

*Feeding the 5000 & Walking on Water: John 6:1–21*

*Jaunting thru John*

Englewood Bible Church

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Feeding the 5000 (6:1–14) and Walking on Water (6:15–21)**

**FEEDING THE 5000 (6:1–14)**

**(Six months) after healing the lame man in Jerusalem (at the Feast of Tabernacles), Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (to Bethsaida) (6:1)**

This is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels:

Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:32–44; Luke 9:10b–17; John 6:1–14

Our exposition is from John, but the other accounts help with the setting.

October 31 Tabernacles (cf. 5:1)	November 31	December 31	January 32	February 32	March 32	April 32 Passover (cf. 6:4)
<i>After these things [the healing in John 5]</i>						

***Chronology:***

John 6 occurs about six months after chapter 5 (see chart above)

John 6:10 says “much grass.” Mk 6:39 says the grass was green (April, around Passover)

Before feeding people, Jesus did healings (Mat 14:14 // Luke 11:11). I assume He also taught.

It was almost sunset before Jesus fed the people (Mt 14:15; Mk 6:35; Lk 9:12)

***Location:***

John 6:23 locates this as near the port at Tiberias. Boat owners went there & got their boats.

Luke 9:10b identifies the location as within the jurisdiction of the city of Bethsaida

It is on the west shore (despite what commentaries say)

Matthew 14:13 and Mark 6:32 identify the location as a deserted place

Why did Jesus desire seclusion? Mt 14:1ff.; Mk 6:14ff.; Lk 9:7ff.

John 6:3 & 15 speaks of the location as a mountain (a high hill): where Jesus sought seclusion

The sign occurred at a place relatively low on the hill, because He went higher in 6:15

Jesus came by boat from Capernaum to Bethsaida; since the 12 returned to Capernaum (6:17)

**Around Passover, a great crowd on shore followed Jesus to a rural place in the jurisdiction of Bethsaida and followed Him up the hillside (6:2–4)**

**Jesus asked Philip (a resident of Bethsaida) where to buy food for all the people, to give him an opportunity to anticipate a Messianic sign (6:5–6)**

John 1:44 says that Philip was from Bethsaida

**Philip said that 8 months' wages could only buy a mouthful of bread for each one (6:7)**

A denarius was a day's wage for a common laborer (a day's wages at minimum wage)

200 working days  $\approx$  33 (six-day) weeks  $\approx$  8 months wages

CO min wage = \$7.36 ( $\$7.36 \times 40 \text{ hrs @ wk} \times 35 \text{ wks} \approx \$10,000.00$ )

There are 5,000 men (plus women & children—per Matthew 14:21)  $\approx$  20,000 people

Philip concludes that not even \$10,000.00 of food would satisfy all of the people

**Andrew found a lad with 5 barley loaves & 2 fish (appetizers): A mere pittance (6:8–9)**

The boy with the food may have brought it for himself or for selling to others

Mt, Mk, & Lk say loaves. John says barley loaves (This was poor-man's bread)

These were probably small loaves. (cf. Lk 11<sup>5</sup> And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves.'").

Mt, Mk, & Lk say *fishes*, but John says *small appetizer* (translated *little fishes*)

These were probably dried or pickled *lake sardines*

**Jesus told His disciples to seat the people: They sat on the grass in groups of 50 (6:10)**

**Jesus gave thanks and began breaking bread the disciples gave everyone as much bread and fish as each wanted (6:11)**

**After everyone was satisfied, Jesus sent each of the 12 with a basket, which they filled with leftover crumbs (6:12–13)**

**The sign caused some people to say that Jesus is the coming Prophet (6:14)**

Remember: Jesus had done other signs before this group (per 6:2; Mt 14:14; Lk 11:11)

Deuteronomy 18<sup>15</sup> **The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst**, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, <sup>6</sup> according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, “Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.”

**WALKING ON WATER (6:15–21)**

**Jesus withdrew higher onto the mountain, when He perceived that some people planned to make Him king forcibly (6:15)**

(I do not equate the people of verse 15 w/ those of verse 14, because of the next passage)

Some Galileans raced in front of the Father’s timetable, while the Judean leadership did the opposite (seeing nothing special in Jesus). Both extremes were problematic.

**At nightfall the 12 stopped filling baskets w/ crumbs & started for Capernaum, but Jesus was still on the hillside and did not join the 12 (6:16–17)**

**A gale stirred up the water as they were on the sea (6:18)**

(The sea of Galilee is shallow, so storms often create violent waves)

**After rowing 3–4 miles in a storm, the 12 were scared by Jesus walking on the sea toward them (6:19)**

**He calmed them by saying, “It is I, don’t be afraid.” (6:20)**

**The 12 welcomed Him into the boat and immediately arrived at their destination (6:21)**

Although the crowds did not see Jesus walk on water, John 6:22*ff.* shows that they became aware that He miraculously reached Capernaum quickly.

**CONCLUSION**

The purpose statement tells us that John included signs to cause unbelievers to have life through believing Jesus Christ and His promise of life. The signs Jesus did on that April day in 32 were also designed to cause believers to trust Him. His disciples had no idea how severely they would be tested the very next day. Jesus provided food and protection supernaturally on that day, precisely because He is the lifegiving Messiah.

MATTHEW 14	MARK 6	LUKE 9	JOHN 6
<p><sup>13</sup> When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a <u>deserted place</u> by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities.</p> <p><sup>14</sup> &amp; when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; &amp; He was moved w/ compassion for them, &amp; <u>healed their sick</u>. <sup>15</sup> When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, &amp; <u>the hour is already late</u>. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages &amp; buy themselves food."</p> <p><sup>16</sup> But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." <sup>17</sup> &amp; they said to Him, "We have here only 5 loaves &amp; 2 fish." <sup>18</sup> He said, "Bring them here to Me." <sup>19</sup> Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. &amp; He took the 5 loaves &amp; the 2 fish, &amp; looking up to heaven, He blessed &amp; broke &amp; gave the loaves to the disciples; &amp; the disciples gave to the multitudes. <sup>20</sup> So they all ate &amp; were filled, &amp; they took up <u>12 baskets full of the fragments</u> that remained. <sup>21</sup> Now those who had eaten were about <u>5000 men, besides women &amp; children</u>.</p>	<p><sup>32</sup> So they departed to a <u>deserted place</u> in the boat by themselves. <sup>33</sup> But the multitudes saw them departing, &amp; many knew Him &amp; ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them &amp; came together to Him.</p> <p><sup>34</sup> &amp; Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude &amp; was moved w/ compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> <u>When the day was now far spent</u>, His disciples came to Him &amp; said, "This is a deserted place, &amp; <u>already the hour is late</u>."</p> <p><sup>36</sup> Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country &amp; villages &amp; buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat." <sup>37</sup> But He answered &amp; said to them, "You give them something to eat." &amp; they said to Him, "Shall we go &amp; buy <u>200 denarii worth of bread</u> &amp; give them something to eat?" <sup>38</sup> But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go &amp; see." &amp; when they found out they said, "5, &amp; 2 fish."</p> <p><sup>39</sup> Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the <u>green grass</u>.</p> <p><sup>40</sup> So they sat down in ranks, in 100s &amp; in 50s. <sup>41</sup> &amp; when He had taken the 5 loaves &amp; the 2 fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed &amp; broke the loaves, &amp; gave them to His disciples to set before them; &amp; the 2 fish He divided among them all. <sup>42</sup> So they all ate &amp; were filled. <sup>43</sup> &amp; they took up <u>12 baskets full of fragments</u> &amp; of the fish. <sup>44</sup> Now those who had eaten the loaves were about <u>5000 men</u>.</p>	<p><sup>10b</sup> Then He took them &amp; went aside privately into a <u>deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida</u>.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; &amp; He received them &amp; spoke to them about the kingdom of God, &amp; <u>healed those who had need of healing</u>. <sup>12</sup> <u>When the day began to wear away</u>, the 12 came &amp; said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns &amp; country, &amp; lodge &amp; get provisions; for we are in a <u>deserted place here</u>." <sup>13</sup> But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." &amp; they said, "We have no more than 5 loaves &amp; 2 fish, unless we go &amp; buy food for all these people." <sup>14</sup> <u>For there were about 5000 men</u>. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of 50." <sup>15</sup> &amp; they did so, &amp; made them all sit down. <sup>16</sup> Then He took the 5 loaves &amp; the 2 fish, &amp; looking up to heaven, He blessed &amp; broke them, &amp; gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude. <sup>17</sup> So they all ate &amp; were filled, &amp; <u>12 baskets of the leftover fragments</u> were taken up by them.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased. <sup>3</sup> &amp; Jesus went up on the mountain, &amp; there He sat w/ His disciples. <sup>4</sup> Now the <u>Passover</u>, a feast of the Judeans, <u>was near</u>. <sup>5</sup> Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, &amp; seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" <sup>6</sup> But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. <sup>7</sup> Philip answered Him, "<u>200 denarii worth of bread</u> is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little." <sup>8</sup> One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, <sup>9</sup> "There is a lad here who has 5 barley loaves &amp; 2 <u>small fish</u> [fish] appetizers, but what are they among so many?"</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much <u>grass</u> in the place. So <u>the men</u> sat down, in number about 5000. <sup>11</sup> &amp; Jesus took the loaves, &amp; when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, &amp; the disciples to those sitting down; &amp; likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. <sup>12</sup> So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Therefore they gathered them up, &amp; filled <u>12 baskets w/ the fragments</u> of the 5 barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. <sup>14</sup> Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."</p>

Dotted lines connect some of the parallels between the four accounts.