

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #54

The Journey

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The Fishes and the Loaves



SEA OF GALILEE

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Event	Scripture	Year	Mth/Day
John the Baptist Begins Preaching	John 1:19-28	26	20-Apr
Jesus Turns Water to Wine in Cana	John 2:1-11	26	23-Oct
Jesus Goes to Capernaum with Family/Disciples	John 2:12	26	30-Oct
Jesus Goes to Jerusalem For 27 AD Passover	John 2:13	27	06-Apr
First Time Jesus Cleanses the Temple	John 2:14-17	27	25-Apr
Nicodemus Comes to Jesus at Night	John 3:1-21	27	01-May
Jesus Departs for Galilee by Way of Samaria	John 4:3-4	27	08-May
Jesus and Disciples Arrive in Samaria	John 4:5-6	27	11-May
Jesus Speaks with Samaritan Woman at Jacob's well	John 4:5-38	27	11-May
Jesus is Welcomed in Galilee	John 4:45	27	07-Jul
Jesus Heals a Nobleman's Son-Second Sign in Cana	John 4:46-54	27	10-Jul
Jesus Heals Paralytic on Sabbath	John 5:1-16	28	26-Apr
Jesus Goes to the Sea of Galilee as Passover Approaches	John 6:1-4	29	30-Mar

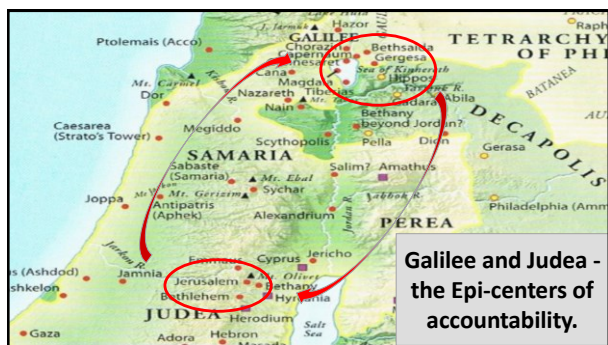
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The Gospel of John

- Jesus preaches in Nazareth.
- Jesus is anointed with oil by a sinful woman at Simon's house
- Jesus denounces the towns who would not repent after seeing his miracles
- Jesus heals a leper
- John the Baptist is beheaded
- Jesus is accused of being demon possessed
- Jesus calms the storm on Sea of Galilee
- Demons commanded to go into pigs

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The Gospel of John

• John 6:1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. 2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. 3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

• Sometime after (roughly 12 months) the events of chapter 5, Jesus and his disciples leave Judea and head back to Galilee.

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- We know that from the time of the Bethesda Pool healing until the “fishes and loaves” a year passes.
- So, we have nearly a year of Jesus’ ministry undocumented by John – he was recording specific and selected events to prove Jesus was Christ.
- The events that happened in that undocumented year by John are not insignificant but are just not germane to John’s purpose.

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The Gospel of John

- The average lifespan in the Roman Empire in the 1st century was under 40 years.
- At that time in his culture, people over 30 had something wrong with them. It would take, or at least three months, to die.
- Very few people were considered as being from a natural cause. Most sicknesses were thought to have a supernatural cause from the spirit world.

Germ Theory was not a thing until the 1860's.

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The Gospel of John

- John 9:1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
- To the disciples of Jesus, it was generally assumed that all sickness was linked to a spiritual cause, sin – pagans were even more sure that spirits were behind sicknesses.
- Someone who could heal on command like Jesus had instant celebrity – so to say that Jesus could draw a crowd would be an understatement.

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The Gospel of John

- In addition to a vast need for healing, another struggle of nearly every person in Jesus' day was the daily quest for food.
- John 6:26 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."
- So, it easy to see what is happening around Jesus in every part of Israel – people were sick and hungry and just as you and I would, they wanted relief.

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37 Miracles of Jesus Christ	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turns water into wine. Luke 2:1-11 2. Heals an Official's Son. John 4:43-54 3. Drives Out Evil Spirit. Mk 1:21-27 4. Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law. Lk 8:38-39 5. Heals Sick & Oppressed. Mt 8:16-17 6. 1st Miraculous Catch of Fish. Lk 5:1-11 7. Cleanses Man of Leprosy. Mk 1:40-45 8. Healed Centurion's Servant. Mt 8:5-13 9. Heals Paralytic. Lk 5:17-26 10. Heals Man's Hand on Sabbath. Mk 3:1-6 11. Heals Sick as Garments Touched. Mk 6:53-56 12. Heals Demon-Possessed Girl's Daughter. Mt 9:24-30 13. Heals Deaf and Dumb Man. Mk 7:31-37 14. Feeds 4,000+ Women & Kids. Mt 15:32-39 15. Heals Blind Man. Mk 8:22-26 16. Heals Blind Man by Spitting in Eyes. Jn 9:1-12 17. Heals Boy w/ Unclean Spirit. Lk 9:37-43 18. Temple Tax Found in Fish's Mouth. Mt 17:24-27 19. Heals Blind Mute Demoniac. Lk 11:14-23 20. Heals Woman Crippled for 18 Yrs. Lk 13:10-17 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Raises Widow's Son from Dead. Lk 7:11-17 22. Calms the Storm on Sea. Mt 8:23-27 23. Cast Demons into Herd of Pigs. Mk 5:1-20 24. Heals Woman w/ Blood Issue. Lk 8:42-48 25. Raises Jarius' Daughter. Mt 9:18-26 26. Heals 2 Blind Men. Mt 9:27-31 27. Heals Man Unable to Speak. Mt 9:32-34 28. Heals Invalid @ Bethsaida. Jn 5:1-15 29. Feeds 5,000 + Women & Kids. Jn 6:1-15 30. Walks on Water. Jn 6:16-21 31. Heals Man w/ Dropsy on Sabbath. Lk 14:1-6 32. Cleanses 10 Lepers. Lk 17:11-19 33. Raises Lazarus from the Dead. Jn 11:1-45 34. Restores Sight to Bartimaeus. Mk 10:46-52 35. Withers Fig Tree. Mk 11:12-14 36. Heals Servant's Severed Ear. Lk 22:50-51 37. 2nd Miraculous Catch of Fish. Jn 21:4-11

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The Gospel of John

- Jesus will do the largest of his miracles in this chapter so one might think that a great miracle would lead to great faith in those who will see it.
- Again, we see that while miracles can attract crowds, they do not necessarily produce faith in those in the crowds.
- John 6:66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

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The Gospel of John

Many were drawn by his miracles and sent away by his words – his words called for repentance, commitment, change, sacrifice, and obedience. Everyone wants to go to heaven, few want Jesus. If it is your testimony that you love Jesus and want to serve and obey him, you are a blessed soul, for God has caused you to be born again.

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The Gospel of John

• John 6:5 Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

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The Gospel of John

- Modern skeptics who want to discredit this miracle have some strange ideas – one is that the fish the little boy was carrying were really big fish. ☺
- 20,000 people X 2 McDonald’s fish sandwiches =
 - 2 X 4 oz fish filets
 - 8 oz of fish per person
 - 20,000 X 8 = 160,000 ounces of fish or 10,000 pounds
 - The boy had (2) fish that weighed 2.5 tons each

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The Gospel of John

In addition to the “really big fish” explanation there is another false view of the miracle that says, “the way Jesus provided for the crowd was to point them to how the little boy shared what he had and if we would follow his model many of the poor would be fed.” When you hear of such an explanation, while our initial reaction is to laugh, we should see the intent of such verbiage – the intent is an evil one to distract from the power of God and reduce others view of him, not magnify him.

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- Jesus and his disciples are up on a mountain and see the people who were on the shores of the Sea of Galilee coming towards them.
- Jesus asks Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” – and John adds that this was a test.
- Philip fails the test – in fact he seems to have no recall at all of the water to wine, the huge catch of fish, or the many healings Jesus had done in his presence.

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The Gospel of John

- The disciples saw so many people and calculated they would need 8 months of a common laborer’s wages to buy enough food for the crowd.
- Philip and the rest were doing math while Jesus was doing “Jesus” – the math was against them, but Jesus was for them.
- And then, of course there was this problem of no supermarkets, and no Costco’s where such a lot of food might be found even if they could raise the money.

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The Gospel of John

So why wouldn’t Philip’s mind, and the other disciples’ minds immediately have gone to a supernatural supply of food for the multitude Jesus wanted to feed? My guess is if the task were to heal the crowd, they would have passed the test, but Jesus is asking for a new thing – feeding a multitude. Where do our thoughts go when we need something not already illustrated in scripture?

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The Gospel of John

- It might be that Jesus posed the very question he did to cause his disciples to focus on the impossibility of any normal solution to the problem at hand.
- From the other gospels we learn the disciples were told by Jesus to get an inventory of what the crowd had available.
- Mark 6:38 And he said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.”

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The Gospel of John

- Before we look at the miracle itself let's look at what Matthew wrote about the same incident.
- Matthew 14:14 When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.
- This time it appears as though Jesus' had two motives – to reveal his deity and to relieve the suffering of the crowds.

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The Gospel of John

- We looked at verse #26 where John wrote that the people in the crowd were not interested in Jesus so much as they were in what they could get from him.
- Maybe there is no better picture of what love does –
- Luke 15:10 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

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- So, what can we say about this miracle – it was big, it was spectacular, it was effective, but how was it actually done?
- If you were there, what would you have seen?
- What if you were one of the disciples, who were the ones who would have had the best view of the fishes and loaves being multiplied?

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The Gospel of John

- Maybe the closest thing we have in scripture to this miracle was the manna and quail God supplied to his people in the desert.
- In the desert God effectively created manna and quail every day for his people.
- Where did the manna and quail come from each day? The same place everything else in the universe came from – the voice of God.

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The Gospel of John

- I found it interesting this week that none of the commentators I checked tackled trying to explain how this miracle happened.
- How is it that 2 fish and 5 loaves became the feast of plenty that it was?
- The Convoy of Hope was not called – neither was the Red Cross or some other human agency.

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It seems that Jesus was willing into existence every additional piece of bread and fish that was not part of the little boy's original offering. The disciples could not have carried all the bread and fish needed once the distribution started, so it would have to have been created in real time as Jesus willed.

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Big lesson – Jesus asks the disciples to do something they could not do. Jesus knew they could not do it but asks them anyway. He surely wanted them to see, perhaps just one more time, that “with God all things are possible”. They did not have the means or the ability to feed the multitude, yet clearly Jesus wanted them to do just that. When Philip confesses “we don’t have the means”, Jesus has them right where he wants them.

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Questions?

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