

Chapter Six

As insignificant as it seems, this new chapter begins with two ways of expressing Jesus' departure from both the commotion of Jerusalem during an unspecified feast as noted in 5.1 and his interaction with the Jews. It's expressed by the words "after these things" (singular in the RSV) and the adverb *peran*, "the other side" with respect to the Sea of Galilee. We have no clear cut idea of why Jesus went there, but that's insignificant to the teaching he's about to offer in this chapter. One thing is certain. He went as far away from Jerusalem as possible, putting a distance between him and the capitol.

Note that Jesus didn't come alone. It seemed he wanted to express himself more concretely and freely than he did with the Jews in Jerusalem. Exposure to the so-called multitude or *ochlos* revealed an ideal occasion for this, they not being sophisticated or well versed in religious matters as had been the case in Jerusalem with religious authorities. As for *ochlos*, that sounds pretty much like an unruly mob of something close to it. The Greek text has the adjective *polus* modifying the noun, much or great as in number. The reason for this throng is obvious. In Jerusalem they saw the signs (*semeion* +) Jesus had done, that is, having cured those who were diseased, *astheneo* usually applicable to a debilitating illness. Such persons who have followed Jesus all the way from Jerusalem must have made quite a ragtag procession. Surely the Roman and religious authorities couldn't help but take notice. Instead of intervening, they were relieved that Jesus and they were leaving the capitol. Now things could get back to normal after the feast at hand.

Jesus catches sight of a mountain which stands out among the others and decides to make use of it because it's more accessible for the crowds. Also it's a natural stage where his voice can reach down the slope more easily as he turned from one side to the other. Present, of course, were his disciples who could help relay his words further down the slope. Once Jesus had ascended the mountain with the crowd in train, he sat down with his disciples, these words suggestive of assuming a certain formality intended as a sign for those assembling behind him to take notice and prepare themselves for what comes next. Obviously they hoped for healing but that was not to happen on this occasion.

Interestingly vs. 4 points out that the Passover was at hand (*eggus*, near or close). You'd think Jesus as well as those with him would be in Jerusalem, the place from which he had just left. In other words, he and they went in the opposite direction. Mention of the Passover seems to say that the "feast of the Jews" of 5.1 was not that celebration. Regardless, John's insistence on the Passover here is important because of what Chapter Six is about. As his teaching will soon show, it will tie in with the Passover but be on a wholly different plane.

A further sign of Jesus about to engage in teaching with his disciples seated about him is that he lifts up his eyes and sees the multitude coming up the mountain to him. This implies that he and his disciples managed to get ahead and ascend the mountain on their own. Of course, they were more nimble whereas the crowd, by reason of its size, moved more slowly. As for lifting up his eyes, physically speaking Jesus did just the opposite. Here he was seated as on a throne

surrounded by his court. To see the people coming toward him he literally had to look downward. While Jesus' intent is to teach, that of the crowd was to have him do more healing. Jesus was fully aware of this which is why he asked Philip about buying enough bread to feed them. Obviously a question meant to test (*peirazo* connoting to test the character) Philip and the other disciples who were listening in. John inserts this as the reason why in vs. 6 Jesus knew in advance what he intended to do.

Philip went along unknowingly and responded that they didn't have enough money to purchase bread for such a crowd. Besides, they were in an isolated place. Since Passover was near, most people had made their way to Jerusalem or were at home, having locked up their businesses for the duration. That means that the those described as five thousand let alone women and children would have been much more. Still, a large number willing to be present on the mountain instead of Jerusalem. Andrew intervenes in vs. 8 by saying that a child happened to have some bread and fish, a meager amount not enough to feed even the disciples. He says in exasperation, that it wouldn't even begin to count as enough food. Throughout this exchange Jesus must have watched the expression on his disciples' faces with a certain amusement while they remained utterly confused and exasperated.

Without further ado, Jesus has his disciples make the people sit down on the grassy slope. They hoped that by reason of the mountain's isolation some people planned ahead to bring some bread or had local contacts to obtain some. In other words, the disciples were completely clueless. Making five thousand men sit down is no easy task, *aner* being man in the biological sense which means most likely a whole slew of women and children were present. Most came with the intent of being healed of this affliction or another, not to hear Jesus teach. If he did that on the side, no problem. As long as he satisfied their pressing needs.

Things got off to a good start. Jesus wanted to make everyone as comfortable as possible, hence mention of "much grass" in vs. 10 followed by the crowd getting as much bread and fish as they needed. The text doesn't say that Jesus multiplied the bread and fish, just that he distributed both, the common verbal root *didomai* (to give) prefaced with the preposition *dia* or through. What brought about the multiplication was the fact that before this *diadidomai*, he gave thanks or *eucharisteo* which has sacramental implications. That is to say, the verb intimates the multiplication of bread and fish not so much exponentially but spiritually. Those present, including the disciples, obviously didn't understand this in the least. Jesus kept us this *eucharisteo-diadidomai* until everyone draped themselves around the mountain's summit was satisfied.

It seems the people were content as having been fed, after which the disciples did clean-up duty. Indeed, to them it was a sign or *semeion* + which was right in accord with the same signs many had seen in Jerusalem. This took their minds off the need for any healing. With a sign like this, they thought, who needs the Passover? Surely by now or close to it, it was being celebrated (cf. vs. 4) in Jerusalem. Such an event traditionally is centered around the temple, not in isolation as is the case at hand. Perhaps it dawned on some present, especially the disciples, that something new was taking its place, new but not fully understood. That would come later. Surely word got back to the religious authorities who were incensed at all this.

Once these authorities got word, immediately they'd claim that Jesus was responsible for a kind of anti-Passover which would be a direct threat to Judaism and all it represented. Furthermore, as vs. 14 says concluding this section, the people exclaimed that Jesus is the prophet destined to come into the world. The RSV has a footnote referring to Dt 18.15 in this regard: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed." Vs. 15 continues as part of an extended sentence with regard to when the people preferred having such a prophet instead of hearing the Lord speak as he had done at Mount Horeb. In other words, they needed a mediator and think they have found one in the person of Jesus Christ. Actually Jesus is such a mediator but not as the people wanted him to be.

Vs. 15 contains an ominous sign, one Jesus feared (*ginosko* + or to know) that would happen. In their eagerness they were prepared to snatch him away forcefully, *harpazo* being the verb suggestive of violence to produce an outcome. In other words, they wanted to make Jesus a king. As for the disciples, nothing is said of how they responded in this tricky situation, most likely hoping it would simply go away. To counter this well-intentioned but unlikely idea, Jesus decided to withdraw once more to the mountain, *anachoreo* suggestive of taking refuge literally "into (*eis*) the mountain."

Apparently the people had withdraw from the mountaintop without getting any healing nor teaching. Being fed was good enough simply because it was miraculous and a sign of things to come. Jesus and his disciples descended as well which means this attempt to make him king took place at or near the base of the mountain. His decision to go "into the mountain" was a wise one done on the spot. People didn't figure that Jesus would go back up there again but head off somewhere else. Note that vs. 15 says Jesus went away on his own, *autos monos*, "he alone," not with any of his disciples. With this adjective (*monos*) in mind, we could say that indeed Jesus did go into or *eis* the mountain itself, thereby disappearing completely. Chances are that the disciples got caught up with the crowd's demand which meant that Jesus needed solitude to figure his next move. As for where he had gone, then, was a matter of great speculation and concern. Surely everyone ransacked the area, everywhere but *eis* the mountain.

According to vs. 16, Jesus remained *eis* the mountain until evening or better, twilight when he could move around more freely or undetected by the crowds. As for the disciples, they went ahead and crossed the Sea of Galilee unafraid that it was dark, for many of them as fishermen were familiar with the sea's vagaries. Why they did this was puzzling though as the text advances, the reason becomes clear. Nevertheless, Jesus told them to go ahead while he remained behind. Interestingly vs. 17 says that while it was dark, Jesus hadn't yet come to the disciples. The sense here is that the disciples thought Jesus would walk out to them in the middle of the lake. However, a strong wind (*anemos*) arose suggesting that soon the disciples would be in real trouble but somehow confident that Jesus would intervene since presumably he had told them about it earlier.

After having been tossed about for some time—again not strange to these fishermen but nonetheless unsettling—true to their hope but in a way that they didn't expect, they saw Jesus walking on the water as he approached them. This walking was far more tricky than when it was

calm. Jesus had to make his way in between the waves which were like hills but were constantly undulating this way and that. It must have been quite a sight, actually terrifying, in the darkness illumined now and again by flashes of lightning. The first words out of Jesus' mouth was not to be afraid (*phobeomai*). Although the text uses the common verb *lego* (to say), in actuality he must have screamed it out in order to be heard over the wind, rain, thunder and crashing of waves. Obviously the disciples were delighted, the verb being *ethelo*, fundamentally as to wish but to do so with gladness as is the case at hand. Although vs. 19 says they were four miles (twenty-five stadia according to the Greek text), at once the ship reached the shore. Instead of taking this literally, it can indicate that once Jesus was on board, the disciples were so overwhelmed with joy that the rest of the night and voyage seemed as nothing. As for the storm, we can presume it continued, for nothing is said as to its cessation.

The disciples had experienced two major miracles or signs (*semeion*) by Jesus, the multiplication of bread and fish followed by him walking on the water. You'd think that would be enough, but it was a preliminary for something greater Jesus would teach, great but not in a spectacular fashion with *semeion* as commonly understood. Upon arriving at Capernaum people must have flocked to see Jesus asking him and the disciples how they managed to survive the storm. It seemed better not to discuss what really happened, just that they were lucky to have survived.

After things had quieted down, on the next day those on the other side of the lake felt gyped. They saw only one boat, knowing that Jesus hadn't entered the same one as the disciples. So what happened? Everyone was confused and more so, angry that Jesus had abandoned them. They figured that Jesus had made off to Capernaum, so they crowded into as many boats as could hold them and sailed over there. Not all the five thousand minus women and children were involved. Many decided enough was enough and made their way back home. Perhaps they could do some catching up with regard to observing the Passover. Some were really angry at this, having been cheated out of observing the most holy day of them all. To top it off, Jesus didn't do any healing as they had expected. Multiplying bread and fish was great, but then again, so what? As for those determined to seek out Jesus, they were aware that a storm had raged on the lake throughout the previous night and were fearful that Jesus and his disciples may not have made it. With this in mind, everyone on boats traversing the Sea of Galilee kept a close eye-out on the water for any survivors, wreckage and hopefully no bodies floating on the surface.

Vs. 25 simply says that those who had crossed over to Capernaum found Jesus, but a lot more emotion is involved in this *heurisko* than the text says. Yes, Jesus and his disciples made it through the storm in one piece. Even though they pressed him as to how they fared, he and those who had been on the boat maintained a discreet silence. That most likely was behind their question as to asking when he got to Capernaum. Jesus detects both frustration and anger in their voices because they felt abandoned. They had a point, and Jesus decided on the spot to be more careful dealing with such people in the future. The lesson? Be more attentive to their needs which could lead them to do anything. First they wanted to make him a king (cf. vs. 15), now they were threatening him.

Please note! From this point or from vs. 26 through vs. 58 the verses are inserted along with their respective notations. The reason? This section of Chapter Six is complex in that it shows the relationship between the Father and Jesus Christ, something the disciples and people in the synagogue at Capernaum where this takes place could barely fathom. One general observation to keep in mind with regard to this section. Pay attention to the verbs, most of which deal with various degrees of coming: the straight-forward coming, coming down and ascending. All in all it's very dynamic. Hopefully this outline will present the material more clearly, again, with a view to reading it as *lectio divina*. As for the notations, they had been written before this outline. The Gospel verses thus are worked into it.

26: Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me not because you saw signs but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

Vs. 25 has the people addressing Jesus formally, that is, as rabbi. That title is associated with someone who teaches but judging from the text so far, little if any of this had been done. Thus rabbi can be understood as a sign of respect. If the people show this, Jesus just might comply and do something spectacular to follow up on the multiplication of bread and fish.

At the same time Jesus felt frustrated. That's why in vs. 26 he comes off with the double *amen* + followed by "I say to you." It's a way of exerting control over the situation which at any minute could get out of hand. He tells it like it is, namely, that the Jews are seeking him because of the bread and fish he had multiplied. In other words, Jesus = a free lunch. Once you get on this treadmill, it's hard to get off. After all, "they had followed him because they saw the signs which he did on those who were diseased" [vs. 2]. Indeed, the crowd was after both food and signs, very understandable for people who live their whole lives on a subsistence level. On top of it they were heavily taxed. So when Jesus speaks as such he's really defending himself or perhaps better put, diverting the heat away from himself to something of great importance he's about to communicate.

27: Do not labor for the food which perishes but for the food which endures to eternal life which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal."

Vs. 27 is pivotal in this chapter insofar as Jesus uses the miraculous feeding followed by coming across the Sea of Galilee in a ferocious storm to introduce something brand new yet familiar. Chapter Six deals with the issue of food or more to the point, of subsistence. Jesus is fully aware of this near primitive level and wishes not so much to improve the situation by providing more material goods but by elevating the issue at hand, of bringing it to a new level. That, it will turn out to be, what's now called the Eucharist.

As for the verse at hand, Jesus tells the people not to labor (*ergazomai* +) for food destined to perish but for what lasts for all eternity. Here the noun *brosis* + or food also means the act of consuming it. Everyone knows that such food, while vital to sustain life, is passing, *apollumi* being the verb which conveys the sense of utter destruction. Implied, of course, is that what Jesus is about to say transcends this *apollumi*. Compared with the food subject to *apollumi* is the kind

that lasts, *meno* +also as to remain in the sense of abiding literally “into (*eis*) eternal life.” The adjective is *aionios* + which applies to that with no beginning or end. Taken at face value, that implies a whole lot of *ergazomai*, and who’s willing to do it?

Vs. 27 continues by saying that the Son of man is, if you will, the paymaster. He’s the one who will dispense the food. So if he’s the long desired Messiah, people will respond all the more...way more...when it comes to the *ergazomai* required for such nourishment. Certainly it’s worth the effort in light of the miraculous feeding.

Jesus sets this Son of man apart even more by saying that God the Father had set his seal on him, *sphragizo* implying an official acknowledgment from someone in power. The seal cannot be broken unless by that person’s authority or someone to whom it has been delegated. Judging by the nature of this verse, no one, not even the Father, will violate the seal.

28: Then they said to him, "What must we do to be doing the works of God?"

This verse begins with *oun* + or “therefore” which reveals that the people trying to absorb all this are dying to blurt out an adequate response to Jesus. It comes across in the form of a straight-forward question which, while as genuine as all get-out, reveals they haven’t a clue as to what’s going on. As very practical people...peasants really...they think in terms of action, of doing this or doing that to object a specific result. As for this doing, note the two different words for the same one in English according to the **RSV**. First comes *poieo* followed by *ergazomai* also to do but involves more effort and planning, both followed by *ergon* (all three +) or work, the result of the latter verb.

In a very real sense, these people knew the answer which lays in what they’ve been doing all along, that is, observing Jewish religious norms and customs. Their sincerity was written all over their faces, something that impressed Jesus and in a way, made him regret having left them so suddenly on the other side of the lake. Jesus doesn’t seem to have expected this willingness, taking him aback as he recalled the similar straight-forward willingness displayed by the disciples when he had called them. After all, they were cut from the same cloth as the people before him. The only thing Jesus could do while finding himself put on the spot was to respond with a similar straight-forward answer.

29: Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

And so the straight-forward answer here consists in telling the people that the work or *ergon* + of God consists in believing literally into (*eis*) him whom God has sent, *apostello* + conveying as it does a sense of mission. As for *ergon* in vs, 29, note that it’s singular compared with the plural in vs. 28 where the people use it. Perhaps this is an incidental distinction, but the singular *ergon* is more unified with regard to *pisteuo* and doesn’t involved doing in the way the people conceived it.

30: So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?"

As with vs. 28, the one at hand begins with *oun* translated here as “thus” and shows the same sincerity the people have with regard to Jesus. Actually it’s one of the few interactions with a distinctly positive character that’s sustained. So despite the initial promise, Jesus can’t help but have a sinking feeling because yet again he’s asked for a sign or *semeion* +. Actually he’s frustrated. The people just cannot get this *semeion* thing out of their heads, wanting to see one in action, if you will, so they may believe (*pisteuo* +). that means their faith is pretty shallow. Implied is no seeing, no believing. Indeed, Jesus is tempted to walk away at this point, having a legitimate excuse. This desire...actually demand...for a sign is put in the context of another question they ask of Jesus in the same verse. What kind of work will he do? The question consists of one verb, *ergazomai* +, the same verb in vs. 28, “in order to do the works of God.”

31: Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

As for this question of bread, again a fundamental theme laying beneath Chapter Six brought up is food but food in the sense of providing enough sustenance to keep people going. And so all the talk about *poieo*, *ergazomai* and *ergon* boil down to this inescapable reality. So when the people pose this to Jesus they have in mind the recent multiplication of bread and fish on the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The translation, if you will? Please do it again.

Jesus sees in the people and awareness of their ancestors whom the Lord provided for in the desert. Actually this was not unlike the other side of the Sea of Galilee. And so both that generation long past and the current one are joined; not only that, all intervening generations are included.

32: Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

Without missing an opportunity indicated by yet another *oun* +, double *amen* + and “I say to you” in vs. 32, Jesus signals to the people that he has taken their case to heart. Actually he doesn’t contract the quote from Exodus but in a way, hedges it. Moses wasn’t responsible for this bread...this *lechem* or sustenance...from heaven but my Father who gives bread which Jesus distinguishes from the manna as true, *alethinos* +. And so externally there’s no difference which thus far sounds just fine.

33: For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

Thus far or in vs. 33 Jesus sees satisfaction on the faces of those with whom he’s speaking which enables him to start shifting the original sense of manna-as-*lechem*. Note that emphasis is being put upon this bread as having come down from heaven meaning Jesus stays true to the original sense of the Exodus text but is starting to enhance it little by little, most likely without his listeners knowing where he’s leading. Again, keep in mind that they have their attention fixed on

being fed to avoid starvation, nothing more. Who couldn't disagree that this bread which has come down from heaven is to give life or *zoe* + to the world or *kosmos* +?

Vs. 33 has the first of seven references to the preposition "down" or *kata* as prefaced to the verbal root *baino* + or to come down, to descend. Thus such down-ness has an important role to play for the rest of Chapter Six, it representing the realm where people live and go about their business. To it Jesus comes not so much as an outsider but one who is to provide nourishment, that of course, being a dominant theme here. Spontaneously the people.—by now a spokesman or two or more must have emerged—asked to be given this bread not just once but always, *pan* or at all times, *pan* = all and *tote* = now.

34: They said to him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

A request as straight-forward and honest as could be. How could Jesus refuse?

35: Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst."

With such an honest straight-forward response which perhaps took Jesus by more surprise than he anticipated, he now finds himself a perfect position to begin presenting a teaching that for the Jews or anyone else, disciples included, was brand new. Best of all, it will be based up the original meaning of the Exodus quote which it should be remembered, the people brought it up, not Jesus. You can't but wonder what would have happened if they didn't. The multiplication of bread and fish which took place so recently would remain just that, a miracle but nothing more.

Now that Jesus has come down in the same fashion as the manna did in the Sinai wilderness, we can assume he wishes people to approach him. For that reason it's helpful to pay attention to the Exodus account as to how the Israelites related to this manna. Note the distinction between hungering and being thirsty: coming to Jesus or *erchomai* + with the directness of *pros* (direction towards-which) prevents hunger whereas believing (*pisteuo* +) literally into (*eis*) him prevents thirst. Both don't happen here and there but *popote* or never.

Keep in mind the context! The Israelites had murmured against the Lord out of hunger, this being echoed in the recent multiplication of bread and fish. Thus as was the mentality at that time, so is the mentality the same *hic et nunc* with Jesus. As for the incident in Chapter Sixteen of Exodus, vs. 16 opens with "This is what the Lord has commanded" with regard to the manna, *davar* being the same word as that had been spoken. Note that of concern here only is the manna. Nothing is said of the quails which contain far more nourishment. The same applies to the fish with regard to Jesus. Now this *davar* is about to be translated, if you will, into action or the bread-like substance to be gathered into one omer per person, omer being a measure, this term applicable to wheat.

In vs. 17 the people gathered an omer apiece in accord with the need of each family which in the next verse functions as a means of measurement for the "bread" in the form of hoarfrost. Two verbs show the balance achieved, *hadaph* and *chasar* (to be abundant and to lack). Regardless of

which one favored, the proper measure was meted out. How this was done is not mentioned though presumably divine intervention was involved. As for any remainder which applies to those who were greedy, Moses commands “Let no man leave any of it until the morning” [vs. 19]. Such bread had appeared in the morning, the time when it was gathered, so the verse at hand seems to apply to the following morning when new bread can be gathered. That “bread” which exceeded the proper amount produced worms and became foul (cf. vs. 20). As a result, “Moses was angry with them.” *Qatsaph* is the verb which fundamentally means to break out. This manifestation of anger is followed by what can be taken as an offshoot of it: “but when the sun grew hot, it melted” [vs. 21]. Such melting is consistent with the bread’s nature of being like hoarfrost or thin, frozen wafers which had to be consumed rather quickly.

The Israelites had learned how to gather properly the bread though nothing is said about an excess or lack of quails, a source of what seems to be a better source of nutrition. Regulation of this bread is more important, perhaps because it was “like wafers made with honey” [vs. 31], quite delicate, and offered a more immediate stimulus in arid conditions. Gathering of it continued until “day six” when “they gathered twice as much bread, two omers apiece” [vs. 22]. It is to the Israelites’ credit that they recalled the Lord’s words to Moses in vs. 6 that “what they bring in will be twice as much as they gather daily.” Such doubling of the portion on day six is deliberate because “Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord” [vs. 23] when no gathering is permitted. Here is the first mention in the Bible of a Sabbath). It is to be holy or *qodesh* to the Lord.

36: But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.

This verses which begins with *alla* + or “but” comes off with a warning. Despite Jesus being seen...out there for any and all to behold... the people persist in not believing. Actually this is a reoccurring theme in the Hebrew scriptures and says something about the human condition. As for this seeing, we can take Jesus-as-bread which he said so plainly in vs. 35. So what does he do now? The usual, having recourse to the Father. It is the Father who gives Jesus all those who come to him, *didomi* + resulting in the directness of *pros*. Beyond that Jesus can do basically nothing.

37: All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out.

Actually in this verse *didomi* is used twice, the second time when Jesus says he won’t cast out such a person, the *ek* (out) of *ekballo* being exactly the contrary. Such coming to Jesus, of course, is directly dependent upon the just mentioned *didomi* of the Father or that first *pros*, “come to me.”.

38: For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me;

Now for the second *katabaino* + which begins with *hoti* + or “for” to show the connection between this twofold *pros* and *katabaino*. Instead of being as bread or better, in addition to being bread, Jesus does this *katabaino* not on his own accord or *thelema* +. That would imply either he was indifferent or had contested going with the Father which would have been a heated argument. Thus we have Jesus down here (i.e., *katabaino*) pretty much against his will which in one way,

doesn't sound very attractive or inviting. Now that he's here, he has to carry out the *thelma* of the Father.

39: and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day.

This verse flows directly from the previous one as a continuous sentence linked by the conjunctive *kai* + or "and." Jesus is quick to spell out the Father's will who had sent him, *pempo* + also as to commission and thus differing from what we'd expect, *apostello* being sent on a mission. *Pempo* does fit in better because it's tied in with Jesus saying he intends not to lose anything given him. Such giving or *didomi* + isn't specified but presumed to be from the Father. Instead of losing there's raising up, *apollumi* + vs. *anistemi*. Note that Jesus doesn't use personal pronouns or the like. Instead, it's impersonal (*auto*) with regard to the last day, *eschatos* suggestive of that which is the very end. Perhaps this *auto* can apply to humanity as a whole which, of course, would include individuals. As for those listening to all this, such talk is not entirely unfamiliar, for people were familiar with the idea of the end of the world and the coming of the Messiah. Thus between now or when Jesus is speaking and the last day we have an indefinite period of time to gather, if you will, that manna in the person of Jesus-as-bread from heaven.

40: For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Here Jesus makes it clear that his Father's will or *thelema* + is tantamount. While we could say that Jesus had some reservation about doing it, nevertheless, there is a concession on the Father's part to the Son. That consists of everyone seeing and believing the Son (*theoreo* and *pisteuo*, both +), the latter with *eis* or "into him." It results in having life which is *aionios* + or eternal in the here and now. It's extended to another time, if you will, or when Jesus will raise this person up (*anistemi* +) on the last day. Thus we can say that the essential part of seeing and believing goes along just fine until it's followed by being raised up, this as secondary in the sense of being sequential.

41: The Jews then murmured at him because he said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."

Everything seems to be going along quite well thus far. However, in this verse we have the Jews murmuring at Jesus, *gogguzo* (with *peri*, also as around, concerning) needing no translation because its very pronunciation conveys what it signifies. Are these the same people as those who had been present at the multiplication of bread and fish and who had followed Jesus across the Sea of Galilee? Perhaps some of them. Then again, it could refer to others who got wind of this extended discussion and found themselves as having been drawn in. As for the *gogguzo* at hand, one can't help but compare in in light of the Exodus quote regarding manna or more specifically, the Israelites murmuring in the desert which had the positive effect of the Lord providing for them (cf. Ex 16.9). All this makes perfect sense, the Jews even quoting Jesus' words about him being the bread of heaven. Perhaps that in and by itself might be passable, but the real bone of contention is

this bread...Jesus...as having come down from heaven and thus by nature is divine. Such is the third use of the verb *katabaino* +.

A kind of footnote at this juncture as Jesus delves into his relationship with the Father and how that ties in with those persons who relate to both. While magnificent and subtle, worthy of spending oodles of time to ponder, the verses at hand tend to be repetitious. While the notations on them may be helpful, quickly it becomes evident that in a way they're not needed. So with that caveat in mind, the text continues as follows.

42: They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

Here the Jews pose a question as to Jesus' origins, words that must have cut him to the quick, perhaps more than any insults he had endured throughout his life. Also he did his best to keep such words away from any family members. They said aloud to all around them that he is the son of Joseph whose parents they know. Such words also must have shaken the disciples who wondered if they should remain with Jesus. For Jesus or for anyone else to claim one's origin in heaven as a descent to the human race...mere mortals...is absurd a claim as anyone could make. It should be kept in mind that such an observation is understandable in village life where everyone knew everyone's business and where privacy was virtually non-existent. Also those making the accusation had quickly forgotten what Jesus had done for them, having been fed with bread and fish. After all, it was they who had followed him up the mountain.

43: Jesus answered them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.

Jesus responds to all this the only way he can by telling his so-called accusers not to murmur among themselves, *gogguzo* + or literally "with one another." If these people claimed to know Jesus' parents, it's true the other way around. Jesus knew them and if he wanted to, could make their dir public. With that background in mind, Jesus could continue with his claim of saying that no one can approach him unless the Father who had sent him draws this person. As in vs. 39 we find *pempo* + or to send in the sense of being commissioned.

44: No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Note the verb *helko* or to draw, also to pull which implies the Father is tugging on a rope to bring a person to Jesus. Implied is that already the Father has lassoed this person. Now it's simply a matter of bringing him close. Anyone so caught may have reservations. What makes this attractive is Jesus saying that once the lassoed person is pulled to him, he will keep him around indefinitely until the last day at which time he will raise him up, *anistemi* +.

45: It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

Jesus proceeds without delay to back up his claim by citing the most authoritative source around, the prophets, singling out Isaiah generally considered to be the best. The quote from 54.13 runs in full as “All your sons shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the prosperity of your sons.” *Lamad* (*didaktos* in the Greek text) is the verb to teach which connotes being chastised or being made accustomed to and hence to become a disciple. The Hebrew text doesn’t have the preposition “by” and reads literally, “they shall be taught the Lord.” Jesus doesn’t add the second part of the verse, that is, the idea of prosperity or *shalom* which fundamentally means peace as well as wholeness. This idea of *lamad*, so familiar to the Jews with regard to *Torah* so it really struck home. Still, they were in no position, none whatsoever, of equating such *lamad* with the divinity of Jesus.

As for this *lamad*, it involves a master-disciple relationship when it comes to transmitting anything religious or spiritual. With regards to the Father, the same approach is inferred by the verb *manthano*, to gain knowledge or instruction. It’s intimately bound up with hearing (*akouo* +) not so much from the Father but *para* the Father, that is to say, as being beside him or in his company. And so this *akouo/manthano* enables a person to come to Jesus, *pros* again implying directness.

46: Not that any one has seen the Father except him who is from God; he has seen the Father.

Jesus now qualifies this relationship with the Father by saying that no person has seen (*horaō* +) him. So far so good regarding the Jews but immediately revoked by them. This happens when Jesus infers that he is the one who is from God or has this *para* relationship with him which qualifies him as having seen (*horaō* again) the Father. Note the past tense of the two instances of verb which implies being-in-the-body.

After such bold but necessary words (else we would not know the identity of Jesus), he prepares those listening to him with another instance of a double *amen* + and “I say to you.” This time it’s a person who believes or *pisteuo* +...no object but presumably Jesus because such *pisteuo* results in life which is *aiōnios* + or eternal, the last time this being mentioned being vs. 40.

As he said in vs. 35, Jesus simply puts out there that he’s the bread of life in vs. 48 which is all this verse has to offer. Jesus spells out himself-as-bread in the next verse by referring to the fathers of those listening, this being a way vaguely not unlike a put-down though one down in all gentleness. They are the same Israelites in the desert to whom the Lord gave quails and manna. Jesus says the same thing in vs. 31 but doesn’t mention the fact that they died. Everyone, of course, was aware of this fact. However, if a person eats of the bread which comes down (another *katabaino* + reference) from heaven, it will be Jesus whom they will eat. Once they do, they will not die. Now Jesus transfers this bread from heaven into something that doesn’t have its origin there, that his, his own flesh (*sarx* +) or body-ness. All this is so easy to reject because beneath the words lies the fundamental distinction between above and below, the two being connected (and hence rejected) by the verb *katabaino* as it has been making its appearance in these verses.

47: Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

Note that believing here has no object, *pisteuo* = *zoe* which is *aionios* (all +).

The following four verses have no notations since what they contain is found elsewhere in the verses at hand. Nevertheless, they are posted.

48: I am the bread of life.

49: Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50: This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die.

51: I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."

52: The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

This verse reflects the just mentioned conundrum faced by the Jews when they disputed among themselves, *machomai* being a strong verb meaning to fight or to contend and amplified by the preposition *pros*, inferring that such intensity is directed toward one another with no exception. The question they bring to bear on the matter boils down to what we all know is the familiar one of cannibalism. By no means does Jesus attempt to alleviate their confusion.

53: So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you;

Jesus presses on here with very uncomfortable language about the need to eat the flesh of the Son of man and to drink his blood. If not, a person simply lacks life or *zoe* +. No getting around that.

54: he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

This verse continues as an extended sentence about a person doing what Jesus just said, that is, with regard to *zoe* which is *aionios* (both again +). Despite the various ways Jesus presents this—and he does his best to make palatable that which clearly is not palatable—twice he throws in the adjective *alethes* (true) which is necessary for giving clarity to that which is close to being unacceptable. The consolation? The person so engaged in eating and drinking Jesus Christ abides in him and he in that person, the verb being *meno* + fundamentally as to remain in the sense of abiding. In away, this *meno* does away with the idea of cannibalism because the person you eat is dead, not alive. So if the Jews paid close attention as clearly as they weren't at the moment, this would have put Jesus' words in perspective.

As with vss. 48-51, the following have no notations since what they contain is found elsewhere in the verses at hand. Nevertheless, they are posted.

55: For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56: He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.

57: As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me.

Note *kathos* and the conjunctive *kai* + with regard to “as” and “so.” *Kathos* begins the verse with the Father described for the first time as living (the verb *zao* +) and his sending of me, that is, Jesus is using the first person singular with regard to this *apostello* +. The *zao* of the Father is intimately connected with Jesus also as *zao* which is literally “through (*dia*) the Father.” Now this double *zao* is transmitted (*kai* as ‘so’) by the person who eats Jesus, again as first person singular and not as someone else nor as an object. Such eating will result in that person having life (*zao*) literally “through (*dia*) me.”

Again, Jesus contrasts these words about himself as bread which has come down (*katabaino* +) from heaven. It’s superior to what had supported Israel’s fathers because it will enable anyone eating this bread/Jesus to live (*zao* +) literally “into eternity,” eis with *aion* which is related to the often mentioned adjective *aionios* and also can refer to a long period of time. Now in vs. 59 we have the exact location where Jesus is speaking, the synagogue at Capernaum.

As with vss. 48-51, the following one verse has no notations since what it contains is found elsewhere in the verses at hand. Nevertheless, it is posted.

58: This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever."

End of insertion of both verses and notations.

Vs. 60 shifts attention away from those whom Jesus is addressing in the synagogue at Capernaum which at last is identified place to his disciples who were present. The verse says that many of them (*pollos* seems to refer to more than the immediate twelve) labeled Jesus’ words as a hard saying, a *logos* + described as *skleros* which fundamentally means rough or harsh. Out of frustration they posed a rhetorical question as to who can hear this *logos*. It’d come as no surprise they were echoing the majority of those present in the synagogue, many of whom they knew and perhaps were relatives. We could almost hearing these people ridicule the disciples, saying something like why on earth are you associating with this man? Indeed, their earlier words in vs. 42 were hard to get out of their minds when people say that they’re familiar with the parents of this Jesus who’s speaking. All this means it must have gotten back to them, that is, to Mary and other relatives as well as Joseph if he were alive at the time.

Those listening to Jesus, disciples included, are simple people. They might be giving him the benefit of the doubt that he isn’t speaking about cannibalism. If that is true which still remains uncertain, how is this giving of Jesus’ body after the manner of the bread from heaven recorded in

Exodus actually to be implemented? In other words, show us how it's to be done. Unfortunately Jesus doesn't clarify that which you think he would. And so it's natural that many had doubts about him and his claims. Hindsight shows that all this will be sorted out at the Last Supper. Despite this disappointment, in the long run things pan out for the better.

Vs. 61 has Jesus not just knowing (*oida* +) about how his disciples were murmuring or *gogguzo* + but puts it more poignantly as "in himself." It's almost as though this *gogguzo* made its way into the very being of Jesus. However, who could blame them for taking issue with such strong words? His question to them about their taking offense or *skandalizo* is both appropriate and naive. Appropriate because this verb means to trip up, to stumble and naive in that what would anyone expect from someone who seems to be speaking in terms of cannibalism.

In vs. 62 Jesus follows up this question with another which ties in with all his talk as it relates to *katabaino* or a descent from heaven, that is, as it ties in with the manna incident. Jesus comes close to taunting his disciples. What would be their reaction if they see the Son of man ascending (*anabaino* +) to the place he had come from or was before or *proteron*? Note that he's careful to use the phrase "Son of man" (last time is vs. 53) which is more objective. If he were to refer this directly to himself (the disciples knew was the case, but he takes this approach for safety's sake), all would abandon him on the spot.

Jesus wisely and gently shifts his words in vs. 63 to the spirit or *pneuma* + which gives life, *zoopoieo* +, the verb *poieo* as to make suggesting active, constant work. Compared with this the flesh (*sarx* +) is useless, *opheleo* as to profit with *ouden*, nothing...to profit nothing. Next Jesus says that his words or *rhema* + (also as thing, object) are *pneuma* and *zoe*, both +. In other words, such *rhema* are not physical entities after the manner of bread or anything corporeal. This is followed immediately in vs. 64 with *alla* + or "but" where Jesus acknowledges that some who are present do not believe, *pisteuo* +. He puts a different slant on this. Instead of speaking about those in the synagogue, in effect he's referring to the person who would betray him, *paradidomi*, literally to give beside or *para*, *para* being those who will take custody of him. Obviously this caused quite a stir at first but once the dust had settled, many thought his words weren't far off the mark. Again, his strong words about eating his flesh and drinking his blood would contribute to this *paradidomi*...and for the good of the people.

Vs. 65 begins with the conjunctive *kai* + translated as "and" to remind those with Jesus, especially his disciples, that already he had told them no one can come to him unless the Father permits it: *pros* = Jesus and *ek* = Father, the two linked by the verb *didomi* or to give or to grant.

By now it was clear that Jesus could go no further. It boiled down to accept or reject which is why many disciples left, *mathetes* here not referring to the twelve intimates but next several rings around them, if you will. Once these people have fallen off—we could see them exiting the synagogue sheepishly wishing not to be seen but couldn't help but be seen—Jesus turns to the twelve. The way it's put is that these men remained steadfast with a mixture of loyalty and perhaps more to the point, with clear realization that they had no place to go. And so they

remained in the synagogue itself after everyone had dispersed. Although Peter expressed the fact that Jesus had the *rhema* + of life which is eternal or *aiōnios* +, he too when you came down to it, was stuck with no option. He blurts out that he and the others have come to believe and to know (*pisteuo* and *ginosko*, both +) that Jesus is the Holy One of God, *Hagios* perhaps not so much as divine but as someone special. This, of course, will come into greater clarity later on.

While Jesus appreciates this profession of loyalty, he doesn't admit it. In vs. 70 he snaps back unexpectedly saying that despite having chosen all twelve of those right there before him, one is a devil, *diabolos* which fundamentally means one who engages in propagating slander or backbiting. Such a word is much stronger than, for example, a traitor. The next or last verse of this chapter says that this *diabolos* is Judas. And so the disciples are left confused and frightened. Despite their weakness, it is to their everlasting credit that they remained with Jesus though if we could ask each one, the response? Barely.

Chapter Seven

The opening words of this chapter, "after this" (*meta tauta*, literally 'after these things,' plural) comprise a time frame. A footnote in the NIV says "Since 6.4 refers to the Passover Feast and 7.2 to the Feast of Tabernacles, the interval was about six months." We could also say that "after this" signifies the start of a new phase in Jesus' teaching. He had gone on at considerable length about eating his body and blood as well as revealing more about his relationship with the Father. Later Christians, especially Catholics, would consider Chapter Six among the most important ones in the entire Bible since it deals with what later would be called the Eucharist. Having completed this, Jesus is about to enter a new phase of his teaching. However, he would continue to meet with rejection from religious authorities inferred by the term "Jews." The only difference is that this hostility started to ramp up significantly. In fact, vs. 1 says plainly that "the Jews sought to kill him," *apokteino*, the preposition *apo* or "from" prefaced to the root *kteino* or to slay making this verse all the more vivid.

Vs. 2 speaks of the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot, one of three great annual festivals when the Jewish people gather together in Jerusalem not only to remember God's care for their ancestors in the wilderness but also to look ahead to that promised Messianic age when all nations will flow to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. In other words, Tabernacles is a preparation for that event. First mention of its roots is Ex 23.16: "You shall keep the feast of harvest of the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the feast of ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor." The brothers of Jesus possibly had some inside information as to what the Jews intended to do to Jesus which is why for his own safety they urged him strongly to leave and head for Judea. The word for brothers is *adelphos* + which can mean close associate. It would come as no surprise that they were concerned about their own heads. If the Jews discovered Jesus among them, they would suffer the same fate as he.

At first glance you'd think these brothers were among the few who believed Jesus' words, but vs. 5 says even they didn't believe in Jesus. It doesn't say "some" or the like but the whole lot. The verb,

of course, is *pisteuo* + along with the preposition *eis*, literally “into Jesus,” the brothers not believing into him. No surprise there, given the strong words of Chapter Six. At the same time they are to be credited with continuing to remain with Jesus...for now. However, their lives were on the line just as much as his and the disciples, so the quicker he leaves, the better. Once in Judea, hopefully the disciples will take their minds off Jesus’ so-called cannibalistic teaching and focus upon the works he’ll be doing there. The same would apply to the people in Galilee. They might come around to him later on. The two verbs are *theoreo* and *poieo* or to do or to make with regard to *ergon* (all three +). *Poieo* is the present tense with regard to *ergon*, most likely healings instead of teaching. The latter, of course would be too controversial. Best to leave that for another occasion or better, among the disciples only.

Another indication that these brothers or close associates have the best interest of Jesus at heart (but at the same time preserving their own self interests) comes in vs. 4 where their words sound almost as though they came from him. In sum, they say that a person doesn’t do things secretly if the goal is to make oneself known. In other words, why bother? The verb for this is *poieo* + or to do along with *kruptos* or in secret. The seeking (*zeteo* +) is amplified by the noun *parresia* which the RSV translates as “known openly.” More precisely it means having freedom to speak as a member of a city state or *polis* and to do so without recrimination. The brothers are urging Jesus not to hesitate or hold back but show himself to the world, *phaneroo* + or to become visible, the opposite of *kruptos*.

Jesus seems to appreciate this advice but feels the need to offer a rebuke. That comes right away in vs. 6 when he speaks of his own time or *kairos* + which is not yet present, the verb being *pareimi*, literally to go beside (*para*). So we could take this as Jesus’ time or special event as not yet having come to be beside him. However, note the difference between his personal *kairos* and that of the brothers speaking with him. Theirs is always present whereas that of Jesus has yet to come. The adjective to describe this is *hetoimos* fundamentally as prepared with the adverb *pantote* +, at all times. Now these brothers who prompted Jesus to leave are not just rebuked but made to consider the fact that as of the present moment they are smack in the middle of their own *kairos*. Most likely they understood that *kairos* is equivalent to death, that it’s around the corner.

In vs. 7 Jesus makes a sharp distinction between himself and the world, clearly having in mind the hostile reception to his teaching such as eating his body and drinking his blood. It boils down to a simple matter of hatred, *miseo* +. The world or the *kosmos* + cannot be this way toward the brothers because those represented by the world were on the fence or were indecisive about it. They viewed their indecision to be an ideal condition for being manipulated. On the other hand, Jesus is not on the fence but holds firmly to his position. He puts it plainly and simply. The world hates him because he gives witness or *martureo* + that anything and everything it does...its *ergon* +...are outright evil, *poneros* + often as being morally worthless. These words aren’t a blanket condemnation but are meant to be in contrast to the witness Jesus is giving. The two simply cannot co-exist. In sum, Jesus is telling it like it is which seals his eventual fate.

In vs. 8 Jesus speaks to these brothers bluntly, almost rudely, telling to go to the feast of Tabernacles on their own because he isn't. Note the use of the verb *anabaino* with regard to *eorte* (both +) or feast, both with the preposition *eis*, into. Obviously Jerusalem is the destination but isn't mentioned. For the second time in a row Jesus gives the reason for not going, that is, his *kairos* + has not come, the verb *pleroo* + meaning it has yet to be fulfilled or be brought to completion. Thus Jesus remained in Galilee, somewhat miffed and wondering if he had treated these people unfairly. And so the time he spent in Galilee wasn't the most pleasant experience.

Vs. 10 has the brothers (*adelphos* +) of Jesus going into (*eis*) the feast as noted above. They left both hurt and saddened at the same time after their encounter with Jesus. However, Jesus had a change of heart feeling somewhat abandoned or left behind in Galilee. That made him decide to go up (*anabaino* +) to the feast. Though it was spread out over about a week, Jesus had to hasten to Jerusalem so as not to miss out on any special event. Jerusalem indeed was intimately tied in with his *kairos* which despite lack of immediacy, wasn't in the too distant future.

Jesus figures that if he shows himself openly, right away he'll be spotted by the religious authorities who never forgot that he had healed the man by the pool of Bethzatha on the Sabbath. Surely they had gotten word of his teaching about eating his body and drinking his blood. Chances are that he might not leave Jerusalem alive. After all, as vs. 11 says, word filtered back to him that the Jews were on the look-out. Still, Jesus goes "in private" as the **RSV** says which is rendered by the adverb *phaneros* with the negative which can be rendered as not openly or manifestly. The first thing that comes to mind is that Jesus assumes a disguise. Since he came from a relatively poor background and was accustomed to moving about, his disguise could be the appearance of someone rather well off or even a foreigner. Even if there's some truth to this, most likely not being *phaneros* implies that Jesus didn't engage in healing nor in teaching but simply walked along and doing those duties expected of a devout Jew. Anyway, Jesus must have felt quite awkward acting like someone exactly opposite his natural demeanor.

Vs. 11 and the next two show that indeed Jesus is a wanted man. This general sentiment is summed up well by the noun *goggusmos* derived from *gogguzo* first noted in 6.42, the very pronunciation requiring no translation. Note that *goggusmos* is situated literally "in (*en*) the crowd" or *ochlos* + making the two practically interchangeable. As for the crowd itself, the connotation is somewhat negative, that it can swing one way or another. In sum, it suggests volatility. Actually two types of rumors had been circulating among those in the city, namely, that Jesus is either a good person or leading people astray. The adjective is *agathos* + and the verb is *planao* which connotes wandering in aimless fashion. And so vs. 13 says of this situation that people were terrified (the adjective *phobos*) to speak openly of Jesus, the noun *parresia* + again being used as in vs. 4.

The very fact that such *goggusmos* or muttering circulated among those assembled in Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles meant that someone caught sight of Jesus and circulated this among the crowd. The report spread like wildfire among three groups: the crowd, Jews (synonymous with religious authorities, not the people) and of course the Romans. Although the Roman presence isn't mentioned, it's not unlike the elephant in the room pervading the entire atmosphere. Even

the slightest inkling of a disturbance would be enough to trigger the occupiers to come down hard and fast. For good reason the other two groups held them in great fear.

Then in vs. 14 a surprise or actually a shock. Jesus decided upon a second *anabaino* +, this one to the temple. Note that he does it in the middle of the feast, the present active participle of *mesoo*, literally to be in the middle, which would be about day three of four into a total of seven. That means Jesus partook of the Tabernacles celebration, most likely with those disciples who had gone to Jerusalem before him. They must have been shocked to see him *ou phaneros* as vs. 10 has it, not seen but in disguise. Something must have happened in that interchange of several days that made Jesus go to the temple and teach, *didasko* fundamentally as the giving of instructions in a formal manner. We can assume the brothers persisted in their cautioning of Jesus who this time took it in stride yet to politely ignored them. So off he went.

Jesus takes a place in the temple's courtyard filled with booths for the feast making it look more like a haphazard campground. This time nobody approaches him for healing because he had come to Jerusalem in disguise. Even if he had come openly people were reluctant because the authorities would have taken note and even arrested them. Nevertheless, Jesus feels compelled to teach, vs. 15 mentioning the Jews who as in other places of the Gospel text equal the religious authorities. This time they decided to let Jesus speak unhindered. His words, like the recent ones about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, would condemn him. All they had to do was sit back and watch him hang himself. However, they were surprised. The text even says that the Jews marveled at his words, *thaumazo* +. Translation? They were impressed and exclaimed out loud a rhetorical question as to where he got this. The text reads literally "How does this (man) know his letters?" The verb is *oida* + and the noun is *gramma* or letters of the alphabet referring to that which is written. They add that Jesus had never studied or *manthano* + which infers that never he had been a disciple of a rabbi but came off with this teaching on his own. I.e., all this is very suspect, something the Jews knew or thought they knew from the beginning.

Vs. 16 begins with *oun* + translated as "so" where Jesus responds at once. Given the circumstance and ample warning, he was prepared and instead of taking a defense tone, he continued as he had done before as in Chapter Six. He comes off in a matter-of-fact manner which immediately impressed those listening to him. They knew someone was speaking with authority, pure and simple, almost even before he opens his mouth.

Jesus says outrightly that his teaching or *didache* isn't his own but comes from the one who sent him, *pempo* + used in the same way as in vs. 38. There he had spelled out this *pempo* with respect to the Father, that is, to those in the synagogue in Capernaum. Chances are those present in the temple courtyard weren't present at that time, so they wondered to whom Jesus was referring. It was only natural for people to think that Jesus was referring to some unknown mysterious rabbi as when the Jews questioned where he had studied or better under whom he had studied.

On the surface vs. 17 is straight forward enough as an extended sentence which comes across as orthodox as all get out. That is to say, should anyone conform his will (*thelema* +) to that of God, right away he'll know whether Jesus' teaching is from God or he's just blabbing on his own. Jesus

expresses this as being in accord with one's own authority, literally as "from myself or *apo' emautou*. As for anyone speaking as such, he is seeking personal glory (*doxa* +). However, such is not the case with Jesus. He speaks of himself as seeking the glory of the one who sent him, that being true and without falsehood (*alethes* + and *adikia*), the latter fundamentally as wickedness. Those listening to Jesus are faced with a conundrum of sorts. They see no inconsistency with orthodox Jewish teaching about the obligation to do God's will. On the other hand, they have a problem with Jesus identifying himself with the Father, that he's some kind of privileged mediator or special envoy.

Vs. 19 consists of three separate sentences. The first is a rhetorical question Jesus proposes because he's fully aware that his words are causing aggravation. It deals with something obvious or accepted by his accusers, Moses giving the Law or *Nomos* +, i.e., *Torah*. The second follows from it, a direct, unequivocal statement that not one of those present are keeping the *Nomos/Torah*, The verb is *poieo* + with emphasis on doing or putting into action. The third question is both rhetorical and in a way, threatening. Jesus asking why the Jews want to kill him.

Finally what had been simmering comes out into the open. Vs. 20 has the people or *ochlos* + speaking most likely after having been incited by the Jews to get at Jesus. While the religious authorities have some formal training, that doesn't mean the rest who are essentially peasants cannot grasp what Jesus is teaching. In fact, he taught in a manner that could reach anyone. Even more important than his words is his presence. It was difficult not being captivated by it which is why people both stayed on and were angered. As for the latter, his manner of speaking had a way of rousing guilt and the need for forgiveness. Such is why when the crowd had incited, people blurted out that Jesus has a demon, *daimonion* meaning a spiritual being lying in between that which is human and that which is divine, usually tending toward the negative. On top of it they threw back into his face a question, demanding who is trying to kill him. Finally it dawns on Jesus that he won't get anywhere with them. Would he find the same attitude elsewhere?

Jesus hits back hard in vs. 21 indicated by "he answered and said." Normally you'd use one or the other but here both show impatience and the inability to see beyond observance of the Sabbath. He refers to one deed or *ergon* + he had done relative to this which had caused the Jews to marvel, namely, healing the lame man at the pool of Bethzatha. This brings up a classical example, circumcision on the Sabbath. While work is prohibited on that day of rest, should the eighth day fall on it, there's no problem with performing a circumcision. Also Jesus rebukes the Jews for attributing circumcision to Moses even though he had legislated for it. This rite goes all the way back to Abraham (Cf. Gn 17.11-12).

If circumcision could be performed on the Sabbath, could Jesus heal the lame man on that day of rest without it being a violation? He puts this in the form of a rhetorical question, again keeping in mind that those condemning him had marveled at the cure. He concludes with the admonition not to judge by appearances but with right judgment. The verb *krino* is used twice with the noun derived from it, *krisis* modified by the adjective *dikaios* (all three +).

It's helpful to keep in mind one again that this heated interchange was taking place in the temple courtyard during the feast of Tabernacles which meant a lot of people were milling about. As noted earlier, it must have been jam-packed with temporary booths for the duration making even this broad area tightly compact. Amid this backdrop people would catch sight of Jesus and those with whom he was arguing, stop awhile to pay attention and move on. The text calls some of them Jerusalemites or natives of the city, not people who've come on pilgrimage during the feast. By reason of this they were known by the religious authorities and were careful to keep a distance. These authorities cut a formidable presence, and nobody wants to mess with them.

By now word had spread that Jesus was circulating freely in the city, causing some to stop because they were curious as what was going on. Thus in vs. 25 they wondered aloud but out of ear-shot of the religious authorities that here in their midst is a man with a bounty on his head. Nevertheless, Jesus was speaking openly, *parresia* + being the exact opposite of how the Jews comported themselves, always on guard as to how they presented themselves. As for *parresia*, the Jerusalemites exhibit some of it but only among themselves, confident that they were fully informed as to where Jesus came from, *pothen* being the first of two instances of this word. They contrast this knowledge with tradition, that is to say, nobody knows for sure from where the Christ will come, the second use of *pothen*. A similar question is asked in 9.29: "We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man we do not know where he comes from." In both instances "this man" suggests a contempt as well as dismissal of Jesus.

Vs. 28 is a short sentence having *oun* + translated as "so" with regard to Jesus' response, giving it an almost casual air. By now the argument as to where he came from is to him by now old hat. This time he blurted it out for all to hear, that is, first he proclaimed it as part of his teaching, the two almost being one and the same. The RSV's "proclaimed" is weak compared with the Greek *krazo*, to cry out. Thus for Jesus both *krazo* and *didasko* (both +) are not separate but one and the same. This approach is a phenomenon those listening never experienced before, the teacher freely acknowledging that the people are right as far as knowing where he comes from. In other words, what's the big deal? It's the teaching that counts. That annoys them even more.

The second sentence of vs. 28 begins with the conjunctive *kai* + translated as "but" where Jesus sets forth his rebuttal. If anyone had been paying attention to him, they'd recognize words which now are familiar, of him not having come on his own volition, *erchomai* + with the literal "from myself" which makes it all the more telling. Instead of this *erchomai* on his own, Jesus claims *pempo* + or sending by something or someone whom he continues to let go as not identified, that of course being the Father. He's done it a number of times thus far which reveals a trend. It seems he doesn't wish to identify outrightly with the Father except here and there, otherwise all this would be too much. If he came straight out and said it, no one would pay any attention to him. Indeed, the Jews display an almost willful unknowing with regard to the one responsible for sending Jesus. And so in vs. 29 he concludes with saying that he knows him or the Father, noting for the second time in a row that he had been sent or *pempo* + by him.

As with vs. 28, vs. 30 has *oun* + translated as "so" to show the direct consequence of Jesus words, of the effect they had on those questioning him. Although the religious authorities would love to

arrest him then and there, they did not because his hour or *hora* + had not come. The way it's phrased is almost as though some kind of invisible shield is around Jesus protecting him. It's effective but not destined to last forever because, there's so much more for Jesus to say. Despite the antagonism at hand, vs. 31 says that many from the crowd or *ochlos* + came to believe literally "into" (*eis*) Jesus.

Despite this, the people remained somewhat confused. They asked aloud whether the Christ will do as many signs or *semeion* + as this man. Hearing these words must have been a disappointment for Jesus but was restrained from giving a response. Even if he did at this stage, chances are almost 100% the people wouldn't believe and in this way be no different from the religious authorities. So that brings up an important questions that remains unresolved. Jesus goes about both teaching and healing, more so with the former in John's Gospel than with the later. While his *semeion* get attention, his words do but almost always in a negative way.

If that's true and Jesus is no fool, why bother speaking about his relationship with the Father? In a way he might as well talk to the wind. This, of course, is inaccurate but has an element of truth. Nevertheless, he's compelled to go ahead teaching, getting it out there despite any response or lack of it. He's relying upon his disciples in a way perhaps they don't even realize. That is, many if not all are mentally recording his words to transmit later on. Who knows? Jesus may have seen this ability in them when he had summoned them to follow him. Such a means sounds unreliable to us moderns, but the ancients had the ability to preserve anything important by activating, if you will, that faculty of *anamnesis* + or recollection whole and entire. It even could be argued that it was more reliable than the way we process information with so many filters.

Vs. 32 opens with the Pharisees being drawn to the crowd or *ochlos* + like vultures to a corpse. They heard murmuring or *gogguzo* +, their favorite sound especially if it's with regard to Jesus. This *gogguzo* came from some who were bothered by the fact that Jesus' origins were like those of anyone else (cf. vs. 27). Although a number of people came to believe in him, they were out-gunned or rather shouted down by those who engaged in *gogguzo*. That prompted the chief priests along with the Pharisees to arrest him, *piazo* also as to take firm hold or to grasp.

Vs. 33 has Jesus responding to those sent by the Pharisees to arrest him but as vs. 45 states, they decided against it. He speaks words which to them sound like he's about to disappear somewhere. It doesn't matter where, just as long as he leaves and never returns. Still, the Pharisees, chief priests and those sent to arrest him are ever conscious of the Romans breathing down their back. Nothing is said of them to date, but their presence is never far from anyone's mind. After all, this is taking place in Jerusalem, the capitol. Jesus says that he'll be around for a short time (*chronos*) after which he will go to the one who had sent him, *hupago* and *pros* with *pempo* (both +).

The next verse continues as part of the one at hand, namely, that those who have come after him won't find him, *zeteo* and *heurisko* (both +). Obviously this creates a lot of confusion, especially when Jesus speaks of the mysterious person responsible for sending him and whom maddingly he doesn't identify. Again, those seeking to kill Jesus don't care where he goes and to whom he goes, as long as he goes. As for the place (*hopou* or 'where') Jesus is...present tense...no one will be able

to go there. Although Jesus is speaking about going away, to Jewish authorities as to where Jesus is and they can't come, that could refer to a fortified place or neighboring land from which at a later time he could return. In other words, Jesus still remains a threat.

As predicted, the Jews turned away from Jesus and remain puzzled by his words. They were thinking in spacial terms as noted above, the Dispersion among the Greeks being the most logical place. *Diaspora* refers to Jews living outside the land occupied by Rome, that meaning just about anywhere either outrightly dominated by Rome or under its influence. It also could include Jews who had been scattered in other places east of the Roman Empire. So if Jesus went anywhere in this large area and taught the Greeks as the Jews thought, no problem. Nevertheless, they are confused and express it as to what Jesus means by seeking him and not finding him as well as not being able to go where he goes.

Vs. 37 represents a break in the discussion or rather, confrontation that had been detailed thus far. Now it's the last day of the feast of Tabernacles compared with what went before or the middle of the feast (cf. vs. 14). One can't help but wonder if Jesus made a mistake by having shed his disguise—the thought must have crossed his mind as well—but something deep within him said that he had to continue speaking. He does so starting off in a formal manner to show that he has more important things to communicate, hence the words “he stood up and proclaimed, *histemi* and *krazo* (both +), the latter more as a crying out. As for what happened in the interim period, that's left to our imagination though we can be sure there was a tug-of-war between those for and against Jesus.

Jesus knows it's time to wrap up his teaching at the end of the feast of Tabernacles just like many around him are dismantling their booths in which they spent the past week or so celebrating. In 37 we have the invitation to come to him (*erchomai* + with *pros*) and drink if thirsty. In other words, don't go home before taking this water and see what happens once you do.

This *erchomai* or coming *pros* Jesus is equivalent to what he says next in vs. 38, believing (*pisteuo* +) literally “into (*eis*) me” which he claims is in accord with scripture about rivers flowing from one's heart. *Potamos* is the noun, not a stream but something broad and mighty. Not only that, it's in the plural making them that much more powerful in their outward flow or *rheo* from the physically small *kardia* or heart. Bringing it even a step further, this water is living or *zao* + which means the mighty flow of the rivers are not just regular water. And so the image is especially powerful. There's not direct quote, whole or impartial, to this reference, but the critical text of the New Testament posits two verses which back up the powerful image of rivers just discussed:

Prov 18.4: “The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a gushing stream.”

Is 58.11: “And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire with good things and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters fail not.”

Vs. 39 explains this example by John inserting a footnote, if you will when he says that the Spirit or *Ruach* + is what this comparison is all about. However, it hasn't yet been given (*lambano* +) or made manifest. *Lambano* suggests that once *Ruach* is in the possession of someone, that person has freedom to do with it what he or she wants. Partially true but mostly it works the other way around. Still, the idea of reciprocity is what's at issue here. In the meantime *Ruach* is momentarily held in reserve, if you will, for those who believe in Jesus (*pisteuo* + with *eis* or into). The reason? Jesus hasn't yet been glorified, *doxazo* and needs to be manifest but in a way no one of yet has the capacity to understand. And so people are left with a double blindness: no Spirit and no glorification. J1 2.28 sheds light on this: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the men servants and maid servants in those days I will pour out my spirit."

Although those listening to Jesus were unaware of this scriptural background, no small wonder that in vs. 40 some from the crowd or *ochlos* + were struck by Jesus' words. The response is put forward in four ways which reflects their thinking, the third and fourth being rhetorical questions:

- This is in truth (*alethos*, adverb) the prophet.
- This is the Christ.
- Is the Christ to come from Galilee?
- Has not scripture said that the Christ comes from Bethlehem?

As for the second rhetorical question, it's in reference to Ps 89.3-4: "You have said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant: 'I will establish your descendants forever and build your throne for all generations.'" If Jesus was listening in on this scriptural quote and offered a commentary, he'd bring up the uncomfortable, even disturbing, second half of the psalm. It begins with vs. 38 and continues to the end, a thorough rejection of David's heritage. That verse reads as: "But now you have cast off and rejected." Something of the same could be applied to Jesus himself.

The conclusion of this heated discussion originating from the *ochlos* or crowd shows, as vs. 43 states, a division among them. *Schisma* is the noun to describe it, more along the lines of a cleft or rent as in a garment. Despite the fact that Jesus is a wanted man by the authorities and is backed up by some from the *ochlos*, no one laid hands on him, *epiballo* literally as to cast upon. Thus this strong urge is held in check.

And so the confrontation came to a draw with those originally sent by the chief priests and Pharisees returning empty-handed which earned them a sharp rebuke in vs. 45. The distance between where Jesus was teaching, presumably the temple courtyard and residence of the religious authorities was a stone's throw. Nevertheless, these men took their time, lingering as much as possible in order to come up with an excuse. In this case words did not matter. They returned without Jesus in custody. The only thing they could blurt out as with so many others was that no one ever had spoken like Jesus. The response was predictable, the authorities saying...yelling... that they've been led astray along with everyone else, *planao* being a perfect verb,

to wander aimlessly about. In a sense, these men who brought back the report were a preliminary echo of the apostles without knowing it: “we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” [Acts 4.20].

In vs. 48 the chief priests and Pharisees were so thoroughly exasperated that they exclaim aloud whether any of their kind—the Pharisees in particular—had gone over to Jesus. Not only that, they accused the crowd or *ochlos* + as being accursed, *eparatos* which fundamentally means being outside the realm (*para*, beside) the sacred. This is equivalent to the people being ignorant of the Law or *Torah*, *ginosko* and *nomos* (both +). On the surface true, but they were the one’s who were careful to put it into practice within their daily lives. Such a remark reveals the true colors of the Pharisees who were caught red-handed as they alienated themselves more and more from those they’re supposed to serve. Although it’s not mentioned, they are ingratiating themselves more with the Romans who are using these religious authorities indirectly to keep tabs on the population.

Vs. 50 sheds some much needed light on a dark situation by introducing Nicodemus whose public intervention stands in sharp contrast to his earlier meeting with Jesus at night (cf. 21-2). Between that time when he acknowledged Jesus as a “teacher come from God” and now he had arrived at a fuller realization of Jesus’ identity. So here he is, stuck with belonging to the establishment and sympathizing with someone outside it. We can assume that Nicodemus maintained a discreet silence, isolated in many ways but determined to stay by what he had witnessed concerning Jesus. It’d come as no surprise that he played an important, behind the scenes role as a go-between with regard to official Judaism and the followers of Jesus. Nicodemus continues to watch Jesus from a safe distance, presumably maintaining this contact. In this way his re-appearance later when assisting at Jesus’ burial (cf. 19.39) makes more sense.

In vs. 51 Nicodemus puts a rhetorical question to his fellow Pharisees with regard not so much to the Law but our Law (making it personal) providing an opportunity to sound out an accused person. This fell on deaf ears, and he knew it. Still, he felt obliged to speak up. The response was swift and sharp. The Pharisees ask whether or not he was from Galilee, a place having no record of a prophet associated with it. And so they were echoing something common in Jewish tradition as when Nathanael said in 1.46: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” To this Philip responded, “Come and see,” something those rebuking Nicodemus not just refused to do but said so with such vehemence perhaps not so much to threaten his life but to put him under permanent suspicion.