

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 130 – May 10th – John 6:22-40

Works frequently referenced in these notes on John

Barrett, CK	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , London, SPCK, 1967
Beasley-Murray, GR	<i>John</i> , <i>Word Bible Commentary</i> , vol 36, Word Books, 1987
Carson, DA	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , Leicester, IVP (Apollos), 1991

Verses 22-24

The statement in vv 22–24 is difficult to unravel with certainty... It is perhaps simplest to view v 23 as a parenthesis. The statement serves as an indirect confirmation of the sign of the crossing of the lake; the crowd knew that one boat only was at the place where the disciples had embarked and that Jesus did not go with them; hence, they were perplexed as to what had happened to Jesus. This 'crowd,' of course, is not to be identified with the entire multitude that had been present at the feeding miracle; it was not an armada that crossed the Lake to find Jesus!" Beasley-Murray.

Verse 22

Τῇ ἐπαύριον ὁ ὄχλος ὁ ἐστηκὼς πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἶδον ὅτι πλοίαριον ἄλλο οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖ εἰ μὴ ἓν, καὶ ὅτι οὐ συνεισηλθεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἀλλὰ μόνοι οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἀπῆλθον·

ἐπαυριον the next day
ἐστηκὼς Verb, perf act ptc, m nom s ἵστημι
stand, stop
περαν see v.17
εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὁραω see,
observe

Barrett suggests that this should be understood to have pluperfect force, 'They had seen'.

πλοιαριον, ου n boat, small boat

John uses πλοιον and πλοιαριον interchangeably.

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
ἐκεῖ there, in that place, to that place
εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, a
συνεισηλθεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
συνεισερχομαι go in with, enter with
μονος, η, ον adj only, alone
ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl
ἀπερχομαι

Verse 23

ἀλλὰ ἦλθεν πλοίαρια ἐκ Τιβεριάδος ἐγγὺς τοῦ τόπου ὅπου ἔφαγον τὸν ἄρτον εὐχαριστήσαντος τοῦ κυρίου.

"Instead of ἄλλα ('other') many translators prefer to read ἀλλά ('however'). Beasley-Murray.

ἐγγυς adv near
τοπος, ου m place
ὅπου adv. where
ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθω
and ἐσθω eat
εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks

The last phrase, εὐχαριστησαντος του Κυριου is omitted from several MSS. Barrett thinks that the shorter text may well be original but the UBS text includes the phrase, Metzger commenting that it is supported by diverse and good witnesses.

Verse 24

ὅτε οὖν εἶδεν ὁ ὄχλος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκεῖ οὐδὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, ἐνέβησαν αὐτοὶ εἰς τὰ πλοίαρια καὶ ἦλθον εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ ζητοῦντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
ἐκεῖ see v.22
ἐνέβησαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἐμβαινω
get into, embark
ζητοῦντες Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s ζητεω
seek, look for

Verse 25

Καὶ εὐρόντες αὐτὸν πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἶπον αὐτῷ· Ραββί, πότε ὧδε γέγονας;

εὐρισκω find, discover
εἶπον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl λεγω
πότε interrog adv. when?
ὧδε adv here, in this place
γέγονας Verb, perf act indic, 2 s γινομαι

Verse 26

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν· Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ζητεῖτέ με οὐχ ὅτι εἶδετε σημεῖα ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐφάγετε ἐκ τῶν ἄρτων καὶ ἐχορτάσθητε·

εἶδετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl ὄραω see

I.e. 'saw and understood'. They failed to perceive the significance of what Jesus had done.

ἐφάγετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl ἐσθίω eat
ἐχορτάσθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl
χορτάζω feed, satisfy

Cf. Mk 6:42; 8:8. "The parallelism is close and supports the view that John knew Mark." Barrett.

Verse 27

ἐργάζεσθε μὴ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην ἀλλὰ τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ἣν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑμῖν δώσει, τοῦτον γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐσφράγισεν ὁ θεός.

"John later reports that the bread of life discourse was delivered 'in the synagogue at Capernaum' (6:59), but he nowhere makes clear where the transition to the synagogue takes place: at v. 27 is as good a guess as any." Carson.

ἐργάζομαι work
βρῶσις, εὼς f food
ἀπολλυμι destroy; midd perish, die
μένω trans remain, stay, abide

"Though the food, being Christ himself (vv. 53-5 *et al.*), is eternal, the sense here is not that the food lasts to eternity, but that, since it is 'abiding' food, its result is to produce eternal life in the believer." Barrett.

σφραγίζω seal; mark with a seal, affirm to be true

This is the one on whom the Father has set his seal of approval. "At 3:33 the word σφραγίζειν is used to indicate that the believer, by accepting the testimony of Christ, has attested the truth of God himself. Here the word has the same meaning, but it is God the Father who attests the authority and truth of Jesus. In view of the aorist it is natural to look to a particular act of sealing; this should probably be found in the baptism of Jesus, or rather, since John does not record the baptism itself, in the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus. See especially 1:33f." Barrett.

Verse 28

εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν· Τί ποιῶμεν ἵνα ἐργαζώμεθα τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ;

"The hearers, as they were Jews, interpret the 'works which God demands' as works of the Law, which God will reward with life eternal. They learn, however, that the 'work' God wants is faith in the one whom God has sent." Beasley-Murray.

Carson adds, "From John's perspective, their native naiveté is formidable. They display no doubt about their intrinsic ability to meet any challenge God may set them; they evince no sensitivity to the fact that eternal life is first and foremost a gift within the purview of the Son of Man (v. 27)."

Verse 29

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Τοῦτο ἐστὶν τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ ἵνα πιστεῦητε εἰς ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος.

πιστεῦω believe (in), have faith (in)
ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
ἀποστελλω send
ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

Verse 30

εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· Τί οὖν ποιεῖς σὺ σημεῖον, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεῦσωμέν σοι; τί ἐργάζῃ;

εἶπον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl λεγῶ
σημεῖον, οὐ n miraculous sign, sign,
miracle

ἴδωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ὄραω see

"πιστεῦειν is no longer constructed with εἰς but with the dative; that is, the Jews contemplate no more than putting credence in the words of Jesus." Barrett.

Beasley Murray comments, "The hearers, as they were Jews, interpret the 'works which God demands' as works of the Law, which God will reward with life eternal. They learn, however, that the 'work' God wants is faith in the one whom God has sent. Their response to this affirmation is nothing less than a challenge: 'What are *you* "working" to warrant such belief? What accrediting sign have you to show that you are from God?'"

Verse 31

οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καθὼς ἐστὶν γεγραμμένον· Ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν.

ἔφαγον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl ἐσθίω
ἐρημος, οὐ f deserted place, desert
γεγραμμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s γραφῶ write

Cf. Ex 16; Num 11:6; Deut 8:3; Josh 5:12; Neh 9:20; Ps 77:24. Some of these passages show that 'manna' was used to represent moral and spiritual teaching (Neh 9:20). Later the manna became a symbol of the new age – it became an apocalyptic theme.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

Beasley-Murray comments, "Their citing of the Scripture that speaks of God giving Israel 'bread from heaven' (Exod 16:15, modified by Neh 9:15 and Ps 78:24) presupposes the current teaching that the Messiah, the 'second Redeemer' (after Moses, the first Redeemer), will at his coming restore the manna to Israel (so MidrQoh 1:9, 'As the first Redeemer brought down the manna ... so will also the last Redeemer cause the manna to come down'). The implication is plain: if Jesus be God's deliverer, let him perform *that* sign!" Cf. Rev 2:17.

Verse 32

εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν·

δέδωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

The phrase could be understood to mean that 'Moses did not give you bread *from heaven* but only perishable physical food.' But the sense is more probably 'It was not Moses [but God] who gave your fathers bread from heaven. It is he who *now* offers you the true bread from heaven.' Jesus is indicating that the manna was a type of himself and not his feeding of the crowds a type of the manna, as they had supposed.

ἀληθινός, η, ον real, genuine, true

Verse 33

ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδούς τῷ κόσμῳ.

καταβαίνω come or go down, descend

Beasley-Murray comments, "ὁ καταβαίνων may be rendered 'he who comes down,' but the context favors referring it to ὁ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ. The application to Jesus becomes evident in vv 35, 41."

διδούς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s δίδωμι

There is a threefold contrast between the manna and Jesus as the real bread from heaven:

- i) Manna was temporary, this bread is eternal;
- ii) Manna was for the Hebrews only, this real bread is for the whole world;
- iii) The Hebrews died whereas those who eat this bread will never die.

Verse 34

εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν· Κύριε, πάντοτε δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον.

παντοτε always

δὸς Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s δίδωμι

They do not perceive that Jesus *himself* is this bread (cf. 4:15 for a similar response from the woman at the well).

Verse 35

Εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς· ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πώποτε.

"The two errors of the preceding verse are corrected. The bread of life is not a commodity which Jesus supplies – he *is* the bread of life; and to eat it does not mean hungering, eating and hungering again." Barrett.

This is the first of the seven 'I am' sayings in John. The others are:

- ii) 8:12 ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου
- iii) 10:7,9 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ θύρα (τῶν προβατῶν)
- iv) 10:11,14 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός
- v) 11:25 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀναστασις (καὶ ἡ ζωὴ)
- vi) 14:6 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ
- vii) 15:1,5 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἀμπελὸς (ἡ ἀληθινή)

ἐμὲ Pronoun, acc s ἐγὼ

πεινάσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s πειναῶ be hungry

διψαῶ be thirsty, thirst for

πώποτε adv ever, at any time

For this use of the symbolism of eating and drinking, cf. Is 55:1 – dealing with the dawning of eschatological salvation – and also Rev 7:14-16. Christ is the centre and source of this salvation and there is a complete sufficiency in him.

Verse 36

ἀλλ' εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι καὶ ἐωράκατέ με καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε.

ἐωράκατέ Verb, perf act indic, 2 pl ὄρω see

Some early authorities (⋈ A it^{a,b,c,q} OS) omit με, indicating thereby that 'you have seen and do not believe' relates explicitly to the sign(s) seen by the hearers. The retention of με in this context would not entail a very different meaning.

Carson comments, "They have seen only a mightily endowed man, a potential king (6:14, 15), not the Son of God who perfectly expresses the Father's word and deed (5:19ff.); they have seen only bread and power, not what they signify. This crowd has witnessed the divine revealer at work, but only their curiosity, appetites and political ambitions have been aroused, not their faith."

Cf. vv 30 & 26.

Verses 37-40

Barrett summarises the thoughts of these verses thus:

"I have come down to do not my will but the will of God who sent me.

"It is God's will that none whom he has given me should perish, but that they should receive life and be raised up at the last day.

"Therefore I will receive and raise up every one who 'comes to me', since he is the Father's gift to me and it is the Father's will that I should do so."

Verse 37

πάν ὃ δίδωσίν μοι ὁ πατήρ πρὸς ἐμὲ ἔξει, καὶ τὸν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς με οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω,

In the face of such lack of faith it may seem that Jesus' mission is failing. Here Jesus expresses confidence that God's saving purposes cannot be frustrated. "Jesus' confidence does not rest in the potential for a positive response amongst well-meaning people. Far from it: his confidence is in his Father to bring to pass the Father's redemptive purposes: *All that the Father gives me will come to me.*" Carson.

πάν ὃ is used collectively instead of παντες ούς. It emphasises the collective aspect of the Father's gift of a people to the Son.

δίδωσίν Verb, pres act indic, 3 s διδωμι
ἔξω come

The contrast is with the crowd who will not come to Christ in faith.

ἐκβάλω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἐκβαλλω
throw out, expel, cast away
ἔξω adv. out, outside, away

Carson argues that the sense of the last phrase is that Jesus undertakes to keep, to preserve, all who come to him.

Verse 38

ὅτι καταβέβηκα ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ οὐχ ἵνα ποιῶ τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἐμὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με·

The ὅτι "introduces the reason *why* Jesus will perfectly preserve all those whom the Father has given him." Carson.

καταβέβηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s
καταβαινω see v.33

θέλημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my, mine

Cf. Mk 14:36.

πέμψαντός Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s πέμπω
send

Verse 39

τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἵνα πάν ὃ δέδωκέν μοι μὴ ἀπολέσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

δέδωκέν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

ἀπολέσω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ἀπολλυμι

destroy, lose

ἀναστήσω Verb, fut act indic, 1 s ἀνιστημι
raise

ἐσχατος, η, ον adj last, final

Cf. vv 40,44,54.

"Here, as in 5:24-9, John balances exactly the two aspects of the Christian life, in present possession and future hope; and there is nothing to indicate that he thought one more important than the other." Barrett.

Verse 40

τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός μου ἵνα πᾶς ὃ θεωρῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν ἐγὼ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

θεωρεω see

"θεωρων is sometimes though not consistently used of a special, perceptive, beholding of Christ: 6:62; 12:45; 14:19; 16:10,16f.,19; cf 20:14." Barrett.

Postscript

Carson, reflecting on the previous verses, comments, "Divine sovereignty in salvation is a major theme in the Fourth Gospel. Moreover, the form of it in these verses, that there exists a group of people who have been given by the Father to the Son, and that this group will inevitably come to the Son and be preserved by him, not only recurs in this chapter (v. 65) and perhaps in 10:29, but is strikingly central to the Lord's prayer in ch. 17 (vv. 1, 6, 9, 24...). John is not embarrassed by this theme, because unlike many contemporary philosophers and theologians, he does not think that human responsibility is thereby mitigated. Thus, he can speak with equal ease of those who look to the Son and believe in him: this they must do if they are to enjoy eternal life. But this responsibility to exercise faith does not, for the Evangelist, make God contingent. In short, John is quite happy with the position that modern philosophy calls 'compatibilism'."