things lying behind them and no longer followed Jesus (6:66). They not only turned away from Jesus – they actually turned back to their former way of thinking and former way of life! This proved that they were not fit for the Kingdom of God⁹⁷. They had never been genuine disciples of Jesus. They were never born-again (15:6)⁹⁸.

b. Disciples who persevere (6:67-71).

6:67. So Jesus said (viaa) to the Twelve, “You do not also want (vipa) to go back (vnpa), do you?”

6:68. Simon Peter answered (viao) him, “Lord, to whom shall we go (vifd)? You always have (vipa) the words of eternal life.

6:69. We have believed (*effectively and continually*) (vira) and know (*effectively and perseveringly*) (by reflexion)⁹⁹ (vira) that you are (vipa) the Holy One of God.”

6:70. Then Jesus replied (viao), “Have I not *once for all* chosen (viam) you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is (vipa) a devil!”

6:71. He was speaking of (viia) Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, one of the Twelve, who was planning (stood on the point of)(viia+) to deliver him up (+vnpa).

Jesus challenged his twelve own disciples to reconsider their commitment. The disciples *continually and persistently* believed and were convinced that Jesus Christ was really whom he claimed to be. They knew that Jesus Christ was the One God had set apart and had dedicated to execute God’s plan of salvation and judgement. Jesus had personally *once for all time* chosen these twelve men to be his disciples.

⁹¹ G: oida

⁹² G: paradidómi

⁹³ cf. Luke 8:4-15

⁹⁴ cf. Isaiah 55:10-11; Hebrews 4:12

⁹⁵ James 2:19

⁹⁶ cf. Luke 8:12-14; John 15:6; Hebrews 6:4-8

⁹⁷ Luke 9:62

⁹⁸ Hebrews 4:4-8

⁹⁹ G: ginóskó

Yet Judas was ‘a devil’, that is, a slanderer and false accuser. Judas had given himself to be an instrument of Satan. While other followers left, Judas remained in order to destroy both Jesus and the other disciples together with himself¹⁰⁰.

APPLICATIONS

- 6:5-9. Stop arguing rationally and stop calculating mathematically whenever Jesus says something to you. Jesus wants us to accept his words by faith.
- 6:15. Whenever people want to force you into something or enforce their will upon you, it is the best to withdraw from them.
- 6:27. Do not give your time, energy and money to things that are temporary and spoil. Give yourself and what you possess to whatever lasts forever! Only Jesus can give you such things.
- 6:28-29. The works that God requires is not *human works*, but *the exercise of faith* in God’s words, the exercise of faith in God’s works and the exercise of faith in God’s Son, Jesus Christ.
- 6:35. Believe in Jesus Christ and you will never be spiritually hungry or spiritually thirsty. Believe continually and you will live continually and be satisfied continually.
- 6:37. Believe in Jesus Christ and he will never drive you away.
- 6:38. You are here on earth, not to do your own will, but to do the will of God.
- 6:39. Believe that Jesus Christ will never allow you to go lost¹⁰¹!
- 6:40. Believe that Jesus Christ will raise your body up in the resurrection at his second coming.
- 6:44,65. Don’t try to understand and don’t question the fact that God the Father draws people to Jesus Christ. Rather accept it with faith, amazement and thankfulness.
- 6:45. Listen to God the Father and learn from him, because that is how God draws you to Jesus Christ!
- 6:54,40. Do not take everything in the Bible literally. Rather, take everything in the Bible in the way God wants you to understand it. Even the symbolic or figurative expressions in the Bible refer to literal realities that far surpass the literalness of the symbol. For example, the symbolic or figurative expression “Lamb of God” (1:29) far surpasses a literal lamb and refers to the literal Jesus Christ!

QUESTIONS

- 6:5-13 Why is it necessary to exercise faith?
- 6:15 Why did the people want to make Jesus king?
- 6:16-21 What are the four miracles in this passage?
- 6:26-29 What does Jesus mean when he says that we must work for the food that endures?
- 6:30-35 What are the credentials of Jesus Christ?
- 6:39-40 What does the Bible teach about perseverance of Christians?
- 6:35-46 What is the relationship between divine predestination and human responsibility?
- 6:50-58 What is the meaning of “eating the flesh of Jesus” and “drinking the blood of Jesus”?

¹⁰⁰ cf. Pharaoh who hardened his heart against the LORD. Exodus 9:16 (Romans 9:17)

¹⁰¹ John 17:12