

Chapter Five

Jesus couldn't get out of Galilee fast enough, admittedly taken aback at not having been recognized as Messiah as had been the case with the traditionally hated Samaritans. Surely the Galileans got word of this recognition and used it as another occasion to sneer at them for having been so gullible. Just think. Imagine the Samaritans recognizing a human being as God or close to it. Now Jesus goes up to Jerusalem for an unspecified feast (*heorte*). A footnote in the NIV says it could have been either the Passover or Feast of Tabernacles. The same footnote goes on to list three occasions of the Passover, a way of calculating the duration of Jesus' ministry: 2.1323, 11.55 and 12.1. If the *heorte* at hand was the Passover, there had been a year's interval between the first one or when he passed through Samaria and remained in Galilee. However, it doesn't seem to have been long because he headed off to Jerusalem not wanting to cause any trouble.

Upon entering the city Jesus heads for the pool of Bethesda (Bethzatha in the RSV) where people with a wide variety of physical afflictions were in the habit of gathering. Supposedly the water of that pool stirred from time to time signaling a time to enter and hopefully be cured. The verb *tarasso* means to move by shaking as well as to trouble. There must have been far more than usual, some hoping to receive alms from those coming for the Passover. Among those hanging around as well as their attendants was a man who had been there an incredibly long time, thirty-eight years. Vs. 6 has Jesus putting a question to him in a somewhat strange but direct fashion, that is, asking if he wants to be healed. He responds by saying he has no one to bring into the water when it stirs up. The way he puts it is that after so long a time but no cure, he expects nothing to happen. Each day of his life he bordered upon losing hope but still hung in there. As for the question, indeed a nice gesture from an apparently nice man, but that's it. He knew from being at the pool for thirty-eight long years someone would have helped him or that he would simply give up and go home. However, the latter was no longer an option. By now this place by the pool had become his home. In other words, he had become a fixture of sorts but an unfortunate one.

Jesus understood this all too well so in vs. 8 he decides to tell this man to rise, take his pallet and walk which he did and disappears from the scene until a few verses later on. You'd think that after almost four decades the man would have thanked Jesus but did not. That's the sad part about this incident. Nevertheless the healing didn't go unnoticed by others who immediately must have swarmed all over Jesus. It so happens that it was the Sabbath when Jesus had cured this man. When some Jews got wind of this cure, they were outraged. In reality some were not, for how often does such an extraordinary event occur? Chances are the outrage was feigned, an opportunity to get at Jesus. These men aren't mentioned as specific religious authorities such as Pharisees but most likely were of that cast. They put a rhetorical question to the just cured man about carrying around his pallet on the Sabbath.

Apart from this ridiculous statement fabricated to bring an equally ridiculous accusation against Jesus, you wonder why he was carrying it. You'd think that after thirty-eight years of laying on the pallet he'd discard it at once. Perhaps he wanted to keep the pallet as a reminder or was so accustomed to it that he carried it around without giving a thought.

The Jews asked the cured man who had brought this about, knowing well it was Jesus but responded by saying he hadn't a clue due to people crowding in all around. Perhaps this accounted for him not showing gratitude, though that doesn't seem to be the case. Anyone who hadn't been able to walk for thirty-eight years and then got up certainly would seek out the person responsible for this miracle of miracles. As noted, the cure took place at the Passover or Feast of Tabernacles when the area about the pool was filled beyond capacity. And so the situation of finding who was responsible remained unresolved.

A bit later Jesus found this man in the temple or more precisely, the temple courtyard, the same place where he had chased out vendors during the last Passover (cf. 2.13). He could have returned there, disappointed that what he had done the last time had no effect whatsoever. However, he figured it was more important to find the man he had cured, having gotten word that he was grilled by the Jews. Actually John gives no reason why Jesus takes the pains to find out. Did he feel miffed as not being thanked? Once Jesus located the man, he told him not to sin anymore. It's a rather strange command. The first thought that comes to mind is what kind of sin this man would be capable of or had been capable of during the past thirty-eight years?

After this encounter or when the text says that the man didn't respond to Jesus, he simply goes away, almost in a casual fashion, and tells the Jews. He does this on his own either not knowing their hostility toward Jesus or out of a desire to see Jesus get in trouble for some perverted reason or the other. Perhaps in back of his mind was that he was laid out for a long thirty-eight years with no one to help. Surely Jesus had visited Jerusalem during part of that time but did nothing for him. The reason why the Jews despised Jesus was, of course on the shallowest of all pretexts, that he cured the man on the Sabbath. Because they were too cowardly to approach Jesus at this moment they decided to take it out the man he cured, that is, rebuking him for carrying his pallet on the Sabbath. In essence, they were jealous and too proud to admit it.

Finally Jesus came across the Jews amid the commotion of the temple courtyard and in vs. 16 took the initiative to confront them. It'd come as no surprise that the cured man stood not far off to see what would happen, he being too chicken to reveal himself. What they might do to Jesus they might do to him. Jesus answered the only way he was capable of, that is, in vs. 17 he says that his Father still is work just like he is right now. Note the small word *eos* or "until." It connotes the end of a period of time or continuance. Here *eos* with regard to the verb *ergazomai* (it's used twice, also as to do or to accomplish) means that the

Father has a definite end in mind but hasn't attained it yet. Even more importantly, both the Father and Jesus are engaged in the same *ergazomai*. Then vs. 18 states the obvious as pointed out already, so obvious it almost doesn't have to be recorded. All the more the Jews sought to kill Jesus, *apokteino* also to eliminate. The Jews now had two reasons for this. In addition to violating the Sabbath, Jesus called God his own Father. The latter makes him equal to the Father, one of the worse things anyone could claim. They could tell that Jesus wasn't out of his mind, for if that were evident, they wouldn't be paying such close attention to him. Now the Jews are hellbent of tripping up Jesus or rather, let him trip himself up by continuing to speak as such.

From vs. 19 to the end of this chapter John presents Jesus as giving witness to his relationship with the Father, the verb *apokrinomai* meaning to answer or to reply. Actually he prefers the more formal title compared with, for example, "my Father." In a way, credit is due to those who allow him to speak so long without interruption. Perhaps their intent was to let him say as much as possible, for the more he speaks of the Father, the more ammunition they have and the more ammunition, the quicker they can convict him. While this is going on you can't help but wonder about Nicodemus, how he fits in. We can be sure that he kept close attention on such matters but remained silent. As for Jesus speaking throughout these verses, he prefers "the Son" over, for example, "his Son" which would apply more directly to that of the Father.

From the Jews' point of view the ammunition Jesus provides is the way he speaks with authority, unabashedly using the double *amen* along with "I say to you" which he has done earlier. Parallel to vs. 17 with the Father and Son working or *ergazomai* is *poieo* or to do with regard to both persons in vs. 19. In the case at hand Jesus adds vision to the mix, that is to say, what the Son sees the Father with respect to his *poieo*, the verb *blepo* is used, to have the faculty of sight. At face value this seems to be a slavish copying but is far from it. It's a union of two occasions of *poieo*, of cooperation for such *poieo*. As soon as the Son sees the Father—as soon as *blepo*—>*poieo*, *poieo* becomes from both, not working independently nor parallel to each other.

The words "nothing of his own accord" (*aph' heautou ouden*, literally 'from himself nothing') applied to the Son sound like the Son is powerless or like a robot. The same applies to John's further words about the Father's *poieo* and the Son following in his steps. A key word here is the adverb *homoios* or likewise. It bridges the *poieo* between Father and Son through the Son's *blepo*. Actually there's something almost humorous about this. The Son is so attentive to the Father, following his every move, that nothing can distract him. It's a type of focus that humanly speaking can be sustained only as with regard to that special relaxed attention we see among children playing games and copying things from the adult world.

Vs. 20 begins with the important *gar* or “for” with reference to the Father’s relationship with the Son, carrying over the *blepo* just mentioned to *phileo* or loving him. At first you’d think the verb *agapao* would be used from which *agape* is derived. However, John wishes to show a close familial association between the two, *philos* being a noun derived from *phileo* meaning a friend. Thus we have a more tender relationship outlined here. Then there follows naturally the Father showing the Son, *deiknumi* implying a pointing out or exhibiting. This is more intimate than the *blepo* of vs. 19 where the Son sees what the Father is doing. While all this is transpiring continually, the Father has in store greater works (*ergon*) than these to show the Son. The whole purpose is to cause us to marvel, *thaumazo* also to be impressed with regard to *ergon* or works which can infer the coming passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

In vs. 21 Jesus brings up a thorny issue which must have sent the Jews listening to him over the top. We don’t have their reaction but easily can imagine their faces becoming red with rage, wanting to jump on him and kill him on the spot. The verse begins with not so much a comparison but a parallel intimated by *hosper* or “for” which also can be translated more fully as “just as.” It’s followed or better, amplified, by *houtos* along with *kai* rendered as “so also.” The issue at hand is the resurrection. There are two verbs associated with the Father, that is, *hosper: egeiro* and *zoopoieo*, to raise and to give or better with the root *poieo* in mind, to make...to make life. We can assume that first by necessity comes *egeiro* (as dead, if you will) followed immediately by *zoopoieo* or making-life. Also note the way this is presented. It is as though the Father is raising the dead and giving life on a constant basis, cranking it out, to put it somewhat crudely but not far off the mark.

Next in vs. 21 we have that which follows *hosper* or *houtos* (so also) as related directly to the Son. Now it’s the Son who gives life or *zoopoieo* to whom ever he pleases (*thelo* also as to wish or to desire) which derives directly from the Father doing the same. The way it’s phrased is quite charming, really. We have the Father’s *zoopoieo* functioning in a general sort of way, and along comes the Son who decides to specify it. He takes the Father’s *zoopoieo* from him and does so freely and respectfully but says something like let me do it my way which you’ll discover to be an improvement, the role of *thelo* playing a key role in all this. Now the Son, with the Father looking on with great enthusiasm starts *zoopoieo* or starts metering it out accordingly...this one first then that one followed by the other and so forth down the line. Obviously he doesn’t crank this out in a tedious manner. However, the way he carries it out is put this way to reveal how both Father and Son operate as well as cooperate. Detailing it as such makes it all very delightful.

Vs. 22 moves on and describes a similar reciprocal interaction between Father and Son, this time as it pertains to judging or *krino*. For various reasons we’ve come to conceive divine judging in terms of the Father being constantly angry with us. However, the verse at hand doesn’t play into that ingrained image. What’s such a relief—and you don’t hear about this

at all—is that the Father doesn't judge at all. It isn't his thing which implies he has a certain aversion to it and doesn't wish our distorted opinion of him to think that he's on a mission to get us. Instead, the Father has given not just judgment (*krisis*) but all judgment to the Son. Addition of "all" means he wants nothing to do with it. By reason of his close relationship the Son he understands this clearly and freely takes it on.

It would be a very special privilege to witness this handing over of judgment, of passing it on. Though not spelled out, we can assume the Father said something like, look. Do what you want with it. I'll stand aside. The Son realizes fully that the Father isn't shirking his responsibility but is watching. In other words, the Son will judge in accord with this innate aversion of the Father to pass judgment. Surely awareness of this aversion will affect the way the Son judges. Always he'll have one eye looking over his shoulder to make sure he's doing what he's supposed to do. One wonders how in the concrete the Jews listening to Jesus are taking this. Their perception of God is closely bound up with him as judge. Indeed, this was blasphemy to the extreme to even question this. To them, Jesus' words has God forfeiting something so close to his divinity and giving it to a mere mortal, the man Jesus standing before him. It's a marvel they didn't stone him on the spot.

Vs. 23 continues as an extended sentence beginning with *hina* or "so that." The purpose of this adverb is to show the result of the interaction between Father and Son. That is to say, everyone will now honor the Son, *timao* also to have reverence and for good reason. The judging originally in the hands of the Father now has been transferred successfully to the Son. That doesn't mean things will be easier but heralds a lack of harshness if it were just the Father. If left to his own devices, he'd come on strong, perhaps too strong for most of us. For examples of this, consider the many times God has interacted with Israel. The transfer in and by itself to the Son doesn't water down this divine judgment but fleshes it out, if you will.

Connecting the two divine persons in this verse is *kathos* translated as "even as." Once people have acclimated themselves to judgment in the hands of the Son, they can give due honor to the Father for his humility, humility insofar as he recognizes the limitations of his transcendence. This is putting it a bit awkwardly, but an overabundance of transcendence doesn't get you much recognition...glory and honor, yes...but in the end, isolation. Note too that vs. 23 ties the Father in with the Son through the words "who sent him." *Pempo* fundamentally means to commission and here intimates a gesture of delegation. Through such delegation the Father can remain transcendent as he's always been yet incorporate created beings which do not share his transcendence. Indeed, this is a great relief because he had been in the habit of lording it over Israel when she had gone astray. This shift, of course, is something the Jews dealing with Jesus at the moment cannot and will not acknowledge.

And so vs. 23 concludes with another sentence which stands in and by itself. Once again Jesus brings up the whole question of honor (*timao*). Actually it's a kind of double negative where a positive doesn't result and has universal application. The honor not given to the Son carries over into not giving the same honor to the Father. Both come up empty-handed. Thus the reverence Jesus has in mind is withheld deliberately, even spitefully. Implied is that those whose duty it is to give reverence—that is, the Jews now present—know what it's involved and simply turned their backs on it. In this way they do not differ in the slightest from their ancestors. It should be kept in mind that while the Jews are an example in this, it's applicable across the board to everyone.

With regard to this discourse, vs. 25 has the second of three references concerning the double *amen* and "I say to you," the last instance being in vs. 19. As noted elsewhere, when Jesus speaks as such, it's of supreme importance. Here it's with regard to hearing Jesus' word, *akouo* and *logos* or the *logos* coming from the *Logos*. Furthermore, both are intimately bound up with believing the one who sent him (*pisteuo* and *pempo*), obviously the Father who isn't mentioned. So we have Jesus-as-Son speaking which, of course, means he's the center of attention, the one the Jews have before their eyes, but essentially is not this center of attention but the Father. Despite Jesus talking a lot about him, the Father remains out of sight. In essence hearing with regard to Jesus and believing with regard to the Father resolve this apparent conundrum. The result? A person is in possession of life which is eternal or *aionios*, this happening instantaneously.

The second half of vs. 24 says of the person with life eternal or *aionios* that he doesn't come into judgment, the verb *erchomai* along with the preposition *eis* and *krisis*. Instead, he has passed from death to life, *metabaino* literally as to pass over (*meta*, after in the sense here as beyond). Note the two similar verbs and their differences, *erchomai* and *baino* or to come and to walk or to step. As for the latter, another use of the preposition is operative, from (*ek*) death *eis* life with *eis* representing a final arrival. So the Father who's looking on must be pleased. He has relinquished judgment as noted in vs. 22, having handed it over to the Son. Interestingly the Son doesn't judge either according to vs. 24. the person who hears his *logos* and believes in the Father having eternal life. You'd think he'd be passing from life into life but not so. True if it were from life into Life. Rather, he is passing from death into Life. That means life as we know it is equivalent to death. It's a complete reversal of how we've been raised to think, life first followed by death.

Vs. 25 has the third and final double *amen* and "I say to you," this one coming in the verse after the last one. That means Jesus is serious...doubly so...as to what he's communicating. Although the Jews are primarily involved, somehow somewhere his words managed to reach a larger audience. While it can argued that someone other than the Jews were present, an alternate is that John as sensitive to Jesus as *Logos* was able to record his *logoi* without

physically being present. It's not a question of magic but of how the *Logos* and *logoi* work hand-in-hand even at a distance.

Vs. 25 is concerned not so much with time in the ordinary sense but as an hour or *hora* which is coming (*erchomai*), the same *hora* Jesus spoke of with the Samaritan woman in 4.21. There it's in conjunction with worship, the context being that neither the Samaritans nor Jews have a prerogative as to where it is to be done. Here, however, *hora* is both coming as well as already present, *nun estin* or "now is." This union of *erchomai* and *nun estin* is with regard to when the dead will hear the voice (*phone*) of the Son of God. In other words, Jesus isn't speaking of the living but of the dead who despite being as such, nevertheless will come alive. So we have both the present tense and the future tense operative simultaneously. That means one has to be situated within the present *hora* to become aware of the future or the dead to hear the Son's voice. Thus as soon as a person hears Jesus' *phone*, not *logos*, which means the actual organ which produces the *logos*, life results. All in all it's very simple, almost too much so, to gain if one desires to pass from death to life in accord with vs. 24.

Vs. 26 begins with *hosper* as in vs. 21 with the corresponding *houtos* or "so also." It's with regard to the Father raising the dead and the Son doing the same. Surely Jesus was aware of the parallel, the verse at hand saying that the Father has life (*zoe*) in himself, that it's a constitutive part of his being which, of course, his identity as Father. He is completely open to sharing this life with the Son, hence the *houtos* which is indicative that life in and by itself cannot be contained but shared. While the verb *didomi* or to give is in the past tense, it means this giving is constant. And so both Father and Son share the exact same *zoe* and in the exact same amount and kind to put it in such terms.

Vs. 27 continues as an extended sentence beginning with the conjunctive *kai* with the intent of fleshing out, as it were, the *hosper-houtos* relationship just described. Here we have a second *didomi* or giving as applied to the Son by the Father, *didomi* being more along the lines of sharing. Here it's with regard to the Father's authority or *exousia* to make judgment, *poieo* and *krisis*. It rests on the fact that the one to whom this is given is the Son of man. Theology now calls him the Second Person of the Trinity which in and by itself it's more than sufficient reason requiring no further explanation.

When hearing of this relationship between the Father and Son (as the Jews see it, Father = God and Son = Jesus as man) there's a spontaneous tendency to marvel (*thaumazo*). However, in vs. 28 Jesus says there's no need for this. Again he speaks of the hour or *hora*, the same context as in vs. 25, as it pertains to something that will happen in the near future. That is to say, those who are buried will hear the voice (*akouo* and *phone*) of the Son of man. What this voice says isn't specified but most likely it will be something akin to "Lazarus, come out" Jesus will utter later in 11.43. We can assume that this voice or *phone*

will convey a *logos* which only the *Logos* has authority to utter. Note that the verse at hand has “all” who are in the tomb, not just those whom the Son or Father had singled out beforehand.

The universal nature of this *phone* becomes evident in vs. 29 which follows as a continuous sentence. Those who have done good as well as evil will come forth, *ekporeuo* connoting a marching out as in a procession. The two adjectives are the common *agathos* and the less familiar *phaulos*, the latter intimating that which is of an inferior grade and lacking proper moral behavior. The two groups will have two separate destinations. The first will enter into (*eis*) the resurrection of life whereas the second into (*eis*) the resurrection of judgment or *krisis*. Thus resurrection or *anastasis* is step #1 followed by step #2, each being diametrically opposed to each other. So before this, the dead are...well...dead. Returning to life doesn't mean automatic bliss but is a preparatory stage for one's final destination. No temporal duration exists here, but it's put this way for clarification.

In vs. 30 Jesus continues to speak of his relationship as Son with the Father though here doesn't mention him explicitly. He can do (*poieo*) nothing on his own or literally “from myself,” “authority” not being in the Greek text. At first glance that sounds somewhat subservient and at worse, as though he has no identity of his own. This mis-perception can be enhanced by Jesus saying that he judges as he hears, *krino* and *akouo*. Taking this literally, the Son doesn't see the Father; his judging depends upon hearing or paying close attention to his words, *logoi* being presumed. This attentiveness makes Jesus' judgment just (*krisis* and *dikaios*). The basis for such confidence is that Jesus attributes seeking the will (*thelema*) of the Father who had sent him, not his own. John doesn't get into the exercise of this judgment but is more intent upon locating it. Those who will be subject to it will find out for themselves where they ultimately land.

Actually the words pertaining to Jesus of himself are ideal for a human judge, worth examining in detail and applying in real life. He puts his function in terms of giving witness, *martureo*. If it's self-centered then it has no value, but if focused upon what Jesus calls “another one” (*allos*) who's bearing witness to him, that witness or *marturia* by its very nature is true. So in many ways Jesus is off the hook with regard to passing judgment. He does it not as a robot with full awareness of the one who had sent him. Again, at this point the Father is not mentioned which makes Jesus' words all the more enticing and mysterious. Also we get a sense of what his judging will be like though we lack the details.

In vs. 33 Jesus turns attention directly to the Jews with whom he has been speaking all along thus far. He reminds them of how they had sent a delegation (spies is more like it) to John the Baptist, *apostello* with *pros*. While John doesn't dwell on their interaction with him nor the report they brought back to Jerusalem, he points out that he had borne witness to the truth, *martureo* and *aletheia*. At this point Jesus has no need to expound further, the

Jews knowing exactly what he's talking about which, of course, makes them uncomfortable. As for this testimony, it's mentioned right off the bat in 1.7: "He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light." Here, of course, is the noun *marturia* and the verb *martureo*. Thus for John as well as for Jesus the act of giving testimony is very important. Actually, it's central to the mission and identity of both men. Implied is that both have seen and have heard first hand something of great value and are in the process of delineating it. That's all they can do. Those listening to them can either accept or reject it which puts Jesus at ease insofar as he following a predetermined plan. This isn't entirely accurate but a way to say that Jesus is more concerned about having the Father work through him which allows him that ease lacking in persons who act and think they represent the ultimate responsibility.

In vs. 34 Jesus clarifies that the testimony he receives as not coming from man, the preposition *para* suggestive of alongside, in the company of. Thus being on the same plan as humans in the constitutive sense is avoided. I.e., Jesus is present among men yet not of them. In the same verse Jesus continues with a second sentence of sorts beginning with *alla* or "but." It's a way spoken with due clarity and sincerity that Jesus intends the testimony he receives (*lambano*) not from man but from the Father is to save (*sozo*) those right there in front of him. Thus *marturia* = salvation and salvation = Jesus, his proper name being exactly that. While this indeed is wonderful, there's the question of how a person takes this into himself. Jesus doesn't get into that now but will do so on the eve of his death. There he will introduce the Holy Spirit who will be the one to effect all this.

Jesus acknowledges that you—including those present who had gone out to see John the Baptist—came away impressed both by his message and seeing all those whom he had been baptizing. While some of the Jews had been spies with the intent to thwart him, they returned with a change of heart. Jesus speaks longingly of the Baptist in vs. 36 almost as though he were reminiscing about him as already dead. There's a certain truth to this. While John isn't dead yet, his testimony...his *marturia*...lies in the past in the sense of having been fulfilled. Those speaking with Jesus need to know the transference of this *marturia*, if you will, which he has been making as plain as day. However, he isn't getting through to them, try as hard as he might. While unfortunate, in the long term that's fine insofar as his words are being recorded and saved for future members of the church he will establish through the apostles.

In the second half of vs. 36 Jesus makes appeal not so much to any testimony of his nor to the Father but to works or *ergon* which had been given to him. We could spell this out by imagining the Father handing over to the Son these *ergon*. On one hand their ownership has now changed hands, so to see them is to see what once had been the Father's property. Did the Son alter them? No, but preserved them in their original form but added his own twist. As for such works, they remain incomplete and are not fully fleshed out. This intimates that Jesus' mission has to continue for a while, hence the present tense of *teleioo*,

to accomplish or bring to completion. The Jews pick up on this not fully but have an overall idea that they're not done with Jesus...yet. After all, Jesus' talk about witness and the Father has to become more visible so they can decide what to do with him. Actually Jesus is in the very act of doing such *ergon* which the Father has sent him in order to bear witness. The verb *apostello* is in the past whereas the verb *martureo* is in the present. The latter serves to bring the agent doing the former into visibility, if you will, which is why the subject at hand is *ergon*, things done out there for all to see.

To date Jesus has been speaking freely about the Father, a mysterious entity who to the Jews may or not be the same as the Lord in their religion. Now in vs. 37 Jesus feels the need to bring more to the fore this enigmatic entity. The Father had sent me (the Son), *pempo* being the verb which here is the same or almost the same as having borne witness (*martureo*) concerning me, *peri* being the preposition. This is pretty straight-forward and ties in what Jesus had said already, that is, simply getting it out there. Now he switches to something quite intriguing. He uses the second person singular, not plural, which makes his words personal, more to the point by presenting two pairs of negatives. You haven't heard his voice nor have you seen his form: *akouophone* and *eidoshorao*. As for *eidos*, that can be taken as a shape or structure as it appears to someone. So far so good for those listening.

Vs. 38 continues as an extended sentence connected with the conjunctive *kai* or "and." Although the Father is completely transcendent which would be in accord with traditional Jewish belief, Jesus says that those listening to him don't have his word abiding in them. They don't practice what they are preaching. The verb *meno* is more along the lines of remaining with regard to *logos*. We could assume that when Jesus is speaking of *logos* he's referring to the *Torah*. The precondition for this *meno*? Believing (*pisteuo*) the one whom the Father has sent. The verb *apostello* as to send has special significance for Jesus. It's part of his very nature to be as such and in a way, removes any burden from himself and puts it on the Father.

In vs. 39 Jesus observes a practice dear to those he's with, namely, their searching the scriptures, *eraunao* also as to apply oneself diligently to learning. Nothing wrong here. The same with thinking that such searching is equivalent to life which is *aionios* or eternal. Thus in a sense searching is eternal or pretty close to it. As for the verb *dokeo*, it involves supposing, of approaching a given fact or truth on the evidence of one's ability only and without relying on any outside source.

As pretty much beginning a second sentence in this same verse, the conjunctive *kai* almost slides in there unexpectedly. That is to say, Jesus says the scriptures are bearing witness or *martureo* concerning (*peri*) himself. So we have here Jews for whom study of *Torah* is important—it'd come as no surprise that they had done it earlier in the day—and Jesus who

is the scripture in and by itself. To *eraunao* one is to *erauno* the other, the two being completely interchangeable.

Vs. 40 continues as an extended sentence, short and to the point. It begins with the conjunctive *kai* translated aptly as “yet” which betrays a certain frustration as well as sadness on Jesus’ part. The Jews are unwilling (*thelo* also as to wish, to desire) to come to Jesus in order to have life. Note that the Jews are already present, that is, physically. It’s another thing to come to Jesus, *pros* indicative of directness. As for the life he offers, it’s just that plain and simple, not described as eternal. He as such life already is eternal.

Now follow two short verses, again, right to the point. Jesus doesn’t receive glory from men, (*doxa*) which judging by the context of these verses, he isn’t getting anyway. Vs. 42 begins with *alla* or “but” which reveals a certain feeling of having been rebuffed. That is to say, Jesus is fully aware that the Jews lack the *agape* of God. To lack that is equivalent to having no soul. Jesus’ knowledge of this is right out there for anyone to grasp.

In vs. 43 Jesus claims to have come in the name of his Father, the personal pronoun being used instead of the definite article which had been the case until now. Actually the last case is vs. 17 with none before that. Such a statement is not unlike one coming you’d expect from a newly appointed ambassador presenting his credentials. However, those to whom he comes do not accept (*lambano*) them or rather, do not accept Jesus himself. Jesus compares this more or less formal presentation to someone who comes but does so in his own name. That person the Jews will automatically accept (*lambano*).

By now or towards the end of his discourse Jesus becomes frustrated. He comes off with the first of two rhetorical questions, the second being this chapter’s last verse. As for the one at hand or vs. 44, Jesus questions how any of those present can believe (*pisteuo*) when attempting to do two opposite things at once. That consists of receiving glory from each other on one hand and not seeking the glory (*doxa*) that comes from God. The two verbs involved are *lambano* and *zeteo* or to receive and to seek. Each is with the preposition *para*, essentially as from alongside of. The first verb is with *allellos* and the second verb with *Theos* modified by the adjective *monos*: one another and God only or better, God alone. Any response, of course, is impossible, and the Jews to whom the question is posed know it at once which infuriates them though they keep quiet about it.

By now we’re familiar with Jesus speaking pretty much as being on the same plane as the Father. In vs. 45 he elevates the Father to God with whom Moses interacted. In light of this, freely he relinquishes any desire to accuse or lay charge against anyone, the verb being *kategoreo*. Moses will step in and do this because the Jews have put their hope in him, *elpizo* with the preposition *eis*, literally “hoped into him.” Such hope lies in the fact that Moses is author of *Torah* and therefore just as present to the Jews as he had been when

physically alive. Jesus doesn't deny this, of course, but says that if they believed (*pisteuo*) in Moses, they'd have the same belief in Jesus.

Before any objection could be thrown out at Jesus, he says that Moses had written of him. That put an overwhelming desire into the Jews to shut down Jesus on the spot. Instead of rushing to kill him, they restrained themselves to put it off momentarily. Of chief concern was to go through the *Torah* and pick out passages which Jesus mentioned. The result was determined beforehand. They could find nothing (or perhaps better, would not find anything) not because Moses failed to write of Jesus, but they were incapable of using their traditional way of reading *Torah* to see his relationship with it.

And so Chapter Five comes to a conclusion with the second rhetorical question Jesus proposes, this too not being able to evoke an adequate response. If the Jews don't believe what Moses had written, how can they believe the *logoi* of Jesus who is the *Logos*? In other words, Jesus is paralleling the *Torah* with him as divine *Logos*, something the Jews were not willing to accept. Over the centuries we've come to champion Jesus while condemning the Jews. However, if we put ourselves in that historical circumstance, they were perfectly correct to let Jesus have it. All in all this boils down to that idea of *marturia* or witness which dominates Chapter Five. The transmission of the *marturia* of Jesus to other persons essentially is risky business. The chances of it actually reaching not the ears of those present but their minds is slightly about zero percent. This is true now as it had been two thousand (and more) years ago.

Chapter Six

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** or 'this') and the adverb *peran*, "the other side" with respect to the Sea of Galilee. We have no clear 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 people of all walks of life 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 capital. 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. This suggests 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 this as a way to acknowledge his Father. Right afterwards he directed attention in the opposite direction. 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 the question was meant to test Philip and the other disciples who were listening in, *peirazo* often in reference to one's character. 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 those described as five thousand, let alone women

and children, would have been much more. Still, this is a large number willing to be present on the mountain instead of at home or elsewhere. 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 as noted above. Most came with the intent of being healed of this affliction or another, not so much 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 to have been fed, after which the disciples did cleanup duty. Indeed, to them it was a sign or *semeion* which was 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 coming into existence, 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 to 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 possibly 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, 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 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 they didn’t expect, they saw Jesus

approaching them on the water. 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 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 eyeout 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 is pay attention to the verbs. Most of them deal with various degrees of coming: the straightforward 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 as well as being 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 doesn't want to be associated as being 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, 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 *broxis* 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 what Jesus is telling them blurt out a response to Jesus as best they could. 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 obtain 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 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 as "thus" and shows the same sincerity the people have with regard to Jesus. Despite the initial promise, Jesus can't help but have a sinking feeling because yet again he's asked for a sign or *semeion*. 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 to do so. 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. 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 a keen 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, *alethinou*. 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* to something new. 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. At the same time he's 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 as one who is to provide nourishment, that of course, being a dominant theme. 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, *pantote* 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 straightforward response which perhaps took Jesus by more surprise than he anticipated, he now finds himself in 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 echoed in the recent multiplication of bread and fish. Thus as was the mentality at that time, so is the mentality the same 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 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. 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. Furthermore, 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 it in light of the Exodus quote regarding manna or more specifically, the Israelites murmuring in the desert. There it 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 nonexistent. Also those making the accusation had quickly forgotten what Jesus had done for them, that is, 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 dirt public. With that background in mind, Jesus is free to 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 anyone has seen the Father except him who is from God; he has seen the Father.

Jesus now qualifies his relationship with the Father by saying that no person has seen (*horaō*) him. The first half is fine in accord with Jewish theology, but it's a different story for the second half. The problem is 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 *aionios* or eternal, vs. 40 being the last time this had been mentioned.

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).

48: I am the bread of life.

As he said in vs. 35, Jesus simply puts out there the fact that he's the bread of life which is repeated here. In vs. 49 speaks of the current generation's fathers to whom the Lord gave quails and manna for sustenance. 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 is, his own flesh (*sarx*) or body-ness. 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.

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 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 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 carrying out what Jesus just said with regard to *zoe* which is *aionios*. 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."

This is the end of insertion of both verses and notations.

Vs. 60 shifts attention away from those whom Jesus is addressing in the synagogue at Capernaum to his disciples who had been present during the previous teaching. 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, wondering among themselves to why on earth are they associating with this man. Indeed, the disciples found it difficult to get out of their minds words as in vs. 42 when people said that they're familiar with the parents of this Jesus who's speaking. It must have been profoundly upsetting to Mary and her relatives, that is, her son openly espousing cannibalism.

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 and 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 requires it 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 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 him which is why many disciples left, *mathetes* here not necessarily 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 *aionios*, 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*) 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 were they hanging on.

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 the hostility present from the get-go starts 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 in-gathering 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*. *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 while 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 present or 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*. However, the world or the *kosmos* is not this way toward the brothers because those represented by the world considered the disciples to be on the fence, that they can be won over, especially in light of Jesus' supposed talk about cannibalism. That would put them on the fence or make them indecisive. They viewed their indecision to be an opportunity to be 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 coexist. 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 them to go to the feast of Tabernacles on their own without him. Note the use of the verb *anabaino* with regard to *heorte* 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 to be brought to completion. Thus Jesus remained in Galilee wondering if he had treated these people unfairly. And so the time he spent there 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 to do what was necessary to protect them. He did 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 the 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. As vs. 11 says, word filtered back to him that the Jews were on the lookout. Still, Jesus goes "in private" as the RSV says which is rendered by the adverb *phaneros* with the negative and can be rendered as not openly or not 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 verses show that indeed Jesus is a wanted man. This general sentiment is summed up well by the noun *goggusmos* or muttering 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 suggests that someone caught sight of Jesus and circulated it among the crowd. The report spread like wildfire among three groups: the crowd, Jews (synonymous with religious authorities, not so much 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 from 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 politely ignored them. So off he went.

Jesus manages to find a suitable 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 a rhetorical question out loud 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 a teaching all his own. I.e., it's 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 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 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 had in mind 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 perfectly orthodox. 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 one Jesus proposes because he's fully aware 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 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 been 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 such people. 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 seem 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 have 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 earshot 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 the way they presented themselves. They were confident of having been 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, 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. 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* are not separate but one and the same. This

approach is something those listening had 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 not to identify, that of course being the Father. He's done it a number of times thus far which reveals a trend, that he has an origin which in turn means he's not speaking for himself. That alone is trustworthy enough but goes unrecognized. 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 by him, *pempo*.

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 who 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 as recorded 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 if Jesus is no fool, why bother speaking about his relationship with the Father? In a way he might as well be talking 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 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 an

uncanny 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 today with all its 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 outgunned 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. After all, this is taking place in Jerusalem, the capital. 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*. 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 necks. Nothing is said of them to date, but their presence is never far from anyone's mind.

The next verse continues as part of the one at hand, namely, that those who have come after Jesus won't find him, *zeteo* and *heurisko*. Obviously this creates a lot of confusion, especially when Jesus speaks of the mysterious person responsible for sending him and whom refused to 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 infer 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 wondering what Jesus means by seeking him and not finding him as well as not being able to go where he is going.

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, 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*, 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 who are dismantling their booths in which they spent the past week or so celebrating. Vs. 37 expresses 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 no 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 noting that this comparison is what the Spirit or *Ruach* 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 or *doxazo* and needs to be manifest but in a way no one as 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 89.34: “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) of the sacred. This is equivalent to the people being ignorant of the Law or *Torah*, *ginosko* and *nomos*. 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 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. 2.12). 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 stand 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 reappearance 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.