



HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

**7 miraculous signs in
Johns Gospel**

Work Book

Johns 7 signs

Work Book

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Nigel Barge, January 2019

Scripture Quotations taken from

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Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3rd edition, published by Inter Varsity Press
The *New Bible Commentary* 21st century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP

www.blueletterbible.org

Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading



LOOK – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
 - a) What questions does it raise -
Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?
 - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
 - a) the surrounding text
 - b) the Book of the Bible
 - c) the whole Bible
 - d) the place in the Bible Story



LEARN – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



LISTEN – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



LIVE – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God,
(Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace*
 - c) Jesus / his salvation**
- 2) What should I do?

* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

** The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27)

The Signs in John's Gospel

This booklet looks at the seven miraculous signs in the first twelve chapters of John's Gospel. Each event has been selected by John to demonstrate a specific aspect of the identity of Jesus as 'the Christ, the Son of God'. Each sign is followed by teaching that substantiates it.

As we read, we will be asking –

What does this show us about WHO Jesus is
and WHAT he did on our behalf?

INTRODUCTION

A basic question that many ask is, “If there is a God – can I know Him and does He communicate with mankind?” The Christian response to this is, “yes - God has spoken in the words of the Bible.” The Bible is the supreme authority in all we think, say or do. Furthermore it is the principal means he has given us to discern what he is saying to us today. To ‘listen’ to him, John’s Gospel is a great place to start.

This booklet presupposes no background knowledge of the Bible. It is intended to encourage everyone to read the Bible carefully for themselves, expecting God to speak to them. It intends to place the reader in the position of the original hearers as far as background knowledge is concerned (geographical, historical, religious, social, etc.)

It provides	pages
a) Background information about the book and its author.	1-4,6
b) Explanatory notes about contemporary customs and religious words whose meaning is not self evident in the text.	p 8,12, 16 etc
c) Some help in reading this particular type of Bible literature.	p5
d) A model for approaching the Bible to ‘Hear the Word of God’.	p7
e) How to share your reading of the Word of God with others.	p37

The Author

‘John’ and his older brother James were sons of Zebedee. They were fishermen and partners of Simon Peter and his brother Andrew (Luke 5:10). Three facts show John was close to Jesus:

- He was not only one of Jesus’ twelve disciples (Mark 3:17),
- but also part of the group of three, including his brother James and Peter, with whom Jesus shared most intimately – the raising of Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5:37), the transfiguration (Mark 9:2) and Gethsemane (Mark 14:33).
- John never mentions himself by name, but always as ‘the one whom Jesus loved’, i.e. Jesus’ best friend (13:23; 21:7; 21:20)

He also wrote the three ‘Letters of John’ and the book of ‘Revelation’.

The Date

It is thought John wrote his gospel around 90 AD.

The relationship with the other Gospels.

This is the 4th account of the Gospel or ‘good news’ about Jesus. It differs from Matthew, Mark and Luke (known as the Synoptic gospels) which are similar to each other, with much material in common.

Jesus lived in Galilee for thirty years before entering on a three-year ministry which began in Galilee and ended in Jerusalem. The other Gospels include accounts of his birth, his early ministry in Galilee and his teaching as stories with a lesson – parables. John, however, concentrates on Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem, devoting fully half his Gospel to the last week of His life.

‘The first three narrate the life and death of Jesus more fully, whereas John emphasises the doctrine in which Christ’s office and the power of his death and resurrection are explained.... [All four writers] had the object to show Christ; the first three exhibit his body, but John shows his soul.’ (John Calvin)

Often John deals with the same issues but comes at them from a different angle, eg

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Ritual cleansing | (John 2: 1-11 - Mark 7: 1-22) |
| b) Communion | (John 6:48-59 - Mark 14:22-24) |
| c) Embracing His death | (John 11:33-50 - Mark 14:32-46) |

The style of John’s Gospel

1. Theological, not chronological

John’s timing of events varies in some cases from those in the other Gospels. The reason for this is that, rather than simply recounting facts and telling a story as a sequence of events, John chooses his order and arranges his Gospel to convey a message.

2. Concise, not verbose.

“Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (21:25)

He has ‘boiled down’ into his Gospel enough events to fill all the books in all the world. That is some précis! It means every single word counts!

The structure of John's Gospel.

1. John 1:1-18 'The prologue'

This is the introduction to the Gospel in which John highlights themes that he will deal with later in the Gospel. These include

The Word of God (v1), Creation (3), Life (4), Light and darkness (4,5), Faith (10-13), The Glory of God (14), Law and grace (18).

2. John 2:1 – 11:57 7 signs and teachings

- a. Water to wine (2:1-11)
- b. Healing the official's son (4:43-54)
- c. Healing the lame man (5:1-18)
- d. Feeding the 5000 (6:1-15)
- e. Calming the storm (6:16-21)
- f. Healing the blind man (9:1-41)
- g. Raising Lazarus (11:1-43)

3. John 12:1 – 21:25 The passion of Jesus

This centres on the last week of his life, where Jesus fulfils his mission as the 'Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world' (1:29) thus bringing life (3:16). He does this in his death and resurrection which is his glorification (17:1)

The Purpose of John's Gospel

"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:30,31)

This is not therefore meant to be simply a biography. John carefully selects events to convey a message. In the first instance it is written for those who do not believe. He hopes his readers will:

- a. HEAR the FACTS – the miraculous signs
- b. BELIEVE the MESSAGE – Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God
- c. RECEIVE the PROMISE - Life in His Name.

He lays out *facts* about Jesus because that is what people need as a basis for reaching a conclusion about who Jesus *is*. Modern sceptics allege that faith is 'a leap into the dark'. John, on the contrary, sees faith as 'a step into the light'! (John 1:8; 3:19-21; 8:12). "The only thing you are liable to get from leaping into the dark is a broken ankle!" (Dick Lucas)

The Message of John's Gospel

In a nutshell: "... Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God..." (John 20:31)

1. 'Jesus'

Jesus means 'saviour'. He was given this name because he 'would save his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21); or, as John puts it, he is 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World' (John 1:29).

2. 'Christ'

Christ or Messiah means 'the anointed one' (ie the King). The Jews awaited a Saviour and King. Jesus arrived in Jerusalem as such (Matthew 21:1-9). He admitted to Pilate he was King (18:37). He was crucified as the 'King of the Jews' for all the world to see. (19:19).

3. 'Son of God'

John presents Jesus as God, made flesh, the incarnate Word, who is God living amongst us (John 1:1,14). He emphasises this by saying he is

- a) The Creator of all things (1:3)
- b) The Source of Glory (1:14; 12:41; 17:5)
- c) The equal of God (5:18; 19:7)
- d) The 'I AM' (8:58)

The Jews and John's Gospel

Jesus was a Jew; he was one of the 'Ioudaioi'; he was of the Tribe of Judah. In fact he was crucified as 'the King of the Jews' (19:19). John's Gospel describes how 'he came to that which was his own (the world he created, v10), but his own (people, the Jews) did not receive him" (1:11) Although most Jews rejected him, some did believe (8:31; 12:11). To them 'he gave the right to become children of God' (1:12)

Throughout the account it is 'the Jews' who are stubborn in their unbelief and who ultimately call for his execution. In doing this they insisted, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be *the* Son of God." (19:7)

John's intention, however, is not to blame and dismiss the Jews. On the contrary, it is to demonstrate to them that Jesus is *their* 'Christ'. Through themes and rituals of Judaism, Jesus is presented in person as the true Israel of God, fulfilling all God's promises and the hopes of his people.

At the heart of the Gospel is a discourse with the Jews (8:31-58). In this Jesus announces that he is greater than Abraham (53); he uses 'I AM' (58) the holy name for God, of himself; and he claims that only those who believe in Him are the genuine sons of Abraham (41,42).

So it is a Gospel first to the Jews; but it is also to the Gentiles (Romans 1:16). The love of God is thus demonstrated for the whole world. (3:16)

Reading ‘Narrative’ in the Bible

Whatever we read, we adjust to its style, sometimes without noticing. We don’t approach a newspaper, a car manual, a cookery book, a poem, a scientific report and a Shakespeare play in the same way. We take into account the purpose for which it was written and the way in which the writer uses words. Since the Bible also has many styles – law, poetry, history, wisdom, prophecy, letters and visions – we need to allow for the style if we are to discern what God is saying.

John’s Gospel is mainly ‘Narrative’. To approach it correctly, keep in mind the following principles:

1) In general – it is *God’s* story

The whole Bible recounts the story of God’s dealings with humankind. After creation and ‘the fall’ in Genesis, the rest describes how he works out his unfolding plan to rescue humankind in Jesus. The Old Testament (OT) prepares for the coming and the death of Jesus. The New Testament (NT) describes the event and looks forwards to his return at the end of time. It is *all* about God. It follows therefore that:

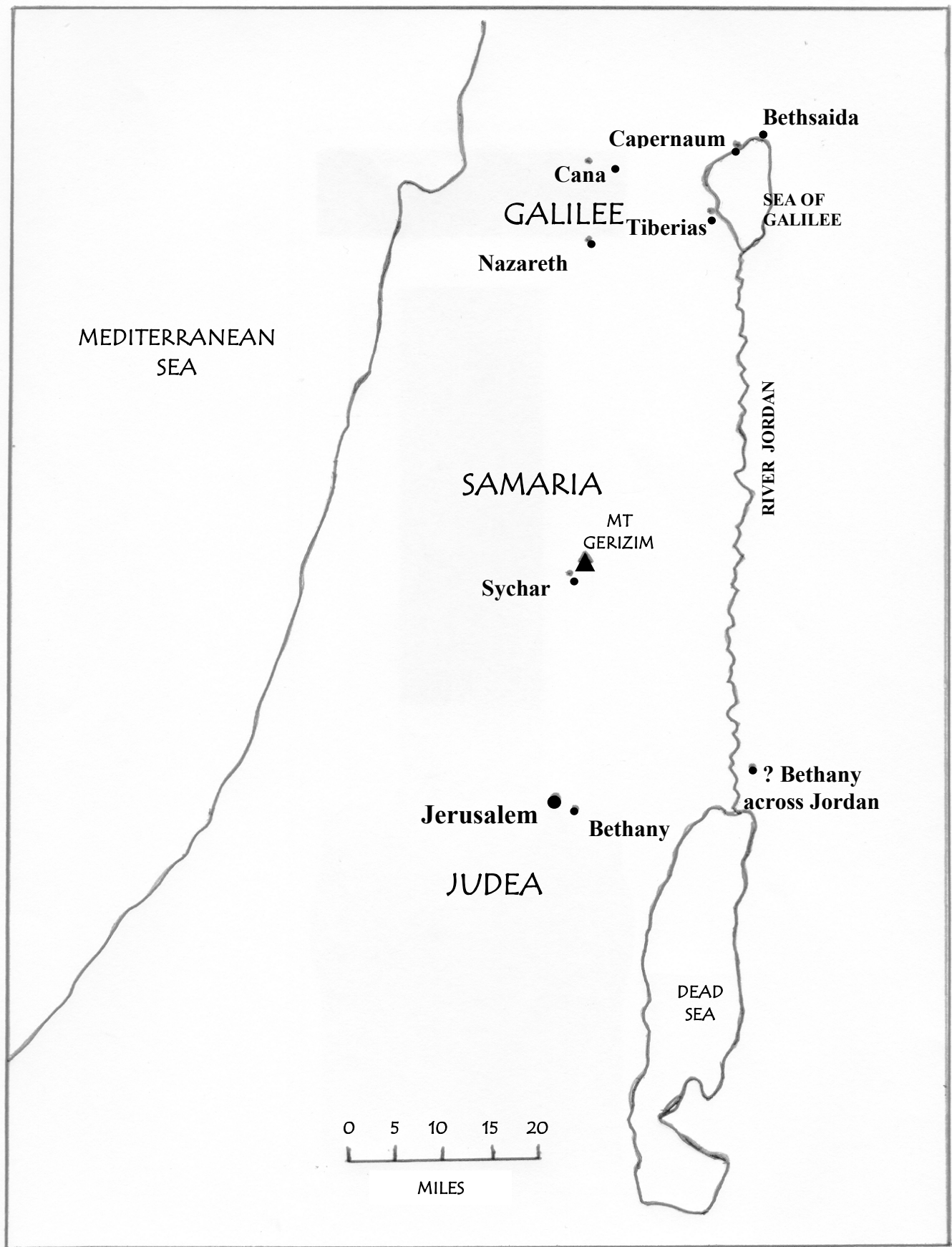
- a) Every part relates to Him (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).
So as we read, we should be asking – ‘what does this show about God? What is He doing?’
- b) Everything is relevant.
In a film every scene plays some part in the overall story. Often you are shown things in the early stages that make no sense until later. It’s the same in the Bible. So, as we read narrative we should be asking ‘what relevance has this part to the main story?’

2) In particular – ‘follow the camera angle’

A film director focuses our attention on particular shots to tell ‘his story’. In the same way the narrator is selective about what he tells us. He leaves out much general detail, only giving us what is relevant to what he is trying to convey.

As we read we should therefore be asking the question – why is he telling me this, and in this particular way?

This sketch map shows places relevant to John's Gospel, chapters 1-12



Who can turn forgive sin?

Background and Word List

This incident takes place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, a few days after he has chosen his twelve 'disciples' (particular followers). Cana is about 10 miles north of Nazareth, his home town.

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | <i>Cana</i> | A village in the uplands west of the Sea of Galilee |
| | <i>Galilee</i> | Northern region around the Sea of Galilee, also called Sea of Tiberias and Lake Chinnareth. River Jordan flows in at north end and out at south. Famous for fishing trade |
| | <i>wedding</i> | Marriage feast usually took place at the groom's house. Many relatives and friends attended. |
| 6 | <i>6 jars</i> | One short of 7, the perfect number for Jews |
| | <i>ceremonial washing</i> | Jewish cleansing ritual see Mark 7:3-4,14-23 |
| 8 | <i>master of the banquet</i> | A steward or family friend who supervised the feast; c.f. our Master of Ceremonies or Head Waiter |
| 11 | <i>sign</i> | Greek ' <i>semeion</i> ': an act conveying a recognizable meaning |
| | <i>glory</i> | Greek ' <i>doxa</i> ': worthiness, honour; in particular - the presence and character of God in Jesus. |

Bible Connections

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>wedding as symbol of joy of God's reign</i> | Mark 2:18ff; Matt 22:1ff |
| | <i>Cana was the home of Nathaniel, one of the disciples</i> | 1:49, 21:1 |
| | <i>the Wedding of Jesus</i> | Revelation 19:7; Ephesians 5:31-32 |
| 2 | <i>Jesus invited to dine</i> | Revelation 3:20 |
| 3 | <i>compare widow of Zarephath's oil and flour</i> | 1 Kings 17:12-16 |
| | <i>Jesus' mother at end of his ministry</i> | John 19:25 |
| 4 | <i>Jesus' time</i> | see John 7:6-8, 17:1 Matthew 26:18 |
| 5 | <i>compare Pharaoh's instructions to his people</i> | Genesis 41:55 |
| 10 | <i>wine and forgiveness</i> | Matthew 26:27 |
| 11 | <i>miraculous signs</i> | see also 2:23 |
| | <i>his glory</i> | see 1:14; Exodus 33:18-23 |
| | <i>put their faith in him</i> | see Exodus 14:31 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Who heals the sick?

Background and Word List

Shortly after the miracle at Cana, Jesus and his disciples went south to Jerusalem for the Passover. While there, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing (John 2:23). On his way back north he stopped in Samaria. This was surprising, for Jews normally regarded Samaritans as renegade Jews and steered well clear of them. While there he met the woman at the well at Sychar (John 4:4-42). This ancient well had been used by Jacob, grandson of Abraham.

Now, after two days, he returns to Galilee, his home area.

- 44 *prophet has no honour in his own country* An ancient proverb, cf our “familiarity breeds contempt”
- 45 *Passover feast* Annual celebration commemorating the Jews’ deliverance from Egypt - see Exodus 12
- 46 *royal official* at the court of Herod Antipas, the tetrach of Galilee who was an Idumean, a descendant of Esau, not of the people of Israel
- Capernaum* village on NW shore of the Sea of Galilee, about 15 miles from Cana as crow flies over hilly country
- 52 *seventh hour* ie about 1pm. The day ran from dawn to dusk, roughly 6am to 6pm.
- 53 *household* the term included family, and any dependants, servants or slaves.

Bible Connections

- 50 *took Jesus at his word* - see also *Centurion and his servant* Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10
- 53 *all his household believed* - see also *Cornelius* Acts 11:14 and the *Philippian jailer* Acts 16:31

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Who is above the law?

Background and word list

Some time later, Jesus is in Jerusalem for one of the Jewish feasts

- 2 *Sheep Gate* One of the gates in walls of Jerusalem
- Aramaic* Language spoken by Jesus
- Bethesda* an Aramaic name, may mean 'House of mercy'
- 5 colonnades* Five rows of columns, supporting a roof. Same number as the books of the Law (also known as the Pentateuch i.e. the first 5 books of Bible)
- 4 *some manuscripts have:* 'and they waited for the moving of the waters. From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir the waters. The first one into the pool after each disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had.'
- 7 *Water is stirred* a subterranean stream every now and then bubbled up and disturbed the waters of the pool
- 9 *Sabbath* seventh day, Jewish day of rest, Exodus 20:8
- 14 *Temple* Centre for worship in Jerusalem

Bible Connections

- 8 *Get up and walk* - Compare with the paralytic man - Mark 2:1-12
- 10 *law forbids you to carry your mat* - 'The Jews had added 39 different classifications of 'work' to the original commandment, eg carrying a burden (based on an interpretation of Nehemiah 13:15-22; Jeremiah 17:21)
- 13 *the man had no idea who Jesus was* – Jesus was well known by now (see John 2:23) but was incognito when healing the man.

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Who can feed the hungry?

Background and Word List

From Capernaum to the East side of the Sea of Galilee was about 4 miles by boat. The crowds went round the north of the lake by land (River Jordan flows into sea at north; near the fords of the Jordan was the village of Bethsaida), a journey of about 9 miles.

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---|
| 3 | <i>sat down</i> | Posture in which rabbis taught |
| 4 | <i>Passover</i> | The annual celebration when Jews remembered their deliverance from Egypt, led by Moses. It was one of the main festivals, which the people were commanded to celebrate in Jerusalem (Exodus 23:14-17; Deut 16:16) |
| 5 | <i>Philip</i> | One of the 12 disciples, from Bethsaida, as were Peter and Andrew (1:44) |
| 9 | <i>Barley loaves</i> | Small loaves of the cheapest bread, food of the poor |
| | <i>Small fish</i> | Dried or pickled sardine-like fish |
| 10 | <i>5,000 men</i> | Jewish method counted men only, so there would have been many women and children as well (Matthew 14:21) |
| | <i>sit down</i> | Different Greek word from v3. This one indicates reclining, ie the posture for eating. |

Bible Connections

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|----|--------------------------|--|
| 3 | <i>mountainside</i> | Jesus may have chosen this spot deliberately. People were expecting the Messiah to provide a marvellous feast for his people - see Isaiah 25:6-8 |
| 11 | <i>Bread from heaven</i> | Numbers 11, Psalm 78:21-25
Man does not live by bread alone - Deuteronomy 8:3 Other miraculous provision: 2 Kings 4:1-7, 42-44 |
| 14 | <i>Prophet</i> | The Jews were expecting someone to come, as Moses had promised them - see Deut 18:15,18; John 2:11, Matthew 11:3; 21:11 |
| 15 | <i>King</i> | they did not understand his Kingship - see John 18:36 |

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Who controls nature?

Background information and Word List

Matthew tells us that Jesus sent the disciples on ahead of him by boat, while he himself went up the mountain again to pray. The Sea of Galilee is a land-locked lake 700 feet below sea-level, surrounded by mountains; that leaves it prone to atmospheric down-draughts and cross winds, provoking sudden and severe storms.

This same incident is also recorded in Matt 14:22-36 and Mark 6:45-56

On an earlier occasion, Jesus *calmed* a storm on this lake: - see Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

- | | | |
|-------|------------------|--|
| 16,25 | <i>Capernaum</i> | village on NW shore of the Sea of Galilee |
| 23 | <i>Tiberias</i> | Town on the western shore of Sea of Galilee. Built about AD 20 by Herod Antipas and named after the emperor Tiberius. Many non-Israelites lived there. |

Bible Connections

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------------|
| 19 | <i>walking on the water</i> | see also Job 9:8 |
| 21 | <i>c.f. calming storm</i> | see also Psalm 107:23-32, esp v 29 |
| | <i>c.f. the parting of the Red Sea (Sea of Reeds)</i> | Exodus 14 |

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Sign 6

John 9:1-41

Who makes the blind see?

Background information and Word List

Jesus has been in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles and has been teaching in the Temple. As a result of his claims about himself the Jews pick up stones, ready to throw at him to kill him for claiming to be God; but he slips away from the Temple grounds

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 2 | <i>Rabbi</i> | Title of honour, meaning 'Teacher' |
| 7 | <i>Siloam</i> | Means 'sent': rainwater (or in this case spring water) was 'sent' by gravity through man-made channels that fed a 'cistern' (water storage tank) cut into the ground. |
| 13 | <i>Pharisees</i> | Teachers of the Jewish law |
| 14 | <i>Sabbath</i> | Saturday, Jewish day of rest |
| 16 | <i>this man</i> | Contemptuous phrase, "this fellow" |
| 17 | <i>Prophet</i> | One who tells God's message |
| 22 | <i>Christ</i> | Messiah, anointed one |
| | <i>Synagogue</i> | Jewish place of worship |
| 24 | <i>give glory to God</i> | A solemn charge to tell the truth (Joshua 7:19) |
| | <i>sinner</i> | Someone who comes short of God's standards. (In secular Greek the word is used for someone whose arrow falls short of a target, or who takes a wrong road) |
| 28 | <i>Moses</i> | God gave the Law to Moses |
| 35 | <i>Son of Man</i> | Title for the Messiah, which Jesus used when speaking about himself |

Bible Connections

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2 | <i>who sinned</i> | The teaching then current made a direct link between illness and wrong-doing | <i>see also</i> Luke 13:2 |
| | <i>this man</i> | | <i>see</i> Ezekiel 18:20 |
| | <i>his parents</i> | | <i>see</i> Exodus 20:5; Job 21:19 |
| 6 | <i>spat</i> | | <i>see</i> Mark 7:33 |
| 29 | <i>by what authority, God or man?</i> | | <i>see</i> Luke 20:1-8 |

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1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

What surprises or confuses you?

2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – surrounding passage, individual book, whole Bible, or Bible story – might help you understand this passage?

LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

- 2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?
- 3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?
- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? v.

LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?
 - a) His nature and character?
 - b) His grace?
 - c) Jesus and His salvation?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Who raises the dead?

Background information and Word List

Jesus had been in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication and again the Jews had tried to stone him. He escaped their grasp and went back across the Jordan to where John had been baptizing in the early days.

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Lazarus</i> | The name means 'God is my help' |
| | <i>Bethany</i> | Village about 2 miles from Jerusalem |
| 16 | <i>Thomas</i> | An <i>Aramaic</i> name meaning 'Twin' |
| | <i>Didymus</i> | <i>Greek</i> and also means 'Twin' |
| 27 | <i>Christ</i> | Messiah, the Anointed One |

Bible Connections

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2 | <i>Mary ... hair</i> | John 12:1-8. The woman in Bethany in Matthew 26:6 and Mark 14:3 is not named but it is clearly the same occasion; whereas Luke 7:36-50 is a different, earlier incident, in Galilee. |
| 11 | <i>fallen asleep</i> | Jesus uses this phrase of Jairus' daughter Matthew 9:24 The church used it of believers who died: Acts 7:60; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 15:6; but <i>never</i> of Jesus; it is always, Christ <i>died</i> , usually adding ' <i>for our sins</i> '. 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 3:18. |
| 24 | <i>resurrection at the last day</i> | see Daniel 12:2 |
| 35 | <i>Jesus wept</i> | see also Luke 19:41 where he weeps over Jerusalem |
| 44 | <i>strips of linen and cloth</i> | contrast Jesus' grave-clothes - John 20:7 |

LOOK

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Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Sharing the Word

Use

'Hearing the Word' can be used alone, with another, or in a group.

Preparation

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE. *

Write down your own questions and answers.

(With good preparation and discipline in the time together, the study may be conducted in as little as 45 mins!)

Format

- a. LOOK - Any questions? (If answer is known or not!)
Relevant cross references in rest of the Bible?
- b. LEARN - Answers to questions?
- c. LISTEN - Key verse and Main Point?
- d. LIVE - What does it show about God /His grace/ Jesus?
What should I do

n.b. Leave plenty of time for the LIVE section!

By also eating together and a time of prayer, you will have shared something of the life of the early church! (Acts 2:42-47)

Remember!

As we gather round God's Word -

- a) Listen to the views of others.
- b) Make room for the novice. (They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'.)
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others, especially 'seekers', in your time together.

* The **process** is explained and practiced in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called **'An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**

<https://hearingtheword.org.uk>

“I can read the Bible for myself!”

To show that the Bible is accessible to all,
the Rev Nigel Barge, former minister of Torrance Parish Church,
has devised a tool called ‘Hearing the Word’.

The Manual explains the basic principles of Bible reading,
teaches them by means of an interactive course,
and practices them on a single passage, Mark 10:35-45,
Participants follow in a Workbook: *Hearing the Word - Introduction*,
which includes the next six passages in Mark,
so they may follow on for themselves.

As the principles apply equally to all, the course will both
instruct the novice and refresh the ‘hardened’ Bible student!