

John 6:1 – 21

+ O + O + O +

~ A discourse on the Bread of Life is how Jesus finished the feeding of the five thousand, and we'll consider both in this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. John calls the miracles "signs" - and they were given for a very definite purpose. John's method was, apparently, to only record certain miracles. John will say in this Gospel that many other 'signs' did Jesus do but THESE are recorded that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ and that, believing, you might have life through His Name. I feel that the miracles that were not recorded could not be believed by you and me today. This statement is actually the key that unlocks the entire Gospel....

1 After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

~ This is likely six months to a year after chapter five; and about a year before His crucifixion. In chapter five we saw Jesus go in through the sheep gate in Jerusalem; but now we see Him back in Galilee. So, we're doing some moving around Israel now. There is some sort of time lapse as this multitude gathered; but they don't believe on Jesus in a saving way. All they are interested in were the miracles and they wanted to declare Him a king in the line of David. That is the only hope they had of liberation from their Roman oppression. The Lord Jesus was filling their stomachs, and the man who feeds is king, indeed. Jesus knows what's in a man's heart, friends - be careful with that. Jesus didn't commit Himself to the crowd back in Jerusalem, either you will recall - and He isn't about to make a commitment to this mob that has only gathered because they see a free meal and possible political leader....

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

John 6:1 – 21

+ O + O + O +

4 And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

~ If a guide in Israel tells you which mountain this happened on - don't believe it. Philip is the quiet one in the group and the Lord Jesus calls him out. We find that Philip and Andrew were, evidently, quite active in the Lord's work. They were very busy, but they were not the public speakers. We don't hear from either of them; and, yet it was Andrew who brought his brother, Simon Peter, to the Lord Jesus. We also know the Greeks later come to Philip and Andrew wanting to see Jesus, and Philip, not knowing what to do, consulted Andrew. That observation is quite interesting to me.

Now, when Jesus asks this question in verse five, He is not asking for advice. Jesus never asked the apostles for any advice at any time for any reason during His ministry. Jesus asked Philip this question only as a test. Philip saw the crowd gathering and he wasn't thinking about a miracle. All Philip knew was that they didn't have enough – not even reasonably close to enough to talk about feeding all of the multitude. Remember, some of the other disciples told Jesus to send the crowd away. Well, Jesus doesn't report to a board of directors, and He told them to all sit down in the grass. That's when Jesus turned the disciples into waiters feeding the multitude.

Too many people today want a lofty position in a ministry. Everyone seems to want to have an office and be an important leader. They love to tell people what to do, but they simply do not have the Biblical literacy or knowledge to be of any help; not to mention they have no spiritual discernment. They don't seem to ever realize they are the ones who should be studying to be quiet to show themselves approved. Unfortunately, they never seem to do very much of anything to further the cause of Christ....

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

~ We went over a reasonable estimate in Matthew, and with the men and women and children there were likely around fifteen to twenty thousand. Of course, Jesus is going to feed the crowd now that the disciples have sunk back to total despair in verse nine. So, we see a huge liability sitting around before us with this crowd. The assets are minimal. Many committees would have turned in a report that said there's nothing we can do for these people. Of course, a committee is comprised of a group of people who can do nothing individually; but, as a group, they can decide that nothing can be done. They meticulously memorialize minutes while wasting hours. The committee's report here is not good. They have a handful of food for a mass of people they can't even number completely. Well, what the disciples left out of this equation is the mathematics of a miracle. They forgot about Jesus.

Naturally, this would have reminded them of Moses and the manna in the wilderness in Exodus chapter sixteen. But manna did not give them life. The true Bread is the Lord Jesus Christ; He gives life. Notice that the work of God is not that which is commanded by God, but that which is wrought by God. We went over the very orderly way in which Jesus handled this crowd of people in Matthew. We'll not revisit that truth. Everything the Lord Jesus does is very orderly and purposeful....

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

~ I think it's extremely important to note how the liberal attempts to explain away the miracles of the Bible. Some theology professors over the years have concocted some laughable theories of how this could have happened. A few have turned this into some sort of second-rate magic act. It's ridiculous to even read this passage if you don't believe this was a miracle or accept that this is the way it happened. There comes a point when we all get to decide whether or not we believe this is the Word of God. If you do believe that this is the Word of God we're studying, then you can see this crowd got as much as they needed to eat. You must realize that in that land in that day many people went hungry regularly. There were people in that crowd who, for the first time in the entire lives, had their stomachs completely filled; and we know that because when Jesus feeds us – we will have more than enough to eat....

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

~ I'm almost sure we have another miracle here as Jesus escapes the crowd that wanted to make Him their king. Jesus came a King, and He is and was a King - but this was not His route to Kingship. Getting a full stomach and casting a yes vote for Jesus is NOT what Christianity is all about, my beloved; this is about an obedient heart that is willing to allow God to change it and rule in and over it. They have a full stomach and want for nothing, and they never want that to change. So, they approve of Jesus. At least, for the moment....

16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

~ Our Spiritual Safari spent a lot of time in this boat with the disciples in the Gospel account by Matthew as the storm broke suddenly over them. This is an unexpected storm, which was a normal occurrence to just break forth on the Sea of Galilee. This is a particularly bad storm, though. This is another account the liberal theologian has put an erroneous explanation to; one that I won't even dignify with a response nor even acknowledge. We take the Word of God at face value for what it says on this safari. These men were about halfway across the sea when Jesus came walking up to them. Take that for whatever it's worth to you, my dear safari readers. It was difficult rowing that boat and the ordeal was terrifying. Ask the Holy Spirit in prayer to speak to you today in this section of Scripture and read this chapter again. You'll be amazed what God can do for you ~

+ O + O + O +