

Twenty-One Days With John

Day 6 – John 6

Prayer: Lord Jesus, the Bread of Life, You have provided all I need for our daily walk. Enable my reading of the testimony of Your ministry to strengthen my faith and give witness to You as the great “I Am.” In Your holy name I pray, Amen.

Meditation:

“A short time after this.” John had a habit of using this phrase to begin his narratives of Jesus’ life. We saw it in John 5:1. Now we see it again in John 6:1. Another interesting thing is that, like in John 5:1, the “short time after this” seems to “conveniently” occur near the time of a Jewish festival.

It is not an accident or mere coincidence that John portrays some of the significant acts of Jesus’ ministry occurring around the time of Jewish festivals. Scholars note that John 5 and 6 are not the first hints of Jesus’ ministry as a festival celebration. The first hint is found in the very beginning of John’s Gospel.

In a recent email reply, Rev. Donald Sandman noted,

“The account of the Wedding at Cana concludes John’s summary of the New Creation begun in 1:1. Note that 1:19 is day one; 1:29 day two; 1:35 day three; 1:43 day four; 2:1 “On the third day” equals seven. And Amos 9:13 says that Day of the Lord will include hills dripping with sweet wine. There’s a lot of ‘hidden meaning’ in John’s chronology.”

St. John appears to portray several key events of Jesus’ ministry—if not His *entire* ministry—as happening in the context of this “Day of the Lord.” The “manna” miracle is undoubtedly one of those key “Day of the Lord” events.

The Jews of Jesus’ day saw Jesus as an affront to Judaism and specifically Moses. By replicating Moses’ miracle of providing bread (“manna”) in the wilderness (cf. Numbers 11, Deuteronomy 8, et al.), Jesus provided unmistakable testimony that He was truly greater than their forefathers, and far superior to even Moses.

“I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true Bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

John 6:32-33 (NIV).

“I am the Bread of Life,” Jesus declared. “He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believe in Me will never be thirsty.” John 6:35 (NIV). Almost predictably, the Jews refused to believe.

Jesus’ words, “I am” is nothing less than an unmistakable, outright claim to be God (cf. Exodus 3:6). By it he demonstrates His divine credentials. This occurrence of “I am” (used with an object, e.g. “bread,” “light,” “door”, etc.) is one of seven times which John records Jesus’ testimony that He is the “I Am...” .

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Some commentators suggest that each time Jesus says, “I am...”, He proves His claim to “I Am” deity by providing a specific sign (“miracle”). Below is one such example.

John 5	I am the Gate of the Sheep	Healing Of Lame Man By The Sheep Gate In Jerusalem
John 6	I am the Bread of Life	Feeding Of The Five-Thousand
John 9	I am the Light of the World	Healing Of The Blind Man
John 11	I am the Resurrection and the Life	Raising Of Lazarus
John 4	I am the Way, Truth and the Life	Raising Of Nobleman’s Son
John 2	I am the True Vine	Changing Water Into Wine At Cana
John 10	I am the Good Shepherd	He Lays His Life Down For The Sheep

Adapted from <http://www.geocities.com/wellofbethlehem/index.html>

In John 6, Jesus’ claim, “I am the Bread of Life,” is proven by Jesus’ miraculous provision of bread for five-thousand men, *not including* presumably thousands more women and children. This miracle is an irrefutable sign that Jesus truly *is* the promised Messiah, the great “I am,” the eternal God of all.

Of all the miracles of Jesus, the Feeding of the Five Thousand is the *only* one recorded in all four Gospels. Even though the vast majority of witnesses to this miracle abandoned Jesus—even some of Jesus’ larger group of disciples (John 6:60)—Simon Peter reflected the faith of the chosen Twelve.

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God.” John 6:68-69 (NIV).

For Peter and the faithful twelve, this event was a moment of decision. At this time Peter, with the twelve, determined he would believe and follow the One who said, “I am the Bread of Life. For Judas, however, the sign of the Feeding of the Five Thousand marks first time in his Gospel that John hints that Judas is the one who will betray Him. “devil” (John 6:70-71).

John intended that the reader of his Gospel understood Jesus’ purpose for performing the Feeding of the Five Thousand sign. It was to demonstrate that He truly was the Bread of Life, the Messiah, the Holy One of God.

Is He also *your* Bread of Life? John’s invitation is not only to his original audience. It’s for you, too.

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Prayer:

Jesus, the Bread of Life, provide me with the daily bread of Your Word. Feed my hunger and satisfy my thirst for Your grace. Renew me each day with the heavenly food that only You can give. Help me in these twenty-one days to develop an even greater hunger for Your Word. Give me faith to proclaim You boldly to those who do not yet believe. Lord, satisfy their hunger and relieve their thirst through the love You demonstrated in Your sacrificial death and atonement for us. In Your name we pray. Amen.

“To him who overcomes, I will give some of the
hidden manna” Revelation 2:17 (NIV)

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