

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO JOHN 6

**Ver. 1.** *After these things*, etc.] After Christ's curing the man at Bethesda's pool, and the vindication of himself for doing it on the sabbath day, and for asserting his equality with God; near a year after these things: for these were done at the feast of the passover, and now it was near another; and what is related here, was after the death of John the Baptist, and when the disciples had returned from preaching in the several cities and towns, where Christ afterwards went, and had given an account of their success; (see <sup><4142></sup>Matthew 14:12,13 <sup><4160></sup>Mark 6:30,31 <sup><4190></sup>Luke 9:10). Quickly after the passover was ended, Christ departed from Jerusalem, and went into Galilee, and preached in the several cities and towns in those parts, and wrought many miracles: and after these things, in process of time,

*Jesus went over the sea of Galilee*; the same with the lake of Gennesaret, (<sup><4181></sup>Luke 5:1);

*which is [the sea] of Tiberias*; and is frequently so called by the Jewish writers <sup>f260</sup>, who often make mention of *l ç hmy hyrbj*, "the sea of Tiberias"; and by other writers, it is called the lake of Tiberias <sup>f261</sup>; Pliny, who calls it the lake of Genesara <sup>f262</sup>, says,

"it was sixteen miles long, and six broad, and was beset with very pleasant towns; on the east were Julias and Hippo, and on the south Tarichea, by which name some call the lake, and on the west Tiberias, wholesome for the hot waters."

And these are the waters which the Jews call *ayrbj d ^yswmyd*, or, *ymj*, the hot baths of Tiberias <sup>f263</sup>; and from the city of Tiberias built by Herod, and called so in honour of Tiberius Caesar, the sea took its name.

**Ver. 2.** *And a great multitude followed him*, etc.] From several cities and towns in Galilee, where he had been preaching and working miracles:

*because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased*; so that it was not for the sake of his doctrine, or for the good of their souls,

they followed him; but either to gratify their curiosity in seeing his miracles, or to be healed in their bodies, as others had been.

**Ver. 3.** *And Jesus went up into a mountain*, etc.] In a desert place near Bethsaida, (<sup>490</sup>Luke 9:10);

*and there he sat with his disciples*; partly for security from the cruelty of Herod, having just heard of the beheading of John; and partly for privacy, that he might have some conversation alone with his disciples, upon their return from off their journey; as also for the sake of rest and refreshment; and according to the custom of the Jewish doctors, which now prevailed, (see Gill on “<sup>490</sup>Matthew 5:1”), he sat with his disciples, in order to teach and instruct them.

**Ver. 4.** *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh*.] This was the third passover, since our Lord’s baptism, and entrance on his public ministry; (see <sup>493</sup>John 2:13 5:1). Whether Christ went up to this feast is not certain; some think he did not; but from what is said in (<sup>490</sup>John 7:1), it looks as if he did: how nigh it was to the feast, cannot well be said. Thirty days before the feast, they began to talk about it; and especially in the last fifteen days, they made preparations for it, as being at hand <sup>f264</sup>; and if there was now so long time to it, there was time enough for Jesus to go to it.

**Ver. 5.** *When Jesus then lift up [his] eyes*, etc.] Being before engaged in close conversation with his disciples, and looking wistly and intently on them, whilst he was discoursing with them:

*and saw a great company come unto him*; who came on foot, over the bridge at Chammath, from Capernaum, and other cities of Galilee:

*he saith unto Philip*; he directed his discourse to him particularly, because he was of Bethsaida, near to which place Christ now was, and therefore might be best able to answer the following question:

*whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?* This, according to the other evangelists, must be said after Christ came from the mountain, and the people were come to him, and he had received them kindly, and had instructed them about the kingdom of God, and had healed the diseased among them, and expressed great compassion for them; and after the disciples had desired him to dismiss them, that they might go to the adjacent towns, and provide food for themselves; which Christ would not

admit of and declared it unnecessary, and then put this question, with the following view.

**Ver. 6.** *And this he said to prove him*, etc.] Or “tempting him”, trying his faith, and not only his, but the rest of the disciples; not as ignorant of it himself, but in order to discover it to him and them, and to prepare them for the following miracle; and that it might appear the more illustrious and marvellous:

*for he himself knew what he would do*; Christ had determined to work a miracle, and feed the large number of people that were with him, with that small provision they had among them; and being God omniscient, he knew that he was able to do it, and that he was determined to do it, and it would be done; but he was willing first to try the faith of his apostles.

**Ver. 7.** *Philip answered him*, etc.] Very quick and short, and in a carnal and unbelieving way:

*two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them*. Two hundred pence, or “Roman denarii”, which may be here meant, amount to six pounds five shillings of our money; and this sum is mentioned, because it might be the whole stock that was in the bag, or that Christ and his disciples had; or because this was a round sum, much in use among the Jews; (see Gill on “~~4065~~ Mark 6:37”). Or this may be said by Philip, to show how impracticable it was to provide for such a company; that supposing they had two hundred pence to lay out in this way; though where should they have that, he suggests? yet if they had it, as much bread as that would purchase would not be sufficient:

*that everyone of them might take a little*; it would be so far from giving them a meal, or proper refreshment, that everyone could not have a small bit to taste of, or in the least to stay or blunt his appetite: a penny, with the Jews, would buy as much bread as would serve ten men; so that two hundred pence would buy bread enough for two thousand men; but here were three thousand more, besides women and children, who could not have been provided for with such a sum of money.

**Ver. 8.** *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother*, etc.] Who also, and his brother Peter, were of Bethsaida, as well as Philip, and was a disciple of Christ’s; he hearing what Christ said to Philip, and what answer he returned,

*saith unto him*; to Christ, with but little more faith than Philip, if any.

**Ver. 9.** *There is a lad here*, etc.] Who either belonged to Christ and his disciples, and was employed to carry their provisions for them; which, if so, shows how meanly Christ and his disciples lived; or he belonged to some in the multitude; or rather he came here to sell what he had got:

*which hath five barley loaves.* The land of Canaan was a land of barley, as well as wheat, (<sup><ORR8></sup>Deuteronomy 8:8); this sort of grain grew there in plenty, and was in much use; the Jews had a barley harvest, (<sup><RM2></sup>Ruth 1:22), which was at the time of the passover; for on the second day after the passover, the sheaf of the first fruits was waved before the Lord, which was of barley; hence the Targumist on the place just cited, paraphrases it thus;

“they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the passover, and on the day the children of Israel began to reap the sheaf of the wave offering, which was of barley.”

And it was now about the time of the passover, as appears from (<sup><RM8></sup>John 6:4), and had it been quite the time, and the barley sheaf had been waved, it might have been thought that these loaves were made of the new barley; but though barley was in use for bread among the Jews, as is evident, from the mention that is made of barley loaves and cakes, (<sup><RM2></sup>2 Kings 4:42 <sup><RM3></sup>Judges 7:13); yet it was bread of the coarsest sort, and what the meaner sort of people ate; (see <sup><RM2></sup>Ezekiel 4:12). Yea, barley was used for food for horses and dromedaries, (<sup><RM8></sup>1 Kings 4:28); and since therefore these loaves were, if not designed for the use of Christ and his twelve apostles, yet for some of his followers, and which they all ate of; it is an instance of the meanness and poverty of them: but however, they had better bread than this, even the bread of life, which is afterwards largely treated of in this chapter, which some of them at least ate of; and as our countryman Mr. Dod used to say,

“brown bread and the Gospel are good fare:”

and it may be further observed, that the number of these loaves were but few; there were but “five” of them, for “five thousand” persons; and these do not seem to be very large ones, since one lad was able to carry them; and indeed, these loaves were no other than cakes, in which form they used to be made:

*and two small fishes*; there were but “two”, and these “small”; it is amazing, that five thousand persons should everyone have something of them, and enough: these fishes seem to be what the Jews <sup>f265</sup> call *yynwmm*, and which the gloss interprets “small fishes”: and by the word which is used of them, they seem to be salted, or pickled fishes, and such it is very probable these were; Nonnus calls them, *ιχθυας οπαλεους*, “fishes which were broiled”, or perhaps dried in the sun; (see <sup><24></sup>Luke 24:42).

*But what are they among so many?* everyone cannot possibly have a taste, much less any refreshment, still less a meal.

**Ver. 10.** *Jesus said, make the men sit down*, etc.] The Syriac version reads, “all the men”; and the Persic version, “all the people”; men, women, and children: Christ, without reproving his disciples for their unbelief, ordered them directly to place the people upon the ground, and seat them in rows by hundreds and by fifties, in a rank and company, as persons about to take a meal:

*now there was much grass in the place*; at the bottom of the mountain; and it was green, as one of the evangelists observes, it being the spring of the year, and was very commodious to sit down upon:

*so the men sat down, in number about five thousand*; besides women and children, (<sup><41></sup>Matthew 14:21), so that there was but one loaf for more than a thousand persons.

**Ver. 11.** *And Jesus took the loaves*, etc.] Into his hands, as also the fishes, in order to feed the multitude with them:

*and when he had given thanks*; for them, and blessed them, or implored a blessing on them, that they might be nourishing to the bodies of men, as was his usual manner, and which is an example to us;

*he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were sat down*. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, only read, “he distributed to them that were sat down”: but it was not by his own hands, but by the means of the disciples, who received from him, and gave it to them; so that the sense is the same;

*and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would*; that is, they had as much, both of the bread and of the fishes, distributed to them, and which they took and ate, as they chose: in some printed copies it is read, “as

much as he would”, and so the Persic version; that is, as much as Jesus would; but the former is the true reading, and makes the miracle more illustrious.

**Ver. 12.** *When they were filled*, etc.] Had not only eaten, but had made a full meal, and were thoroughly satisfied, having eaten as much as they could, or chose to eat:

*he said unto his disciples, gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost*; this he said, partly that the truth, reality, and greatness of the miracle might be clearly discerned; and partly, to teach frugality, that, in the midst of abundance, care be taken that nothing be lost of the good things which God gives; and which may be useful to other persons, or at another time.

**Ver. 13.** *Therefore they gathered [them] together*, etc.] The several broken bits of bread, which lay about upon the grass, which the people had left, after they had been sufficiently refreshed:

*and filled twelve baskets*; every disciple had a basket filled:

*with the fragments of the five barley loaves*; and it may be of the fishes also:

*which remained over and above unto them that had eaten*; such a marvellous increase was there, through the power of Christ going along with them; insomuch that they multiplied to such a degree, either in the hands of the distributors, or of the eaters.

**Ver. 14.** *Then those men*, etc.] The five thousand men, who had been fed with the loaves and fishes:

*when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did*; in feeding so many of them, with so small a quantity of food; in multiplying the provision in such a prodigious manner, that after they had eaten to the full, so many baskets of fragments were taken up:

*said, this is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world*; meaning that prophet, that Moses spoke of, in (<sup>4885</sup>Deuteronomy 18:15); for the ancient Jews understood this passage of the Messiah, though the modern ones apply it to others; (see Gill on “<sup>4882</sup>Acts 3:22”). And these men concluded that Jesus was that prophet, or the true Messiah, from the

miracle he wrought; in which he appeared, not only to be like to Moses, but greater than he.

**Ver. 15.** *When Jesus therefore perceived,* etc.] As being the omniscient God, who knew their hearts, and the secret thoughts and purposes of them; or, as man, understood by their words and gestures:

*that they would come and take him by force, and make him a king;* that they had “determined”, as the Arabic version renders it; or “had it in their mind”, as the Persic; to gather about him as one man, and seize him in a violent manner, whether he would or not; and proclaim him the King Messiah; place him at the head of them, to deliver the nation from the Roman yoke, and set up a temporal kingdom, in which they might hope for great secular advantages: and they might the rather be induced to take such a step, since, by this miracle, they could not doubt of his being able to support such an army of men, and to succeed in the enterprise; for he that could do this, what was it he could not do? but,

*he departed again into a mountain, himself alone;* he left the company directly, upon this resolution of theirs, and even took not his disciples with him, who were in the same way of thinking about a temporal kingdom, as the people, and might encourage them in this undertaking: the mountain Christ went into, very probably was the same he went up to before; the reasons of his departure, were to prevent the attempt; to show that his kingdom was not of this world; to teach his followers to forsake the honours and riches of this world, for his sake; and to let them know, that those who sought only for a temporal redeemer, were unworthy of his presence: and also he went away alone, for the sake of secret retirement, and private prayer; and it may be chiefly, that he prayed that God would open the minds of these men, and particularly the disciples; that they might be convinced of their mistaken notions of him as a temporal prince: some copies add, “and he prayed there”; the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Persic versions leave out the word “again”; and the latter, contrary to all others, renders it, “Christ departed from the mountain alone”.

**Ver. 16.** *And when even was [now] come,* etc.] The last of the evenings, when night was coming on; for the first of the evenings took place before they sat down to eat, when the above miracle was wrought; (see <sup><045</sup>Matthew 14:15,23).

*His disciples went down unto the sea*; of Galilee, or Tiberias, to the sea side; and this was by the order, and even constraint of Christ, who would have them go before him, that he might be clear of the multitude, and have an opportunity for solitary prayer, (see Gill on “<sup>4142</sup>Matthew 14:22”) (see Gill on “<sup>4165</sup>Mark 6:45”).

**Ver. 17.** *And entered into a ship*, etc.] In which they came, and was waiting for them; or into another:

*and went over the sea towards Capernaum*; steered their course from Bethsaida, where they took shipping over the sea of Galilee; at least over one part of it, a creek or bay of it, as they intended, towards the city of Capernaum, which lay over against Bethsaida:

*and it was now dark*; quite night, which made their voyage more uncomfortable, especially as it afterwards was tempestuous: but the worst of all was,

*and Jesus was not come to them*; as they expected, and therefore were obliged to set sail and go without him.

**Ver. 18.** *And the sea arose*, etc.] Swelled, and was tumultuous and raging; the waves mounted up, and tossed the ship to and fro:

*by reason of a great wind that blew*; which agitated the waters of the sea, and lifted up the waves; which storm seems to have arose after they had set sail, and were got into the midst of the sea.

**Ver. 19.** *So when they had rowed*, etc.] For the wind being contrary, they could not make use of their sails, but betook themselves to their oars, and by that means got

*about five and twenty, or thirty furlongs*; which were three or four miles, or little more than a league; no further had they got, though they had been rowing from the time it was dark, to the fourth watch, which was after three o'clock in the morning; all this while they had been tossed in the sea;

*they saw Jesus walking on the sea*; (see Gill on “<sup>4145</sup>Matthew 14:25”), (see Gill on “<sup>4146</sup>Matthew 14:26”), (see Gill on “<sup>4149</sup>Matthew 14:29”).

*And drawing nigh unto the ship*; though Mark says, he “would have passed by them”, (<sup>4168</sup>Mark 6:48); that is, he seemed as if he would, but his intention was to come to them, and save them from perishing, as he did:



*and they were afraid*; that he was a spirit, some nocturnal apparition, or demon, in an human form; (see Gill on “<sup><4145></sup>Matthew 14:26”).

**Ver. 20.** *But he saith to them, it is I, be not afraid.*] (See Gill on “<sup><4147></sup>Matthew 14:27”).

**Ver. 21.** *Then they willingly received him into the ship*, etc.] When they knew who he was; and especially he was the more welcome, as they were in distress; and he able, as they well knew, to help them:

*and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went*; which was done, as Nonnus observes, by a divine motion; for not only the wind ceased, but another miracle was wrought; the ship was in an instant at the place whither they intended to go.

**Ver. 22.** *The day following*, etc.] The day after that, in which the miracle of feeding live thousand men with five loaves and two fishes was done: the morning after the disciples had had such a bad voyage:

*when the people which stood on the other side of the sea*; from that in which the disciples now were, being landed at Capernaum; that is, they stood on that side, or shore, where they took shipping, near Bethsaida and Tiberias: here, after they were dismissed by Christ, they stood all night, waiting for boats to carry them over; or rather, knowing that Christ was not gone with his disciples, they continued, hoping to meet with him in the morning, and enjoy some more advantage by him: for they

*saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone*; from whence they concluded, that since there was only that boat, and Jesus did not go into it, but that the disciples went off without him, that he must be therefore somewhere on shore, and not far off, and they hoped to find him in the morning; wherefore it was very surprising to them, when they found him at Capernaum, when, and how he got there.

**Ver. 23.** *Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias*, etc.] A city by the sea side, built by Herod, and called so in honour of Tiberius Caesar; though the Jews give a different etymology of it; they say, it is the same with Rakkath, (<sup><4148></sup>Joshua 19:35), and that it was a fortified place from the days of Joshua, and that on one side, **htmwj hmy**, “the sea was its wall” <sup>f266</sup>; and so Jonathan the Targumist on (<sup><4147></sup>Deuteronomy 3:17) says, that

Tiberias was near the sea of salt: this place became famous for many of the wise men that lived here; here was a famous university, and here the Misna and Jerusalem Talmud were written; and here the sanhedrim sat, after it removed from Jerusalem:

*nigh unto the place where they did eat bread*; where the day before they had been fed in so miraculous a manner: the meaning is, either that Tiberias was near to the place where the miracle was wrought, or the boats from Tiberias came near that place, and both were true: so that these men that were waiting by the sea side, had an opportunity of going over in these boats in quest of Christ, to whom they were now become greatly attached, by feeding them in so wonderful a manner:

*after that the Lord had given thanks*; which clause is added to show, that the multiplication of the bread, and the refreshment the men had by it, were owing to the power of Christ, and his blessing it; though this is wanting in Beza's most ancient copy, and in some others.

**Ver. 24.** *When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there*, etc.] At the sea side, at the usual place of taking boat; and having reason to think he was not on that side of the lake, but was gone from thence:

*neither his disciples*; when they found that there were neither of them there, but both were gone, and considering that it was to no purpose for them to stay there:

*they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus*; they might observe, that the disciples steered their course towards this place; and they knew that was a place of general resort with Christ and his disciples; therefore they took boat and came directly thither, and sought for him in the synagogue, it being on a day in which the people used to go thither; and where Christ, as often as he had opportunity, attended.

**Ver. 25.** *And when they had found him on the other side of the sea*, etc.] At Capernaum, and in the synagogue there; (see <sup>415</sup>John 6:59).

*They said unto him, Rabbi*; or "master", a name now much in use with the Jewish doctors, and by which they delighted to be called; and these men being convinced by the miracle, that Christ was that prophet that should come, honour him with this title, saying,

*when camest thou hither?* since he did not go with his disciples, and there was no other boat that went off the night before, but that in which they went; and they came over in the first that came out that morning, and he did not come in any of them; and therefore it was amazing to them, both when and how he came, since they could not devise how he should get there by shipping, and also how he should so soon get there on foot.

**Ver. 26.** *Jesus answered them and said,* etc.] Not by replying to their question, or giving a direct answer to that, which he could have done, by telling them that he walked upon the water, and found his disciples in great distress, and delivered them, and came early that morning with them to the land of Gennesaret, and so to Capernaum: but not willing to gratify their curiosity; and knowing from what principles, and with what views they sought after him, and followed him; and willing to let them know that he knew them, being the searcher of hearts, and to reprove them for them, thus addressed them:

*verily, verily, I say unto you;* this is a certain truth, and was full well known to Christ, and what their own consciences must attest:

*ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles;* of feeding so large a number with so small a quantity of food, and of healing them that needed it, (~~and~~ Luke 9:11). Not but that they did regard the miracles of Christ, and concluded from thence he must be that prophet that was to come, and were for taking him by force, and proclaiming him king; but then they had a greater respect to their own worldly interest, and their carnal appetites, than to these, as follows:

*but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled;* they regarded their own bellies more than the honour and glory of Christ, and even than the good of their immortal souls, and the spiritual and eternal salvation of them: and it is to be feared that this is the case of too many who make a profession of religion; their view being their own worldly advantages, and not the spiritual and everlasting good of their souls, and the real interest of a Redeemer: hence the following advice.

**Ver. 27.** *Labour not for the meat which perisheth,* etc.] Meaning either food for the body, which is perishing; its virtue is perishing; man cannot live by it alone, nor does it last long; its substance is perishing; it is received into the stomach, and there digested; it goes into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; and that which it supports, for a while, is

perishing; and both the one, and the other, shall be destroyed; even meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: now, though it becomes men to work for their bread, to provide it for themselves and families; yet they should not be anxiously solicitous about it, or labour only for that, and prefer it to spiritual food: or else food for the mind is meant, and that either in a sensual way, as sinful lust and pleasures, the honours of this world, and the riches of it; which are sweet morsels, though bread of deceit, to carnal minds, and which they labour hard for: or, in a religious way, as superstition, will worship, external works of righteousness, in order to please God, and obtain eternal life and salvation; which to labour for in such a way, is to spend money for that which is not bread, and labour for that which profiteth not; and in each of these ways were these Jews labouring for perishing food, from which Christ dissuades them:

*but for that which endureth unto everlasting life*; either the grace of Christ, which, as meat, is quickening and refreshing, strengthening and supporting, and which causes nourishment and growth, and by virtue of which work is done; and this springs up unto everlasting life, and is inseparably connected with it; and particularly the blessings of grace, such as sanctification, adoption, pardon, and justification: or the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which are refreshing, and strengthening, and by which the saints are nourished up unto everlasting life; or rather the flesh of Christ eaten, in a spiritual sense, by faith, of which Christ so largely discourses in the following part of the chapter:

*which the son of man shall give unto you*; meaning either everlasting life, which is in Christ's gift, and is a free grace gift of his; or else the meat which endures unto it: for though it is to be laboured for, not so as to prepare it, or to purchase it, but by asking for it in prayer, and by attending on ordinances, and exercising faith on Christ; yet it is his gift, and he gives it freely; grace, and the blessings of it, are freely given by him, and so are the Gospel and its ordinances; and also his own flesh, which is first given by him, by way of sacrifice, in the room and stead of his people, and for the life of them, (<sup>415</sup>John 6:51); and then it is given unto them to feed upon spiritually by faith, and which is here designed:

*for him hath God the Father sealed*; designated and appointed to be the Saviour, and Redeemer of his people, and has sent, authorized, and commissioned him as such; and has made him known, and approved of him, by the descent of the Spirit on him, and by a voice from heaven,

declaring him his beloved Son; and has confirmed him to be the Messiah by the miraculous works he gave him to finish; for all which several uses seals are, as to distinguish one thing from another, to render anything authentic, to point it out, or to confirm it.

**Ver. 28.** *Then said they unto him,* etc.] Understanding by what he said, that they must labour and work, though not for perishing food, yet for durable food; and as they imagined, in order to obtain eternal life by working:

*what shall we do that we might work the works of God?* Such as are agreeable to his will, are acceptable to him, and well pleasing in his sight: they seem to intimate, as if they desired to know whether there were any other works of this kind, than what Moses had directed them to, or than they had done; and if there were, they suggest they would gladly do them; for this was the general cast and complexion of this people; they were seeking for righteousness, and life not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law.

**Ver. 29.** *Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God,* etc.] The main and principal one, and which is well pleasing in his sight; and without which it is impossible to please him; and without which no work whatever is a good work; and this is of the operation of God, which he himself works in men; it is not of themselves, it is the pure gift of God:

*that ye believe on him whom he hath sent;* there are other works which are well pleasing to God, when rightly performed, but faith is the chief work, and others are only acceptable when done in the faith of Christ. This, as a principle, is purely God's work; as it is an act, or as it is exercised under the influence of divine grace, it is man's act: "that ye believe"; the object of it is Christ, as sent by the Father, as the Mediator between God and men, as appointed by him to be the Saviour and Redeemer; and believing in Christ, is believing in God that sent him. The Jews reduce all the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law, for so many they say there are, to this one, "the just shall live by his faith", (Habakkuk 2:4).<sup>f267</sup>

**Ver. 30.** *They said therefore unto him,* etc.] Seeing he proposed believing in him as the grand work of God to be done, and what is most acceptable in his sight:

*what sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee?* The people of the Jews were always requiring signs and wonders, and when they had

one and another shown them, they still sought for more, and were never satisfied; (see <sup><4023></sup>Matthew 12:39 16:1). These men had lately seen various signs and miracles of Christ, as healing the sick, and feeding live thousand of them, and more, with five loaves, and two fishes; and though, for the time present, these had some influence upon them, and they were ready to believe he was that prophet; yet now, at least some of them, begin to retract, and signify, that unless some other, and greater signs were shown, they should not believe in him as the Messiah:

*what dost thou work?* more than others, or Moses. They seem to make light of the miracle of the loaves, or at least require some greater sign and miracle, to engage their belief in him as the Messiah; and as they were lovers of their bellies, and expected dainties in the times of the Messiah, they seem to move for, and desire miracles of that kind to be wrought; and which sense the following words confirm.

**Ver. 31.** *Our fathers did eat manna in the wilderness*, etc.] Which was a sort of food prepared by angels in the air, and rained down from thence about the tents of the Israelites; it was a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground; it was like a coriander seed, and the colour of it was the colour of bdellium: it was so called, either from **hnm**, “to prepare”, because it was prepared, and got ready for the Israelites; or from the first words that were spoken upon sight of it, **wh ʿm**, “what is it?” for they knew not what it was: and this the Jewish fathers fed upon all the while they were in the wilderness, till they came to Canaan’s land, and they only; it was food peculiar to them: “our fathers did eat”; and so the Jews <sup>f268</sup> observe on those words in (<sup><2165></sup>Exodus 16:35):

““and the children of Israel did eat manna forty years”; the children of Israel, **arj a al w**, “not another”. And the children of Israel saw, and said, what is it? and not the rest of the mixed multitude.”

Now these Jews object this miracle to Christ, and intimate, that he indeed had fed five thousand of them with barley loaves, and fishes, for one meal; but their fathers, in the times of Moses, to the number of six hundred thousand, and more, were fed, and that with manna, very sweet and delightful food, and for the space of forty years; even all the while they were in the wilderness: and therefore, unless he wrought as great a miracle, or a greater than this, and that of the like kind, they should not think fit to

relinquish Moses, and follow him; and in proof of what they said, they produce Scripture,

*as it is written* in (~~19784~~ Psalm 78:24,25), or rather in (~~121615~~ Exodus 16:15); and perhaps both places may be respected:

*he gave them bread from heaven to eat*; they leave out the word Lord, being willing it should be understood of Moses, to whom they ascribed it, as appears from the following words of Christ, who denies that Moses gave it; and add the phrase “from heaven”, to set forth the excellent nature of it, which is taken from (~~12164~~ Exodus 16:4), where the manna, as here, is called “bread from heaven”.

**Ver. 32.** *Then Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you,* etc.] It is truth, and may be depended on, whether it will be believed or not:

*Moses gave you not that bread from heaven*; in which Christ denies that that bread, or manna, did come from heaven; that is, from the highest heavens, only from the air, and was not such celestial bread he after speaks of, and which came down from the heaven of heavens: and moreover, he denies that Moses gave them that bread; it was the Lord that gave them it, as is expressly said in the passage referred to, in the above citation. Moses had no hand in it; he did not so much as pray for it, much less procure it, or prepare it: it was promised and prepared by God, and rained by him, and who directed to the gathering and use of it. This stands opposed to a notion of the Jews, that the manna was given by means of Moses, for his sake, and on account of his merits: for they say <sup>f269</sup>,

“there arose up three good providers, or pastors for Israel, and they are these, Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam; and three good gifts were given by their means, and they are these, the well, the cloud, and the manna; the well by the merits of Miriam; the pillar of cloud by the merits of Aaron; *hçm twkzb ^m*, “the manna, by the merits of Moses”.”

This our Lord denies; and affirms,

*but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven*: he not only gave the manna to the Jewish fathers, and not Moses; but he also gives that bread which the manna was typical of, by which he means himself; who may be compared to bread, because of the original of it, or the matter of it, of which it is made, wheat, he is called a corn of wheat, (~~8124~~ John 12:24); and

from its preparation for food, being threshed, and winnowed, and ground, and kneaded, and baked; all which may express the sufferings and death of Christ, by which he becomes fit food for faith; and from its being the main part of human sustenance, and from its nourishing and strengthening nature, and from its being a means of maintaining and supporting life: and he may be called the “true” bread, because he is the truth and substance of the types of him; the unleavened bread, eaten at the passover, was typical of him, as he was free from sin in nature and life; and from all error in doctrine; and so was the showbread a type of his intercession, and set forth the continuance of it, its efficacy and acceptance, of which the priests only shared; and so were the meat offerings in the sacrifices, which were offered up day by day: and particularly the manna, the bread from heaven, the Jews were now speaking of: Christ was the truth of that type; that was but shadowy bread, Christ is the true bread, or the antitype of it in its name; whether it be derived from “manah”, to prepare, Christ being the bread of life, and salvation of God, prepared in the council and covenant of grace, and by his sufferings and death before the face of all people; or from the words “man hu”, what is it? Christ being as little known by carnal men, as the manna was at first to the Israelites: and in its nature, kind, form, and quality; it was round in form, which might be expressive of the perfections of Christ, and particularly his eternity, being without beginning or end; it was white in colour, which may denote the purity and innocence of him; it was sweet in taste, as he, his fruits, his word, and ordinances, are to them that are born again; it was small in quantity, which may set forth the meanness of Christ in his state of humiliation: it was also typical of Christ in its usefulness; it was sufficient to supply a, great multitude, and that for many years, as the fulness of grace in Christ is sufficient for the whole family in heaven, and in earth, in time, and to all eternity; the Israelites all shared in it, and had all an equal portion of it; so all the people of God have an interest in Christ, and equally participate of the blessings of his grace, and shall enjoy the same eternal life and glory by him: one has neither more nor less than another; Christ is all in all, and made alike all things to them: and he may be called the bread “from heaven”; because he came from thence, not by change of place, but by assumption of nature, even from the highest heavens, the third heaven, from whence the manna came not: he is the Lord from heaven, and is such bread as has a virtue and tendency in it to nourish men for heaven, and is truly of a heavenly nature: and this is Christ’s Father’s gift, and is of pure grace, without any consideration of works and merits in men. Philo the Jew says <sup>f270</sup>, the heavenly food of the



soul, which is called “manna”, the divine word distributes alike to all that ask.

**Ver. 33.** *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven,* etc.] In the way and manner just now mentioned: and which clearly points out Christ himself, who may be called “the bread of God”; to distinguish him from common bread, and to show the excellency of him, and that he is of God’s providing and giving, and which he would have his children feed upon:

*and giveth life unto the world;* a spiritual life, which he is the author, supporter, and maintainer of; and eternal life, which he gives a right unto and meetness for, and nourishes up unto; and this not to a few only, or to the Israelites only, but to the Gentiles also, and even to the whole world of God’s elect: not indeed to every individual in the world, for all are not quickened now, not shall inherit eternal life hereafter; but to all the people of God, in all parts of the world, and in all ages of time; of such extensive virtue and efficacy is Christ, the bread of God, in which he appears greatly superior to that manna the Jews instance in.

**Ver. 34.** *Then said they unto him,* etc.] At least some of them:

*Lord, evermore give us this bread;* that is so divine and heavenly, and has such a quickening virtue in it: these words are said by them either seriously, and to be understood of bread for their bodies, of which they imagined Christ was speaking; and so sprung from ignorance of his sense; and from sensuality in them who followed him for the loaves; and from a covetous disposition, being desirous of being supplied with such excellent food without charge; and from idleness, to save labour and pains in working for it; and from a vain desire of the continuance of this earthly life, being willing to live for ever, and therefore would have this bread evermore; and from a gross opinion of plenty and delicacy of corporeal food in the times of the Messiah; (see Gill on <sup>“<del>“</del> Luke 14:15”</sup>); or else these words are spoken ironically, by way of derision, as if there was no such bread; and if there was, that Christ could not give it. However, the words may be improved, when considered as a petition coming from, and suitable to, a sensible and enlightened soul: for such who are sensible of their famishing condition by nature, and of their need of Christ, the bread of life, and whose taste is changed, and have tasted how good this bread is, will earnestly desire always to be supplied with it, and to live upon it; for nothing is more grateful to them, and more nourishing and satisfying to

their souls; they are never weary of it; it is always new and delightful to them, and they always stand in need of it, and wait in the use of means and ordinances for it; and this has always an abiding, lasting, virtue in it, to feed their souls, and nourish them up to everlasting life. Josephus <sup>f271</sup> says of the “manna”, which was a type of this bread, that there was such a divine quality in it, that whoever tasted of it needed nothing else: and the Jews also say <sup>f272</sup>, that

“in the manna were all kinds of tastes, and everyone of the Israelites tasted all that he desired; for so it is written in (~~ORIG~~) Deuteronomy 2:7), “these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing”, or “not wanted anything”; what is anything? when he desired to eat anything, and said with his mouth, O that I had fat to eat, immediately there was in his mouth the taste of fat. — Young men tasted the taste of bread, old men the taste of honey, and children the taste of oil.”

Yea, they say <sup>f273</sup>,

“whoever desired flesh, he tasted it, and whoever desired fish, he tasted it, and whoever desired fowl, chicken, pheasant, or pea hen, so he tasted whatever he desired.”

And to this agrees what is said in the apocryphal book of Wisdom, 16:20,21:

“Thou feddest thine own people with angels’ food, and didst send them from heaven bread, prepared without their labour, able to content every man’s delight, and agreeing to every taste; for thy sustenance (or manna) declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man’s liking.”

All which must be understood of that pleasure, satisfaction, and contentment which they had in it; for it was a very uncommon case to eat it, and live upon it as their common food for forty years together: and no doubt but that there was something remarkable in suiting it to their appetites, or giving them appetites suitable to that, to feed upon it, and relish it for so long a time: twice indeed in that length of time we read they complained of it, saying, that they had nothing but this manna before their eyes, and their souls loathed it as light bread, (~~ORIG~~) Numbers 11:6 21:5), and lusted after the flesh, and the fish they had eaten in Egypt. And so it is with

some professors of Christ, and his Gospel; for there is a mixed multitude among them, as there was among the Israelites, who disrelish the preaching of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel respecting his person, blood, and righteousness, and salvation by him; they cannot bear to have these things frequently inculcated and insisted upon; their souls are ready to loath them as light bread, and want to have something else set before them, more suitable to their carnal appetites: but to such who are true believers in Christ, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, Christ, the true manna, and bread of God, is all things to them; nor do they desire any other: they taste everything that is delightful, and find everything that is nourishing in him.

**Ver. 35.** *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life,* etc.] Christ is so called, because he gives life to dead sinners: men in a state of nature are dead in trespasses and sins; and whatever they feed upon tends to death; Christ, the true bread, only gives life, which is conveyed by the word, and made effectual by the Spirit: and because he supports and maintains the life he gives; it is not in the power of a believer to support the spiritual life he has; nor can he live on anything short of Christ; and there is enough in Christ for him to live upon: and because he quickens, and makes the saints lively in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, and renews their spiritual strength, and secures for them eternal life.

*He that cometh to me shall never hunger;* not corporeally to hear him preach, or preached, or merely to his ordinances, to baptism, or the Lord's table; but so as to believe in him, feed, and live upon him, as the next clause explains it:

*and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;* and which is owing, not to the power and will of man, but to divine teachings, and the powerful drawings of the efficacious grace of God; (see ~~John~~ John 6:44,45). Now of such it is said, that they shall never hunger and thirst; which is true of them in this life, though not to be understood as there were no sinful desires in them; much less, that there are no spiritual hungerings and thirstings after they are come to Christ; but that they shall not desire any other food but Christ; they shall be satisfied with him; nor shall they hereafter be in a starving and famishing condition, or want any good thing: and in the other world there will be no desires after that which is sinful, nor indeed after outward ordinances, in order to enjoy communion with God in them, as now, for they will then be needless; nor shall they have any uneasy desires

after Christ, and his grace, and the enjoyment of him, since he will be all in all to them.

**Ver. 36.** *But I said unto you*, etc.] The substance of what follows in (<sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲥ</sup>John 6:26) though the Persic and Ethiopic versions render it, “I say unto you”; and so refers not to anything before said, but to what he was about to say:

*that ye also have seen me, and believe not*; that is, they had not only seen him in person, which many kings, prophets, and righteous men had desired, but not enjoyed, yet nevertheless believed; but they had seen his miracles, and had shared in the advantages of them, being healed, and fed corporeally by him, and yet believed not in him as the spiritual Saviour and Redeemer of their souls; nor did they come to him in a spiritual way, for eternal life and salvation.

**Ver. 37.** *All that the Father giveth me*, etc.] The “all” design not the apostles only, who were given to Christ as such; for these did not all, in a spiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him; one of them was a devil, and the son of perdition; much less every individual of mankind: these are, in some sense, given to Christ to subserve some ends of his mediatorial kingdom, and are subject to his power and control, but do not come to him, and believe in him: but the whole body of the elect are here meant, who, when they were chosen by God the Father, were given and put into the hands of Christ, as his seed, his spouse, his sheep, his portion, and inheritance, and to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation; which is an instance of love and care on the Father’s part, to give them to Christ; and of grace and condescension in him to receive them, and take the care of them; and of distinguishing goodness to them: and though Christ here expresses this act of his Father’s in the present tense, “giveth”, perhaps to signify the continuance and unchangeableness of it; yet he delivers it in the past tense, in (<sup>ⲁⲓⲃⲏⲥ</sup>John 6:39), “hath given”; and so all the Oriental versions render it here. And it certainly respects an act of God, antecedent to coming to Christ, and believing in him, which is a fruit and effect of electing love, as is clear from what follows:

*shall come unto me*; such who are given to Christ in eternal election, and in the everlasting covenant of grace, shall, and do, in time, come to Christ, and believe in him to the saving of their souls; which is not to be ascribed to, any power and will in them, but to the power and grace of God. It is not here said, that such who are given to Christ have a “power” to come to

him, or “may” come if they will, but they shall come; efficacious grace will bring them to Christ, as poor perishing sinners, to venture on him for life and salvation:

*and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*; such who come to Christ in a spiritual manner, and are brought to believe in him truly and really, he not only receives kindly, but keeps and preserves them by his power, and will not cast them out, or thrust them from him into perdition: the words are very strongly and emphatically expressed in the original, “I will not, not, or never, never, cast out without”; or cast out of doors. Christ will never cast them out of his affections; nor out of his arms; nor out of that family that is named of him; nor out of, and from his church, which is his body, and of which they are members; nor out of a state of justification and salvation; and therefore they shall never perish, but have everlasting life. The three glorious doctrines of grace, of eternal election, efficacious grace in conversion, and the final perseverance of the saints, are clearly contained in these words.

**Ver. 38.** *For I came down from heaven*, etc.] by change of place, or local motion; for Christ is the immense, infinite, and omnipresent God, and cannot be said properly to move from place to place; for he fills all places, even heaven and earth, with his presence, and was in heaven as the Son of God, at the same time he was here on earth as the son of man: wherefore this must be understood in a manner becoming his proper deity, his divine sonship, and personality: this descent was by the assumption of the human nature into union with his divine person, which was an instance of amazing grace and condescension. The Jew <sup>f274</sup> objects to this, and says,

“if this respects the descent of the soul, the soul of every man descended from thence; but if it respects the body, the rest of the evangelists contradict his words, particularly Luke, when he says, (~~<0117>~~ Luke 2:7) that his mother brought him forth at Bethlehem.”

But this descent regards neither his soul nor body, but his divine person, which always was in heaven, and not any local descent of that; but, as before observed, an assumption of human nature, which he took of the virgin on earth; and so there is no contradiction between the evangelists; nor is descent from heaven unsuitable to Christ as a divine person, since it is ascribed to God, (~~<0117>~~ Genesis 11:7) (~~<0182>~~ Genesis 18:21); and if God may be said to go down from heaven by some display of his power, and intimation of his presence, Christ may be said to descend from heaven by

that marvellous work of his, taking upon him our nature, and walking up and down on earth in the form of a servant; and which was done with this view, as he says,

*not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me*; that is, not to do his own will, as separate from his Father's, and much less as contrary to it; otherwise he did come to do his own will, which, as God, was the same with his Father's, he being one with him in nature, and so in power and will; and though his will, as man, was distinct from his Father's, yet not repugnant, but resigned unto it: and this will he came to do, was to preach the Gospel, fulfil the law, work miracles, and obtain the eternal redemption and salvation of his people. What the above Jewish writer<sup>f275</sup> objects to this part of the text is of very little moment: whose words are;

“moreover, what he says, “not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me”, shows, that he that sent, is not one and the same with him that is sent, seeing the will of him that is sent, is not as the will of him that sends.”

It is readily granted that they are not one and the same person; they are two distinct persons, which sending, and being sent, do clearly show; but then they are one in nature, though distinct in person, and they agree in will and work. Christ came not to do any will of his own different from that of his Father's; nor do these words imply a difference of wills in them, much less a contrariety in them, but rather the sameness of them.

**Ver. 39.** *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me*, etc.] This explains both who he was that sent him; the Father of him, and of his people; whose sending of him does not suppose any change of place, or inequality between them, or disrespect unto him, or compulsion of him, but agreement between them, and love to the persons on whose account he was sent; and also what is the will he came to do, and is what was declared by him to Christ, when he gave the elect to him: for this expresses his secret will in the council and covenant of grace,

*that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*; that is, that of all the elect which were given to Christ by his Father, in eternal election, he should not lose anyone of them, not the meanest among them, nor anything of theirs, their grace, or glory, or anything belonging to them, either to their souls or bodies, and particularly the latter;

*but should raise it up again at the last day*; even every part of their bodies, and every dust belonging to them; their bodies being given to Christ, and redeemed by his blood, as well as their souls: so the Jews<sup>f276</sup>, speaking of the resurrection, and making mention of that passage in (<sup>4230</sup>Numbers 23:10), “who shall count the dust of Jacob?” add,

“and he (i.e. God) shall order it all, *μwl k dybaty al w*, “and not anything shall be lost”, but all shall rise again; for, lo, it is said, (<sup>211B</sup>Daniel 12:2), “and many of them that sleep in the dust”, etc.”

**Ver. 40.** *And this is the will of him that sent me*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin adds, “of my Father”; and all the Oriental versions read only, “and this is the will of my Father”; this is his declared, his revealed will in the Gospel, which the sons of men are made acquainted with, as the other was his secret will, which was only known to the Son till he discovered it.

*That everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him*; who so sees him as to believe in him; for this is not to be understood of a corporeal sight of Christ, or of a mere speculative knowledge of him, or historical faith in him; for it is not so to see him, as merely to believe what he is, the Son of God, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, or what he says, but to trust in him for righteousness, life, and happiness. Men are by nature blind, their eyes are shut to all that is spiritually good; it is the Spirit of God that opens blind eyes, and illuminates the understanding: and in his light men see not only themselves, their sin, and want of righteousness, and their lost state and condition, but Christ, and a beauty, glory, and excellency in him, ability and willingness to save, a suitableness in him for them, and a fulness of all grace; they see righteousness, peace, pardon, cleansing, wisdom, strength, grace, life, and salvation, and go out of themselves to him for all: and such a sight, though it may be but glimmering, is saving, and is self-abasing, soul rejoicing, surprising, and transforming; is attended with certainty, reality, and evidence, and is a foretaste of glory; for it is the will of God, and not man, of a gracious Father, of an unchangeable and eternal being, whose will cannot be resisted, and made void, that such

*may have everlasting life*; which will be a life of glory, and will consist in possessing glory both in soul and body; in beholding glory, the glory of one another, the glory of angels, the glory of divine truths, and mysterious providences, the glory of the divine perfections, and of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it will be a life of perfection, of perfect knowledge, holiness,

obedience, love, peace, and joy; a life free from all the miseries and inconveniences of this, both in a natural and spiritual sense; a life of pleasure, and which will last for ever: to which Christ adds,

*and I will raise him up at the last day*; Christ will be the efficient cause, as well as he is the exemplar, the earnest, and first fruits of the resurrection of the dead; he will indeed raise all the dead by his power, but the saints particularly, by virtue of union to him, as the members of his body, and in the first place; and the very same shall rise, and with the same numerical body, that were given to him, and believe in him: and this will be at the last of the last days, at the end of all things; and is mentioned to show, that length of time will not hinder the resurrection of the dead, and in opposition to a Jewish notion, that the resurrection of the dead would be at the Messiah's coming: it will be at his second coming, but was not to be at his first; there was indeed then a resurrection of some particular persons, but not a general one of all the saints: that the Jews expect the resurrection of the dead when the Messiah comes, appears from their Targums, Talmuds, and other writers; so the Targumist on (~~2348~~ Hosea 14:8):

“They shall be gathered from their captivity, they shall sit under the shadow of their Messiah, “and the dead shall live”, and good shall be multiplied in the land.”

And in the Talmud <sup>f277</sup> it is said,

“the holy blessed God will quicken the righteous, and they shall not return to their dust.”

The gloss upon it is,

“the holy blessed God will quicken them “in the days of” the Messiah.”

And so the land of the living is said to be,

“the land, whose dead live first in the days of the Messiah <sup>f278</sup>.”

And hence R. Jeremiah desired to be buried with his clothes and shoes on, and staff in his hand, that when the Messiah came, he might be ready <sup>f279</sup> with which agree others of the more modern writers; so Kimchi on (~~2345~~ Isaiah 66:5).



“They shall live at the resurrection of the dead, in the days of the Messiah.”

And the same writer on (<sup>223D</sup>Jeremiah 23:20) observes it is said,

““ye” shall consider, and not “they” shall consider; which intimates the “resurrection of the dead in the days of the Messiah”.”

And says Aben Ezra on (<sup>271D</sup>Daniel 12:2):

“The righteous which die in captivity shall live, when the Redeemer comes;”

though some of their writers differ in this point, and will not allow the days of the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead, to be one and the same

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**Ver. 41.** *The Jews then murmured at him*, etc.] When they found that he spoke of himself as the true bread, the bread of God, and bread of life, and as descending from heaven: and which was to be fed upon in a spiritual manner by faith, which they were ignorant of, and had no desire unto: and thus being disappointed of the delicious corporeal food they expected, they grew uneasy, and displeased,

*because he said I am the bread which came down from heaven*; for though, as yet, he had not said this in so many words, and in this direct form, as afterwards, in (<sup>415D</sup>John 6:51); yet he had said what amounted to it, and which might be easily gathered from (<sup>415D</sup>John 6:35,) (<sup>415D</sup>John 6:38). The Vulgate Latin reads, “I am the living bread”; and the Persic version, “I am the bread of life”. And this last renders the first clause “mocked at him”.

**Ver. 42.** *And they said, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph?* etc.] From murmuring they go to mocking and scoffing at his parentage and descent, and object this to his coming down from heaven; and intend by it to upbraid him with the meanness of his birth, being the son of Joseph, a poor carpenter; and suggest, that it was great arrogance in him to claim an heavenly original, and to ascribe such things to himself, that he was the bread of God, and the bread of life, and came from heaven:

*whose father and mother we know?* for Capernaum and Nazareth were not at a great distance from each other; so that Joseph and Mary might be

personally known by the inhabitants of Capernaum, and they might be intimately acquainted with them.

*How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?* they could not tell how to reconcile these things, not knowing either his miraculous conception and incarnation, nor his divine sonship; otherwise his being made of a woman, or born of a virgin on earth, is consistent with his being the Lord from heaven.

**Ver. 43.** *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them,* etc.] Either overhearing what they said, or knowing, as God, their secret murmurs, and private cavils among themselves, thus addressed them,

*murmur not among yourselves:* meaning neither about his descent from heaven, nor about coming to him, and believing in him; for it follows,

**Ver. 44.** *No man can come to me,* etc.] That is, by faith, as in (~~John~~ John 6:35); for otherwise they could corporeally come to him, but not spiritually; because they had neither power nor will of themselves; being dead in trespasses and sins, and impotent to everything that is spiritual: and whilst men are in a state of unregeneracy, blindness, and darkness, they see no need of coming to Christ, nor anything in him worth coming for; they are prejudiced against him, and their hearts are set on other things; and besides, coming to Christ and believing in Christ being the same thing, it is certain faith is not of a man's self, it is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit; and therefore efficacious grace must be exerted to enable a soul to come to Christ; which is expressed in the following words,

*except the Father which hath sent me, draw him:* which is not to be understood of moral persuasion, or a being persuaded and prevailed upon to come to Christ by the consideration of the mighty works which God had done to justify that he was the true Messiah, but of the internal and powerful influence of the grace of God; for this act of drawing is something distinct from, and superior to, both doctrine and miracles. The Capernaïtes had heard the doctrine of Christ, which was taught with authority, and had seen his miracles, which were full proofs of his being the Messiah, and yet believed not, but murmured at his person and parentage. This gave occasion to Christ to observe to them, that something more than these was necessary to their coming to him, or savingly believing in him; even the powerful and efficacious grace of the Father in drawing: and if it be considered what men in conversion are drawn off “from” and “to”, from

their beloved lusts and darling righteousness; to look unto, and rely upon Christ alone for salvation; from that which was before so very agreeable, to that which, previous to this work, was so very disagreeable; to what else can this be ascribed, but to unfrustrable and insuperable grace? but though this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force; God in drawing of unwilling, makes willing in the day of his power: he enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives an heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of his grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and give up itself to him; he draws with the bands of love. Drawing, though it supposes power and influence, yet not always coercion and force: music draws the ear, love the heart, and pleasure the mind. “Trahit sua quemque voluptas”, says the poet. The Jews have a saying <sup>f281</sup>, that the proselytes, in the days of the Messiah, shall be all of them, *μυρωργ μωργ*, “proselytes drawn”: that is, such as shall freely and voluntarily become proselytes, as those who are drawn by the Father are.

*And I will raise him at the last day;* (see Gill on “<sup><B6D></sup>John 6:40”); compare with this verse (<sup><B6D></sup>John 6:40 <sup><D047></sup>Judges 4:7).

**Ver. 45.** *It is written in the prophets,* etc.] In the book of the prophets, as the Ethiopic version renders it: the Jews divided the books of the Old Testament into three parts, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa; now in that division which was called the Prophets, are the following words: or in one of the prophets, namely, in (<sup><2543></sup>Isaiah 54:13); so the Syriac version reads, “in the prophet”; though some think reference is had to more prophets, and more passages than one, as besides the above mentioned, (<sup><2613></sup>Jeremiah 31:34) (<sup><3002></sup>Micah 4:2);

*and they shall be all taught of God;* by his Spirit to know themselves, and Jesus Christ; that is, all that are ordained to eternal life; all that are given to Christ, and are chosen in him; all the children of Zion, and who are the children of God; these are all, sooner or later, in a special manner, taught of God: and which does not intend mere external instructions, and objective teachings by the ministry of the word, for many are so taught, who never come to Christ; but special teachings, such as are attended with the energy of divine grace, and the power of the Spirit of God, who guides into all truth, savingly and spiritually: for this is to be understood of their being taught in the Gospel of Christ, and not in the law, as the Targum paraphrases it,

“all thy children shall learn in the law of the Lord.”

And that this prophecy refers to Gospel times, is clear from the citation and application of the first verse of it, to the church in the times of the apostles, (<sup><R02></sup>Galatians 4:27). The Jews themselves acknowledge the prophecy belongs to the times of the Messiah, to which they expressly apply <sup>f282</sup> the words in (<sup><S45></sup>Isaiah 54:5), “thy Maker is thy husband”, etc. And one of their modern commentators allows <sup>f283</sup>, that this very passage, “all thy children shall be taught of God”, refers, **dyt [ I** , “to the time to come”; that is, to the times of the Messiah: in this citation, those words, “thy children”, are left out, to show that the words are not to be restrained to the people of the Jews, as they might seem by that clause, and to whom the Jews would limit them: for so they say <sup>f284</sup>,

“they are truly taught of God from whom prophecy comes, which does not to all the world, but to Israel only, of whom it is written, “and all thy children are taught of God”.”

But our Lord, by these words, instructs us, and would have us observe, that all that the Father hath given him, whether Jews or Gentiles, of whom he had been speaking in the preceding verses, should be taught of God; and so taught, as to be drawn and brought to him, and believe in him, and have everlasting life: wherefore he infers from hence, that every man, whether a Jew or a Gentile, that is taught of God, will come to him in a spiritual way, and trust in him for eternal life and happiness, as follows:

*every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*; everyone that has heard the voice of the Father’s love, grace, and mercy in the Gospel, and has learned of him the way of peace, life, and salvation by Christ, under the influence of his grace, comes unto Christ; being encouraged by the declarations and promises of grace he has heard and learned, and ventures his soul on Christ, and commits it to him; trusting and relying on his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, for justification, pardon, atonement, acceptance with God, and eternal life.

**Ver. 46.** *Not that any man hath seen the Father*, etc.] This is said, lest it should be thought from the above words, that our Lord meant that men should be so taught of God, as that they should visibly see the Father, and vocally hear his voice, and be personally instructed by him; for his voice is not heard, nor his shape seen; (see <sup><E018></sup>John 1:18 5:37);

*save he which is of God*; who is begotten of him, and of the same nature and perfections with him, though a distinct person from him, and who was always with him, and lay in his bosom:

*he hath seen the Father*; has perfect knowledge of him, personal communion with him; has seen the perfections and glory of his person, and the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of his heart, his whole mind, and will, and all the grace, goodness, and mercy which is in him, and has declared it; (see <sup><4018></sup>John 1:18).

**Ver. 47.** *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This is a certain truth, and to be depended on:

*he that believeth on me hath everlasting life*; not only he may have it, as in (<sup><4164></sup>John 6:40), and shall have it, but he has it; he has it in Christ, his head and representative; he has it in the covenant of grace; he has it in faith and hope; he has a right unto it, and a meetness for it; he has the earnest of it, the grace and Spirit of God; and he has the beginning and foretastes of it in his soul, and shall certainly enjoy it.

**Ver. 48.** *I am that bread of life*.] (See Gill on "<sup><4165></sup>John 6:35").

**Ver. 49.** *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness*, etc.] All the while they were in the wilderness, for the space of forty years, till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan; this was their only food on which they lived, during their travels through the wilderness. It is observable, that Christ says, not "our fathers", but "your fathers"; for though Christ, as concerning the flesh, came of these fathers, yet in every sense they were rather theirs than his; because regard may be had to such of them more especially who ate the manna as common food, and not as spiritual meat, as typical of the Messiah, as others did; and whom these, their offspring, did very much resemble. Though perhaps the reason of the use of this phrase may be, because the Jews themselves had used it in (<sup><4166></sup>John 6:31), and Christ takes it up from them.

*And are dead*. This food, though it supported them in life for a while, could not preserve them from a corporeal death, and still less from an eternal one: for some of them not only died the first, but the second death.

**Ver. 50.** *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven*, etc.] Namely, that of which he had spoken (<sup><4167></sup>John 6:32,33,35,48), meaning himself:

*that a man may eat thereof, and not die*; for this heavenly bread is soul quickening, soul strengthening, and soul satisfying food; nor can there be any want where this is: eating of it is not to be understood corporeally, as these Capernaïtes took it; nor sacramentally, as if it was confined to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which was not, as yet, instituted; but more largely of eating and feeding upon Christ spiritually by faith: he is, by the believer, to be fed upon wholly, and only; all of him, and none but him, and that daily; for there is the same need of daily bread for our souls, as for our bodies; and also largely and freely, as such may do; and likewise joyfully, with gladness and singleness of heart: such as are Christ's beloved, and his friends, "may" eat; they have liberty, a hearty welcome to eat; and so have everyone that have a will, an inclination, a desire to eat; and all overcomers, whom Christ makes more than conquerors, (~~2100~~ Song of Solomon 5:1) (~~4100~~ Revelation 2:7,17 22:17); which liberty is owing to Christ's gracious invitation, and to his and the Father's free gift; and to the openness and ease of access of all sensible sinners to him: and the consequence and effect of such eating is, that it secures from dying, not from a corporeal death, to which men are appointed, and saints themselves are subject; though it is indeed abolished by Christ as a penal evil; nor shall his people continue under the power of it, but shall rise again to everlasting life: but then they are, through eating this bread, secured from a spiritual death; for though there may be a decline, as to the exercise of grace, and a want of liveliness, and they may fear they are ready to die, and conclude they are free among the dead, and that their strength and hope are perished; yet he that lives and believes in Christ, the resurrection, and the life, shall never die; and such are also secure from an eternal death, on them the second death shall have no power, nor shall they ever be hurt by it.

**Ver. 51.** *I am the living bread which came down from heaven*, etc.] This is the same with what is said in (~~4100~~ John 6:33,35,48), which is true of Christ, as he has life in him; and is the author and giver of life to others; and is of an heavenly original, and came from heaven to give life to men: and such is the virtue of this living and heavenly bread, that

*if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever*; not a natural, but a spiritual life; a life of sanctification, which is begun here, and will be perfected hereafter; and a life of glory, which will never end:

*and the bread that I will give is my flesh*; or “body”, as all the Oriental versions render it. Here our Lord explains more clearly and fully what he means, under the notion of bread; and which shows, that by bread he did not design merely his doctrine, but his flesh, his human nature; though not as abstracted from his deity, but as in union with it:

*which I will give for the life of the world*; and which he did by the offering up of his body, and making his soul, or giving himself an offering, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; which was done in the most free and voluntary manner, in the room and stead of his people, to procure eternal life for them, even for the whole world of his elect; whether among Jews or Gentiles; particularly the latter are here meant, in opposition to a notion of the Jews, that the world, or the Gentiles, would receive no benefit by the Messiah when he came; (see Gill on “~~John~~ John 3:16”).

**Ver. 52.** *The Jews therefore strove among themselves*, etc.] Fell to cavilling and disputing one among another; some understanding Christ, and others not; some being for him, and vindicated what he said; and others being against him, and who were the majority, objected,

*saying how can this man give us his flesh to eat?* which is to be understood, not physically, but as morally impossible and unlawful; since, with the Jews, it was not lawful to eat the flesh of any creature alive, and much less the flesh of man; for the Jews understood Christ of a corporeal eating of his flesh, being strangers to a figurative or spiritual eating of it by faith, in which sense he meant it.

**Ver. 53.** *Then Jesus said unto them*, etc.] The Jews, who were litigating this point among themselves:

*verily, verily, I say unto you*; or you may assure yourselves of the truth of what follows,

*except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*: by “the son of man”, Christ means himself; under which title he often speaks of himself; because it was a title of the Messiah under the Old Testament; and was expressive of the truth of his human nature, though as attended with weakness and infirmities. The “flesh” and “blood” of Christ do not design those distinct parts of his body; much less as separate from each other; nor the whole body of Christ, but his whole human nature; or Christ, as having united a perfect human nature to him, in order to shed his blood for the remission of sin, and to offer up his soul and body a sacrifice

for it: and the eating of these is not to be understood of a corporeal eating of them, as the Capernaites understood them; and since them the Papists, who affirm, that the bread and wine in the Lord's supper are transubstantiated into the very body and blood of Christ, and so eaten: but this is not to be understood of eating and drinking in the Lord's supper, which, as yet, was not instituted; and some, without participating of this, have spiritual life in them now, and will enjoy eternal life hereafter; and all that partake of that ordinance have not the one, nor shall have the other: and besides, having a principle of spiritual life in the soul, is previously necessary to a right eating of the supper of the Lord. These words, understood in this sense, once introduced infants to the Lord's supper; as misinterpretation of (~~John~~ John 3:5) brought in the baptism of them. But the words design a spiritual eating of Christ by faith. To eat the flesh, and drink the blood of Christ, is to believe that Christ is come in the flesh, and is truly and really man; that his flesh is given for the life of his people, and his blood is shed for their sins, and this with some view and application to themselves: it is to partake of, and enjoy the several blessings of grace procured by him, such as redemption, pardon, peace, justification, etc. and such a feeding upon him as is attended with growth in grace, and in the knowledge of him, and is daily to be repeated, as our corporeal food is, otherwise persons have no life in them: without this there, is no evidence of life in them; not such live as feed on sinful pleasures, or on their own righteousness; only such that believe in Christ are living souls; and without this there is nothing to support life; everything else that a man eats tends to death; but this is what will maintain and preserve a spiritual life; and without this there is no just expectation of eternal life; but where there is this, there is good reason to expect it, and such shall enjoy it: some copies and versions read, "ye shall not have life in you"; eternal life. Now, though the acts of eating and drinking do not give the right to eternal life, but the flesh, blood, and righteousness of Christ, which faith lays hold, and feeds upon; yet it is by faith the right is claimed; and between these acts of faith, and eternal life, there is an inseparable connection.

**Ver. 54.** *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, etc.] Spiritually by faith, as explained in the preceding verse:

*hath eternal life*; the principle of spiritual life, which is evidently implanted in him, as appears from his eating and drinking; and is a durable and lasting principle: grace is an incorruptible seed; every part of it is abiding and permanent; and it is itself the beginning, pledge, and earnest of everlasting



life, and is inseparably connected with it: moreover, such have eternal life itself, not only in Christ their head, but in themselves: they have a right unto it, and a meetness for it: and may be assured of it, as if they were personally possessed of it, from their election to it; the security of it in Christ; from the grace they have received, which is the beginning of glory; and the earnest of it in themselves:

*and I will raise him up at the last day*; to enjoy it in soul and body; (see Gill on “~~416~~John 6:39-40”).

**Ver. 55.** *For my flesh is meat indeed*, etc.] Not in a corporeal, but in a spiritual sense; and the same is said of his blood:

*and my blood is drink indeed*, etc. that is, they are both “truly” meat and drink, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions render it; or are “true” meat and drink, as the Arabic version: in opposition to what was typical meat and drink; as the manna in the wilderness, the water out of the rock, the flesh and wine at the passover, the meat and drink offerings under the law, or any other meats and drinks under that dispensation; and which, though not when Christ said these words, yet now are abolished, being unprofitable, and not to be fed upon. Moreover, these phrases may denote the reality, substance, and solidity of that spiritual food believers have in Christ, in opposition to the imaginary food of sensual sinners, who feed on ashes and bread of deceit; and to that of self-righteous persons, who spend their labour and money for, and live upon that which is not bread, even upon their works of righteousness; and to the superficial tastes of hypocrites and formal professors; and to the charge of enthusiasm; and even to the outward elements of bread, and wine, in the Lord’s supper, since instituted; and as it may be attended upon by persons destitute of the grace of God. And these words may also be expressive of the virtue, efficacy, and excellency of this food, it being soul quickening, nourishing, strengthening, satisfying, and delightful food, as well as spiritual and savoury; not to carnal persons, or outward professors, but to new born babes, and true believers; and which, by them, may be had, and to the full, and that in due season, even every day, and is what will abide for ever.

**Ver. 56.** *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, etc.] In the sense above given; (see Gill on “~~416~~John 6:53”);

*dwelleth in me, and I in him*. There is a mutual indwelling of Christ, and believers; Christ is the habitation, or dwelling place of his people: there is a

secret dwelling in Christ; so the elect of God dwelt in the heart, and in the hands, and arms of Christ from everlasting; and as members in their head in election grace; and representatively in him, as the Mediator of the covenant; and they secretly and safely dwelt in him, when all mankind fell in Adam; and when he was on the cross, in the grave, and now he is in heaven; all which is owing to his own love, his Father's gift, and to secret union to him. But there is an open dwelling in him in time, which is here meant: God's elect, as in their natural state, are without Christ, and lie open to the law and justice of God; the Spirit of God convinces them of this state, and directs them to flee to Christ, as a city of refuge; when they find him a stronghold, a place of defence, and a proper dwelling for them, where they resolve to abide, and do abide; and where they dwell safely, peaceably, comfortably, and pleasantly; and from which dwelling place they will never be turned out. Likewise, the saints are the habitation or dwelling place of Christ; he dwells not in their heads and to tongues, but in their hearts, and by faith; which is here expressed, by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; and which, though it is not the cause of Christ's dwelling here, yet is the means or instrument by which men receive him into their hearts, and retain him, and have communion with him; for he dwells in believers, not in such sense as he dwells in the world, by his omnipresence, and power; or in the human nature, by hypostatical union to it; but by his Spirit, and by faith, which is an instance of wonderful condescending grace, and is owing to union to him, and is expressive of communion with him, and is what will continue for ever.

**Ver. 57.** *As the living Father hath sent me*, etc.] Into the world, to be the Saviour of it; not by local motion, but by assumption of human nature; and not against his will, or as having superiority over him; but by joint consent and agreement: the first person in the Godhead is here styled, "the living Father"; not because he is the Father of spirits, of angels, and the souls of men; and the Father of all men by creation, and of saints by adoption; and the Father, or author of all mercies, spiritual and temporal; but because he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this character is peculiar to him: he is indeed the living God, and has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to others; but not in distinction from, and to the exclusion of the Son, or Spirit; but then none but he is the living Father, who ever did, and ever will, live as the Father of Christ:

*and I live by the Father*; which is to be understood of Christ, not as God, but as Mediator, and as man. As Mediator he was set up by his Father, as

the head of life to the elect; and was intrusted by him with a fulness of life for them; and was sent to open the way of life unto them, and bestow it on them. As man, he had his human life from God, and was preserved and upheld in it by him; and he laid it down at his command, and at his death committed his soul or spirit to him; and which was restored unto him, and is continued with him. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “for the Father”, or “because of him”; and may design either that near union and conjunction of Christ with him, by virtue of which they live the same life; or else his living to the glory and honour of his Father, as he did, and does:

*so he that eateth me*; in a spiritual sense, by faith. The phrase of eating the Messiah was a familiar one, and well known to the Jews; though these Capernaïtes cavilled at it, and called it an hard saying.

“Says Rab, the Israelites shall “eat” the years of the Messiah: (the gloss on it is, the fulness which the Israelites shall have in those days:) says R. Joseph, it is certainly so; but who shall “eat him?” shall Chellek and Billek (two judges in Sodom) **hl yl ka**, “eat him?” contrary to the words of R. Hillell, who says, Israel shall have no Messiah, for **whwl ka**, “they ate him” in the days of Hezekiah <sup>f285</sup>;”

that is, they enjoyed him then; for he thought that Hezekiah was the Messiah; but that was the doctor’s mistake. The Messiah now was, and to be enjoyed and eaten by faith in a spiritual sense, and everyone that does so,

*even he shall live by me*: such have their life from Christ; he is their food, on which they lived; and by him they are continued, upheld, and preserved in their spiritual life, and are by him brought to the life of glory: or they live “for”, or “because of” him, as the above versions render it; they derive their life from him, and because he lives, they live also; and they live to his glory, and will do so to all eternity.

**Ver. 58.** *This is that bread which came down from heaven*, etc.] That true bread, the bread of God, the bread of life, living bread; meaning himself, as in (<sup><416></sup>John 6:32,33,35,48,50,51);

*not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead*: this is bread of a quite different nature from that; that was only typical bread, this true; that was

the bread of angels, but this is the bread of God; that came but from the air, this from the third heaven; that men ate of, and died; but whoever eats of this, lives for ever; (see <sup><464></sup>John 6:49); as follows:

*he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever*; (see Gill on “<sup><465></sup>John 6:51”).

**Ver. 59.** *These things said he in the synagogue*, etc.] Openly and publicly, in the place of divine worship, where the Jews resorted for that purpose:

*as he taught in Capernaum*; his own city, and where there was a synagogue, into which he often went and taught his doctrines, and wrought miracles; (see <sup><463></sup>Matthew 3:13 8:5,14 9:1,2 12:9).

**Ver. 60.** *Many therefore of his disciples*, etc.] Not of the twelve, nor of the seventy, but of the multitude of the disciples, who followed him from place to place, attended on his ministry, and might be baptized in his name; (see <sup><404></sup>John 4:1);

*when they had heard [this]*; that his flesh and blood were truly and really meat and drink, and that none had life in them, or should have eternal life, but such as eat and drink the same:

*said, this is an hard saying*; or it is to be objected to; so *ayçq*, “an hard thing”, the word here used in the Syriac version, and *yl [awh hçq*, “it is to me a hard thing”, are phrases used to express an objection in the Talmudic writings, where they are often met with: or it is difficult to be understood and received; so *hçqh rbdh*, “an hard saying”, or “an hard cause”, is a cause difficult to be tried and determined, (<sup><1233></sup>Exodus 18:26), and is used of that which seems incredible and absurd, and is surprising and unaccountable: so it is said <sup>f286</sup>, that

“it happened to a certain woman, that she came before R. Abika: she said to him, I have seen a spot; he said to her, perhaps there is a wound in thee; she answered him, yes, and it is healed; he replied, perhaps it may be opened, and the blood brought out; she answered him, yes; and he pronounced her clean. R. Abika saw his disciples look upon one another; and he said unto them, *hçq rbdh hm*, “is this an hard saying with you?””

is it a difficult thing with you? does it seem absurd to you? or are you surprised at it? anything difficult, or which seems irreconcilable, is so

called: so the slaying the passover between the two evenings is called by Aben Ezra, in (<sup>1216</sup>Exodus 12:6), **hçq hl m**, “an hard saying”. In like sense the phrase is used here; and the allusion may be to food that is hard of digestion, since Christ had been speaking of himself under the metaphors of bread and meat. As some of the doctrines of Christ are comparable to milk, which is easy of digestion; others are like to strong meat, which belongs to those of full age, and cannot be digested by children, by babes in Christ, and much less be received, ate, and digested, with ease and pleasure, by carnal minds; who therefore say, as these Capernaïtes did,

*who can hear it?* this saying, or doctrine, concerning eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ; or “him” Christ, who delivered this doctrine: such preaching, and such a preacher, are intolerable; there is no hearing, nor bearing them: hence we afterwards read, that these withdrew from the ministry of Christ, (<sup>466</sup>John 6:66).

**Ver. 61.** *When Jesus knew in himself*, etc.] And of himself, without any intelligence from others, or hearing what was said, being the omniscient God:

*that his disciples murmured at it;* at the doctrine he had delivered, looking upon it as absurd, incredible, and contrary to sense and reason:

*he said unto them, does this offend you?* or trouble you? cannot you get over this? cannot you understand it? or account for it? if not, how will you be able to digest some other things, or reconcile them to your minds, which are less known, and more unexpected, and will appear at first sight more surprising?

**Ver. 62.** *[What] and if ye shall see the son of man*, etc.] Meaning himself then in a state of humiliation, and was taken for a mere man, though the true Messiah, and Son of God:

*ascend up where he was before?* for Christ was, he existed before his incarnation, and he was in heaven before; not in his human nature, but as the word and Son of God: and he intimates, that when he had done his work, and the will of his Father, for which he came down from heaven, by the assumption of the human nature, he should ascend up thither again; and which would be seen, as it was, by his apostles; and which would prove that he came down from heaven, as he had asserted; (see <sup>400</sup>Ephesians 4:9,10); and that his flesh and blood were not to be eaten in a corporeal

sense; in which sense they understood him: and he hereby suggests, that if it was difficult to receive, and hard to be understood, and was surprising and incredible, that he should come down from heaven, as bread, to be eat and fed upon; it would be much more so to them to be told, that he who was in so mean and lowly a form, should ascend up into heaven.

**Ver. 63.** *It is the Spirit that quickeneth*, etc.] It is the spirit of man that quickens him; or which being breathed into him, he becomes a living soul; for the body, without the spirit, is dead; it is a lifeless lump: and it is the Spirit of God that quickens dead sinners, by entering into them as the spirit of life, and causing them to live: and it is spiritual eating, or eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense, which quickens, refreshes, and comforts the minds of believers; it is that by, and on which they live, and by which their spiritual strength is renewed: unless, by spirit, is meant the divine nature of Christ, by which he was quickened and raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and was declared to be the Son of God with power:

*the flesh profiteth nothing*; the human nature of Christ, though profitable, as in union with the Son of God, to be given for the life of his people, and to be an offering, and a sacrifice for their sins, yet not as alone, or as abstracted from the divine nature; nor would his flesh and blood, corporeally eaten, could, or should it be done, be of any avail to eternal life; nor is any other flesh, literally understood, profitable of itself for life; for man lives not by bread, or meat, or flesh alone, but by the word and blessing of God upon it, and along with it; nor flesh, in a figurative sense, as creature acts and performances, self-righteousness, obedience to the ceremonial law, carnal descent, and birth privileges:

*the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life*; the doctrines which Christ had then been delivering concerning himself, his flesh and blood, being spiritually understood, are the means of quickening souls. The Gospel, and the truths of it, which are the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, are the means of conveying the Spirit of God, as a spirit of illumination and sanctification, into the hearts of men, and of quickening sinners dead in trespasses and sins: the Gospel is the Spirit that giveth life, and is the savour of life unto life, when it comes not in word only, or in the bare ministry of it, but with the energy of the Holy Ghost, and the power of divine grace.

**Ver. 64.** *But there are some of you that believe not*, etc.] Notwithstanding the ministry they sat under, and the words they heard; for though they professed to believe in Jesus, as the Messiah, yet they did not truly believe in him; their faith was not a living faith, or of a spiritual kind, but a mere historical and temporary one, and was feigned and hypocritical:

*for Jesus knew from the beginning*; of his ministry, and of their profession of him, being God omniscient, and the searcher of hearts:

*who they were that believed not*; i.e. in him, as the Arabic version reads: notwithstanding their following him, and professing to believe in him, and the great outward respect and esteem they showed to him, he could see through all those masks they put on, and knew they had no true faith of him in them; and the same knowledge he has of every professor of his name: he knows whether their faith is of the right kind or not; whether they have obtained the like precious faith with God's elect; or whether their profession is only a verbal one. In some copies it is read, "who they were that believed"; who were true believers, as well as who were hypocrites.

*And who should betray him*: he not only knew how it was with the multitude of the disciples that professed love to him, and faith in him; but he also particularly knew the case of the twelve apostles, and that one of them should betray him, and who he was. This was determined in the decrees of God, and was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and was predicted by Christ; and the person was pointed at by him before it was done.

**Ver. 65.** *And he said, therefore said I unto you*, etc.] Referring to (~~4164~~ John 6:44), where the substance of what is here said, is there delivered; though the Ethiopic version reads, therefore I say unto you, what follows:

*that no man can come to me, except it be given him of my Father*; which is the same, as to be drawn by the Father; for faith in Christ is the gift of God, and coming to him, is owing to efficacious grace, and is not the produce of man's power and freewill; (see Gill on "~~4164~~ John 6:44").

**Ver. 66.** *From that [time] many of his disciples went back*, etc.] Not any of the twelve apostles, for they are distinguished from these in the next verse; nor any of the seventy disciples, for their names were written in heaven, and could not apostatize totally and finally, as these did; but some of the multitude of the disciples, who followed Christ, heard him, and professed to believe in him, and were baptized in his name, but were not

true disciples, only nominal ones: they had never heard and learned of the Father, otherwise they would have known what it was to come to Christ, as the Father's gift, and under the drawings of his grace; and would not have been offended at the words of our Lord, just now spoken by him, concerning that sort of coming to him: but from the time he spoke those words; "because of this word", as the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it; they withdrew themselves from his ministry, they dropped their profession of faith in him, and relinquished him as a Saviour and Redeemer: for finding that he would not be made king, nor set up for a temporal redeemer; and talking of himself as the bread of life, and of coming to him, in a sense they did not understand; they turned their backs on him; and as the words may be literally read, "returned to the things that were behind"; to the world, and to their old companions, to Satan and their own hearts lusts; like the dog to its vomit, and the swine to its wallowing in the mire: their true picture is drawn, in the parable of the unclean spirit going out of the man, and returning, (<sup>412B</sup> Matthew 12:43). And they returned to their quondam teachers, the Scribes and Pharisees, and to the law of works, and to seek for righteousness by it; setting up their own righteousness, and not submitting to the righteousness of Christ; and thus to look back and draw back, is a sad case indeed:

*and walked no more with him*; never returned to him more, or went with him from place to place as before: never more attended on his ministry, or had any intimacy and fellowship with him: and so it commonly is with apostates from the profession of Christ; they seldom or ever return, or are recovered; it is difficult, if not impossible, which is sometimes the case, to renew them again to repentance.

**Ver. 67.** *Then said Jesus unto the twelve*, etc.] "To his own twelve", as the Persic version reads; that is, to his twelve apostles, whom he had chosen to that office: Christ takes no notice of those that went away from him, he showed no concern about them; he knew what they were, that the truth of grace was not in them, and that they did not belong to him, and therefore was not uneasy about their departure; but turns himself to his apostles, whom he dearly loved, and in a very tender manner thus said to them,

*will ye also go away?* this he said, not as ignorant of what they were, or of what they would do in this case; he knew full well their faith in him, their love to him, and esteem of him, and close attachment to him, at least in eleven of then; nor did he say this, as having any fears or jealousies



concerning them, by observing any thing in their countenances or gestures, which looked like a departure from him; but it was said out of a tender regard and strong affection for them: and it is as if he should have said, as for these men that have walked with me for some time, and have now turned their backs upon me, it gives me no concern; but should you, my dear friends and companions, go also, it would give me, as man, real pain and great uneasiness: or he might say this to show, that as they were not pressed into his service, but willingly followed him, and became his disciples, being made a willing people by him, in the day of his power on them; so they willingly continued with him, and abode by him; as also to strengthen their faith in him, and cause them the more to cleave to him, with full purpose of heart, when others left him; as well as to draw out from them expressions of their regard for him, and faith in him, which end was answered.

**Ver. 68.** *Then Simon Peter answered him,* etc.] Who was strong in the faith of Christ, and full of zeal for him, and love to him; and who was the mouth of the apostles, and always forward to speak out of the abundance and sincerity of his heart, in their name; believing, that they all of them, for he had now no suspicion of Judas, no more than of the rest, had the same faith in Christ, love to him, and esteem of him, as he himself had; wherefore out of a good opinion of them, and love to Christ, he thus addressed him:

*Lord;* or “my Lord”; as the Syriac version renders it; which was either a title of respect, and the same with “Sir” with us; or else, as acknowledging the dominion and authority of Christ, as Lord of all, and especially of the saints, and as claiming his interest in him; and which carries in it a reason, why he should abide by him:

*to whom shall we go?* as a teacher, whose ministry we can attend upon, to greater profit and advantage? not to the Scribes and Pharisees, whose leaven, or doctrine, Christ had bid them beware of; who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and were blind leaders of the blind; nor to John the Baptist, who had declared he was not the Messiah; but had pointed him out to them in his person, as the son of God; and in his office as the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of men; and perhaps, he might not be now living; and if he was, he would have encouraged them not to follow him, but abide with their master; so that there was no other, that was “better”, as Nonnus expresses it, that they could go unto; and

therefore it would be folly and madness in them to leave him: and as it was with Peter and the rest of the disciples, so it is with all sensible sinners, and true believers, who see there is no other to go to for life and salvation, but Christ; not to the law of Moses, which accuses, curses, and condemns, and by which there is neither life nor righteousness; nor to any creature, or creature performance, for there is a curse on him that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm; nor to their own righteousness, which is impure and imperfect, and cannot justify before God, nor answer for them in a time to come; nor to their tears of repentance, which will not satisfy the law, atone for sins, or wash them away; nor to carnal descent, birth privileges, a religious education, sobriety, and civility, to trust to which, is to have confidence in the flesh, which will be of no avail; nor to ceremonial services, or moral duties, or even evangelical ordinances, neither of which can take away sin. There is no other Saviour, but Christ, to look to; no other Mediator between God and man, to make use of; no other physician of value, for diseased and sin sick souls to apply unto; no other fountain but his blood, for polluted souls to wash in, and be cleansed; no other city of refuge, or strong hold, for souls sensible of danger, to flee unto and be safe; no other to come to as the bread of life, where hungry souls may be fed; no other place of rest, for those that are weary and heavy laden; nor is there any other, where there is plenty of all grace, and security from every enemy, as in him: and therefore, to whom can they have recourse, but unto him? and that for the following reason,

*thou hast the words of eternal life*: meaning, either the promises of eternal life, which were made before the world began, and were put into Christ's hands, for his people, and are yea and amen in him; or the doctrines of eternal life; for so the Gospel, and the truths of it, are called, (~~HEB~~ Acts 5:20); and that because the Gospel brings life and immortality to light, gives an account of eternal life; of the nature of it, that it is a glorious life, a life free from all the sorrows of the present one; a life of pleasure, and of perfect knowledge and holiness, and which will last for ever: and because it points out the way to it, that it is not by the works of the law, but by the grace of God; that it is his free gift, through Christ; and that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, or the true way to eternal life: and because it is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving true believers, and of nourishing them up unto everlasting life: or this phrase may design the power and authority which Christ has, to dispose of, and dispense eternal life; for he has the firing itself in his hands, and a power to give it to as

many as the father has given him; and to them he does give it: and each of these senses carry in them a reason why souls should go to Christ, and to him only, for life and salvation.

**Ver. 69.** *And we believe and are sure*, etc.] Or know of a certainty: they believed upon the first call of them by Christ, and their following of him, that he was the true Messiah; and they came to an assurance of it, by the miracles he wrought, and by the doctrines which he taught; their faith, how weak soever it might be at first, rose up to a full assurance of faith, and of understanding; there was a reality and a certainty in it, as there is in all true faith, with respect to the object, though not always with respect to interest in it; which was the case here, as appears by what follows:

*that thou art that Christ*; or Messiah, that was promised by God of old, spoken of by the prophets, and expected by the Jews; that anointed prophet Moses had spoken of, that should arise out of Israel, like unto him that anointed priest, who, according to the oath of God, was to be priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek; and that anointed King, whom God has set over his holy hill of Zion:

*the son of the living God*; this they knew, and were sure of, both by John's testimony, and by the father's voice from heaven; which three of them heard, at Christ's transfiguration on the mount: God the father is called "the living God"; though the Vulgate Latin version leaves out the word "living"; not to distinguish him from his son; for he also is the living God; and is so called, (<sup>NRD</sup>Hebrews 3:12), but to distinguish him from the idols of the Gentiles, who have no life nor breath in them: and Christ is called the son of the living God, as he is a divine person, as he is truly God; and to show that he has the same life his father has; being a partaker of the same nature, and divine perfections: and this is another reason why sensible souls will go to Christ, and no other; because he is the Messiah, the Saviour, and Redeemer, and an able one; and because he is God, and there is none else.

**Ver. 70.** *Jesus answered them*, etc.] The disciples, taking Peter's answer to his question, as delivered in the name of them all, and as expressing their mind and sense:

*have not I chosen you twelve*; not to grace and glory, to holiness and happiness; though this was true of eleven of them, but to be apostles:

*and one of you is a devil?* or like to one, is a deceiver, a liar, and a murderer, as the devil is from the beginning; all which Judas was, and appeared to be, in the betraying of his master. The Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read, “is Satan”; which name, if given to Peter, as it once was on a certain occasion, (~~41623~~ Matthew 16:23), might very well be given to Judas; who, notwithstanding his profession of faith in Christ, was in the hands and kingdom of Satan, and under his influence and power: and this our Lord said, partly that they might not too much presume upon their faith and love, and steady attachment, and be over confident of their standing; and partly, to prepare them for the apostasy of one from among them.

**Ver. 71.** *He spake of Judas Iscariot, [the son] of Simon,* etc.] These are the words of the evangelist, pointing out the person Christ intended, lest any other should be suspected:

*for he it was that should betray him:* as it was determined and foretold, and which Christ knew full well, and therefore said the above words:

*being one of the twelve;* apostles, whom Christ had chosen, and which was an aggravation of his crime.