



# Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Examining the text & our hearts:

*Bible Reading: John 6:14-21*

### 1. Jesus' Walking on Water—the Central Pivot Point of John's Gospel

- a. "Peter Ellis & John Gerhard have shown that the entire Gospel of John is structured according to an A:B:C:B':A' chiasm or... concentric parallelism. The conceptual center or focus of the Gospel is chapter 6, which comprises a triptych, whose central panel is 6:16-21, the Walking on the Water..." [John Breck, "Chiasmus in...John," Sacra Scripta, Vol. 11, #1 (2004) p. 72]

### 2. John 6 illustrates "Moses Wrote of Me"—Jesus (5:46)

#### a. The Interpretive Key—"Moses wrote of me"

- a. "The fundamental [interpretive] claim...stated in Jesus' own words [is]...'If you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he [Moses] wrote about me'. (5:45-46). So Philip was right. Jesus endorses Philip's eager description of him as 'the one whom Moses wrote about...' (1:45)...Moses actually testifies to Jesus. Yet Jesus' adversaries... reject Jesus' astonishing claim to be the true & ultimate referent to who Moses' words point." [Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, p. 283]
- b. "Whereas Jesus is heralded [by others] as the Lamb of God, the king of Israel, & the Son of God in John, [Jesus] speaks of himself as the one of whom Moses wrote(5:37-47), & this connection is also made by Philip at the outset of the narrative (1:45). [Scholars] have pointed out that [John's] sending motif has its roots in...Deut. 18:15-22." [Paul A. Anderson, "Fulfilled Word in...John," TR. Hatina (ed.) *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels: John*, p. ]

#### b. John 6: Illustrates—"Moses wrote of me" (5:46)

- a. Jesus: "If you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me." (Jn. 5:46)
- b. John "6...serves as a [clear] illustration of the claim attributed to Jesus that it is to him the Scriptures point."—Paul Anderson
- c. "Jn. 5:46 sets the agenda for Jn.6...It's a full scale e.g....of the important assertion that 'Moses wrote of Jesus'."—B.Lindars
- d. "We would dearly love...to have a specimen of the way in which John understood the OT witness to Christ; fortunately...[John] has provided precisely such an example in...[Jn.] 6...John 6 "is fundamentally an exposition of an OT text—the story of the Manna in the Wilderness in Ex. 16 [which] serves to illustrate Jesus' claim...It's a full scale example, & the only one which John has given us, of the important assertion that 'Moses wrote of Jesus'." [Barnabas Lindars, *Gospel*, pp. 233-4]

### 3. The Background—Judaism’s Exaltation of Moses

#### a. Moses’ Exaltation in Jewish Tradition & Extra-biblical Texts

- a. “The exaltation of Moses is seen in [The Testament of Moses] & other texts from the 2nd Temple period.”—William Horbury
- b. “Inevitably...Jewish exaltation of the Law...involved (1.) the veneration of Moses...(2.) the idealization of Israel’s wilderness days. All the parties within 2nd Temple Judaism—Sadducees, Pharisees, [etc.,]—were united in this veneration & idealization.” [David E. Garland, Expositor’s Bible Commentary:Acts, p. ]

#### b. Moses’ Enthronement, Translation to Heaven, & Divinization

- a. “Developments in early Jewish extra-biblical [folk-]lore...include Moses’ enthronement, his translation to heaven at his death, and his divinization (Joel Marcus).” [Andrei A. Orlov, “Which Moses?...” p. 191]
- b. “Moses’ enthronement at Mt. Sinai circulated in rabbinic...Judaism...Moses ascent of Sinai was often portrayed in this way...[Its] found in...the 2nd-century BC Jewish poet Ezekiel the Tragedian, in his Exagoge.” [Joel Marcus, Way of the Lord, p.84]
- c. “Moses was regarded by [some Jews] as one of the greatest prototypes of mystic ascent to heaven. Some Jews from...the 2nd century BCE [on] believed that Moses went up to God on Mt. Sinai to receive the [Law] & the heavenly secrets, he was crowned king of Israel & became the mediator of all kind of heavenly secrets (Meeks).” [Jey Kanagaraj, Mysticism in...John, p.38]
- d. “Moses is transformed by the contemplation of God...which distances him from the rest of humanity...Moses is no longer simply human, but occupies a middle point between humanity and God.” [Ian W Scott, Is Philo’s Moses a Divine-Man? p. 109]
- e. “The seating of Moses on a divinely-appointed throne is...evidence of a [Jewish] tradition that Moses was viewed as God’s chief representative in heaven.” [Larry W. Hurtado, One God, One Lord, p. 62]
- f. “Not only [is] Moses...king...his enthronement...implies participation in God’s kingship...In Ezekiel’s Exagoge...God invests Moses with...symbols of his own kingship...his crown & scepter ... abdicating His throne in favor of him.” [J Marcus, Way..., p.86]

#### c. Moses is ‘god’: “The LORD told Moses, ‘See, I have made you god(‘elohim) to Pharaoh...’” (Ex. 7:1)

- a. “Moses is a divine figure...called ‘god’...[with] divine office...Even if Jews held that only God himself possesses essential divinity, Jewish literature describes Moses as possessing...delegated aspects of that divinity.” [John Lierman, NT Moses, pp. 231, 246]
- b. “Numerous Jewish texts speak of the exaltation of Moses after his death, & his attainment of angelic, or divine, status in heaven...Philo’s reference to Moses as ‘both god & king’...express[es] an opinion about Moses circulating widely among Jews of his day...John was conscious of how far Jewish claims about Moses could go...[For John] Moses...[is] a foil for the Son. Moses was called ‘god,’ but ‘the Word was with God and was God’.” [John Lierman, Challenging Perspectives on...John, p. 232]
- c. “It’s probable that already in the 1st – century there were Jews who went so far as to worship Moses as a god.”—Joes Marcus

#### d. John’s Polemic against Moses

- a. “The 4th Gospel as a whole...is directed against a kind of Judaism in[which] Moses had a central position.”—M. J. J. Menken
- b. John’s “polemic [is] against the Jewish belief...Moses had seen God, & had ascended into the heavenly realm.”—David Aune
- c. John’s “central polemic probably exalts Jesus above Moses. Philo declares that the Sinai revelation...transformed [Moses into] a heavenly man; Jesus, by contrast, came from above...and grants others birth ‘from above’.” [Craig S. Keener, John, p. 46]
- d. Jewish “tradition [held that] because Moses ascended...he became God’s agent on earth ‘as prophet...conveying divine secrets; as king, his vice-regent’...John is opposed to this Moses mysticism which honors Moses as God’s agent...because he’s [allegedly] ascended to the heavens to have direct contact with God himself.” [Francis J. Moloney, Johannine Son of Man, p. 57]
- e. “John’s portrayal of Moses seems to...[be] formed in direct response to certain thinking about Moses...in Philo.”—Carson Bay
- f. Note: Philo of Alexandria [born ~25 BC] is a Jewish thinker who lived in Alexandria, Egypt in the 1st half of the 1st century BCE
- g. “Polemic against ascribing too much importance to Moses is discernible in John...There are numerous indications in divergent [Jewish] sources...that there’s a tendency towards deification of Moses...to deify Moses, to make him into God’s vice-regent...in Rabbinic texts” [M. J. J. Menken, OT Quotations in 4th Gospel, pp. 57, 59]

- e. An Example of John's Polemical thrust—Jn. 3:13
- a. "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven—the Son of Man"—Jesus (Jn. 3:13)
  - b. "When the 4th Evangelist argues that 'no one has ascended into heaven' (3:13), he is arguing against those who claim that someone has ascended into heaven. The ['no one'] is a strong contradiction; as F. J. Moloney states, the force of the sentence is to reject any validity in the claims that 'the great revealers of Israel [Enoch, Moses, etc.] had been to heaven to learn the secrets they eventually revealed. That is why the 4th Evangelist then adds the emphatic positive... 'except the one that surely descended from heaven.' Then to underscore the point he adds the identity & title of this individual... 'he who descended from heaven'... the Son of Man." [James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus as Mirrored in John*, p. ]
  - c. "Peter Borgen wisely points out that the polemic in Jn. 3:13... is a polemic against the ascents of Moses and all others who are said to have ascended into heaven." [James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus as Mirrored in John*, p. ]
4. In John, Jesus is the 'Mosaic Messiah,' not a 'Davidic Messiah'
- a. "Jesus the Son appears in the 4th Gospel as a Mosaic Christ."—John Lierman
  - b. John's Gospel ignores David & the 'Davidic Messiah'
    - a. The Data—"David" 2x; "Moses" 13x
      - a. "Doesn't the Scripture say the Messiah comes from David's offspring & from... Bethlehem, where David lived?" (Jn. 7:42)
    - b. Jesus the 'Mosaic Messiah'
      - a. "Jewish messianism had a pronounced Davidic flavor [but,] this did not prevent John from making Moses the primary antecedent for the messiah-ship of Jesus. Of David & Moses, Moses was the senior." [John Lierman, *Challenging...*, p. 233]
  - c. John is not interested in a 'Davidic Messiah'
    - a. "John makes nothing of Jesus' Davidic ancestry, & never refers to Jesus as the Son or descendent of David. John brings up the expected Davidic ancestry of the Jewish Messiah only in Jn. 7:41-42, but far from seizing the opportunity to clear up Jesus' Davidic credentials, he... [leaves] the crowds in confusion & the reader uninformed on that question... [Here,] John presents himself with a golden opportunity to affirm that Jesus is the awaited Davidic king—in order to ignore it." [John Lierman, 'Mosaic Pattern...', in *Challenging Perspectives on... John*, p. 217]
    - b. "David hardly figures in the 4th Gospel, while references to Moses & 'the Prophet' like Moses repeatedly contribute to John's Christology... Nothing in the 4th Gospel itself indicates that John has the slightest interest in advancing a Davidic appraisal of the Messiah Jesus [as Son of David]. John offers in the place of David an alternative, apparent in the messianism of the crowd in John. 6, which saw a Messiah in the Prophet [like Moses] of Dt. 18:15." [John Lierman, 'Mosaic Pattern of John's Christology,' in *Challenging Perspectives on... John*, p. 223]
    - c. "It is... conspicuous that John is nearly devoid of Davidic messianic motifs... In John... Moses is the one through whom the God of the OT has (primarily) spoken... Most importantly... one of the primary reasons for the 'Jews' rejection of Jesus [was] their inability to perceive him as fulfilling their conception of a Davidic Messiah." [P. N. Anderson, *Christology...*, p. 229]
  - c. In John, Jesus is the 'Mosaic Messiah'
    - a. John offers in the place of David an alternative... a Messiah in the Prophet [like Moses] of Deut. 18:15." —John Lierman
    - b. Moses [is] at the center of the... portrait laid out by John... Jesus the Son... in the 4th Gospel [is] a Mosaic Christ." —J. Lierman
    - c. John shows "over & over... how [Jesus,] the Son is a new & better Moses, who as the Prophet like Moses and the Son of God fulfills all that Moses was toward his people." [John Lierman, 'Mosaic Pattern...', in *Challenging Perspectives...* John, p. 233]
    - d. "In the 4th Gospel, the... roles & functions of Jesus are antitypes of what... [Jews said of] Moses. Also the complete... portrait, the overall pattern of Jesus' ministry... finds an antecedent in the ministry of Moses. Because Moses [is] at the center of the total... portrait laid out by John, it's fair to say that Jesus the Son appears in the 4th Gospel as a Mosaic Christ." [John Lierman, 'Mosaic Pattern of John's Christology,' in *Challenging Perspectives on... John*, p. 234]
  - d. Jesus acclaimed as a 'Mosaic Figure'—"The Prophet" (6:14-15; Dt. 18:15)
    - a. Moses promised: "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me... You must listen to him." (Deut. 18:15)
    - b. "When the people saw the sign [Jesus] had done, they said, 'This truly is the Prophet who is to come into the world'." (Jn. 6:14)
    - c. "In John... the significance of the feeding is left until the end of the [episode] when the people... claim Jesus as 'the Prophet who is to come'... The 'Prophet who is coming into the world' in 6:14 is the prophet 'like Moses'... who is expected in fulfillment of Dt. 18:15... The feeding miracle is the act of a Mosaic figure, John makes it explicit." [John Lierman, *NT Moses*, p. 111]
    - d. "While John never suggests that the title, 'the Prophet' adequately describes Jesus, he repeatedly shows that Jesus fulfilled Jewish expectations for this figure... The crowds see [Jesus'] signs & on that basis identify Jesus specifically with the Mosaic Prophet... for e.g., in Jn. 6:14." [John Lierman, 'Mosaic Pattern...', in *Challenging Perspectives on... John*, pp. 213-4]

- e. “Jesus...acts in the manner of...Moses by speaking for God, miraculously feeding people with bread, healing the sick, & raising the dead. Those who experienced...[this] respond by calling him a prophet & even ‘the Prophet’ whom God was sending into the world (4:19; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17). On one occasion the crowd misconstrues the role by attempting to make Jesus the Prophet into a king on their own terms, & Jesus rejects the attempt by fleeing (6:14-15).” [Craig Koester, Portraits of Jesus in...John, p. 13]

#### 5. Jesus as the ‘Mosaic Prophet & King’ (6:14-15)

- a. “The people saw the sign[Jesus] had done, they said, ‘This truly is the Prophet who is to come...’  
15Therefore, when Jesus realized they were about to come & take him by force to make him king,he withdrew...to the mountain by himself.” (6:14-15)
- b. John’s Gospel is unique in its “presentation of Jesus as the Prophet-King like Mosesin John 6:14-15.”—Paul Anderson
- c. The NT itself...shows an awareness of...the Moses’...kingship theme. In Jn.6:14-15 the people recognize Jesus as ‘the Prophet-like-Moses’ of Dt.18:15-18 & then attempt to seize him & make him king.” [Joel Marcus, Way of the Lord, pp.85-86]
- d. Questions & Answers
- a. Scholars ask: “Who...is ‘the ‘Prophet who is coming...’? Why does...the multiplication of the loaves indicate his identity? Why is it self-evident that ‘the prophet’ is to be made king?...The two terms ‘prophet’ & ‘king’ in the 4th Gospel...are interrelated, [&] interpret each other...[There were Jewish] traditions about Moses...[as]the figure who combines in one person both royal andprophetic...functions(Meeks).” [John Lierman, NT Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses, p. 20]
- b. “Once the people recognized Jesus as the expected prophet, 6:15 continues ‘Jesus thereforeknew that they were about to come &seize him to make him king.’...The apparent ‘fit’ between the two elements—the Prophet like Moses & kingship—...urges the kingly rank of Mosesin current [Jewish] thinking...[It seems] the crowd’s reaction is entirely expected, andJesus’ perception quite natural...in the full light of contemporary[Jewish] views of Moses as king.” [John Lierman, NT Moses, pp. 111-112]

#### e. Role of Jewish Tradition

- a. “Depiction of Jesus as prophet & king in the 4th Gospelowes much to...traditions...inherited from...Moses piety.”—W. Meeks
- b. “The crowd has seen the sign & understood that the abundant bread announces the arrival of this messianic time associated with...an expectation that a ‘prophet like Moses’ would appear fulfilling the promise of Deut. 18:15-18; such expectation lies behind the people’s attempt to makeJesusaking(6:15).” [Mary L Coloe, Wisdom Commentary: John 1-10, p. 166]

#### f. Moses in Jewish Tradition—‘he became King’(Deut. 33:5)

- a. “1 TheLORD came from Sinai...4 Mosesgave us instruction, a possession for...Jacob. 5So he became King...” (Dt. 33:1, 4-5)
- b. “The Hebrew text of Deut. 33;5 was understood in the midrash to speak of Moses as king” –WilliamHorbury
- c. Deut. 33:5 “is the sole OT text that has been thought to name Moses king...The context...of Dt. 33:5 suggests ‘Moses’ as the subject of [‘to be’]...the obvious translation is ‘he became king’with reference to Moses who has just been mentioned...In the rabbinic period many agreed that Dt. 33:5 teaches the kingship of Moses...The Targums [Jewish commentaries] to this verse ...all but state ‘Moses was king in Israel.’” [John Lierman, NT Moses, pp. 80-81]
- d. “Some texts within the Rabbinic & Samaritan traditions show the offices of prophet & king consolidated in a single person. Early Jewish commentary appears to take the kingship of Mosesfor granted, much of it stemming from Dt. 33:5: ‘The LORD came from Sinai...Moses gave us instruction, a possession for...Jacob. So he became King...’ (Dt. 33:1b, 4-5 CSB) [Does ‘He’ refer to the LORD(33:1) or ‘Moses’ (33:4)?]The latter [33:4]gives ‘the mistaken impression that Moses is the referent, ‘King’ (NET).” [R. D.Reynolds, “People See the Prophet-King,” MA Theses #37, Luther Seminary (2017) pp. 32-33]

#### g. Jesus is More than Moses, the ‘Prophet-King’

- a. Jesus “is not simply a prophet like Moses as a second Moses, but the Son of God who came to do the Father’s will... to give eternal life to all who believe.” [Marinus de Jonge, “Jesus as Prophet & Kingin the4th Gospel,”ETL, Vol. 47, pp. 160-77]
- b. “According to [W.] Meeks, the 4th Evangelist [has] a multi-layered understanding of Jesus...First, he [i.e., Jesus] fulfills the functions expected of Moses (...Jesus [is] the true Moses). Then, the Christ does this in such a superior & exclusive waythat Moses is stripped of those messianic functions & presented, not as a messianic type, but merely as a...witness to Jesus [the true Prophet-King] (Meeks).” [Sanghee M. Ahn, Christological Witness Function of the OT Characters in...John, p. 23]

#### 6. Feeding the 5,000—Jesusis Superior to & Supersedes Moses

a. The Setting

- a. "The crossing of the sea (6:1) & the coming of people out to a lonely mountainside (6:3) formed a picture-perfect setting for reflecting about Jesus & the Exodus. Accordingly, it should be no surprise that...the linkage of a miraculous feeding & a control of the sea is compared with the experience of Moses in the wilderness." [WE. Mills (ed.) Mercer Commentary on...NT, p. 1057]
- b. "The reference to [Jesus] going up the mountain (6:3) evokes memories of Moses at Mt. Sinai...Passover in 6:4 introduces the exodus theme [which] celebrates God's deliverance of the Jews from slavery to Egypt, including the giving of manna from heaven (Ex. 16:9-35); exodus imagery figures prominently in Jn. 6:52-59." [R. P. Vande Kappelle, Truth Revealed, p. ]"Perry...argues that Jesus is...described in 6:1-21 in a manner reminiscent of Moses'. Jesus crosses a sea (6:1), he is followed by a multitude that has witnessed signs performed by him (6:2), goes up a mountain (6:3), and then feeds the multitude with miraculous bread (6:11)." [David GIBSON, "Eating is Believing?...in Jn. 6," Themelios, Vol. 26, #2, p. ]

b. Jesus Fulfills & Exceeds Moses

- a. "John makes explicit what's only implicit in the Synoptic account of Jesus' feeding of the 5,000; his Gospel presents the event as a parallel to Moses' providing manna." [CC. Broyles, "Moses," in JB. Green (ed.) Dictionary of Jesus & Gospels, p. 562]
- b. "The theme of Jesus' superiority to Moses...is perhaps most explicit in...the feeding of the 5,000 in Jn. 6. John's presentation... sets Jesus' actions against those of Moses...John frames the story by noting that 'the Passover...was near' (6:4). [This] connects the [5,000's] feeding to the Exodus, Moses' shining moment...2nd, John makes the analogy between Moses & Jesus explicit in the...discourse on the 'bread of life' (6:22-58)." [Tom Thatcher, "Remembering Jesus," in SE. Porter (ed.) Messiah..., p. 182]
- c. "Jesus fulfills the role of Moses...by feeding the multitude in the wilderness & crossing the sea." –R Alan Culpepper
- d. "Jesus' comparison with Moses is not a matter of contrast, but a matter of substitution & fulfillment" –Les?aw Chrupca  
a

c. Jesus Supersedes & Replaces Moses

- a. "Scholars...often spoken of the 'fulfillment & replacement' motif in John. Jesus fulfils & replaces [Moses]" –R. Alan Culpepper
- b. "John's Jesus is not a 'second Moses' in the sense of merely recapitulating or building on the mission of his predecessor. John states quite clearly that Jesus supersedes & replaces Moses as the decisive bearer of revelation." [Paul Miller, "They saw His Glory..." in SE. Porter (ed.) Hearing the OT in the NT, p. 143]
- c. "The [4th] Gospel represents a deliberate decision to supplant Moses and replace him with Jesus, thereby substituting one revelation [via Christ]...for another [via Moses]." [John Ashton, John & Christian Origins, p. 3]
- d. "The people declared of Jesus: 'This is the prophet who is to come...' (6:14)—the clearest acknowledgment in the whole Gospel that Jesus had now taken over the role of Moses as the prophet of God...[Thus] the Evangelist... refute[s] the Jewish belief that Moses had the key role in...God's revelation to his people, &...reassign[s] that role to Jesus." [John Ashton, John..., p. 20]

7. Jesus' Theophany—the 'I AM' Walks on the Waves

- a. "The emphasis is not on Jesus' rescue of the disciples, but on their vision of Jesus as God."—Susan Hysten
- b. "...Jesus walking on the water...approaching the boat...they were afraid. 20 He said..."I AM. Don't be afraid." (Jn. 6:19-20)
- c. "The sight of Jesus walking upon the sea...is experienced & perceived as a theophany & this...is the turning point"—P Anderson

d. A. Jesus' Crossing Galilee echoes Moses' Crossing the Red Sea (Ex. 16)

- a. "Given its placement between the feeding miracle in Jn. 6:1-15 & the Bread of Life discourse in 6:22-59, the...6:16-21, account of Jesus walking on the water, recalls the miraculous parting of the [Red] sea by Moses during the exodus (Ex. 13-15);...A strong thematic allusion exists as John relates his second exodus motif to the first exodus, although in a greater fashion. Where Moses divided the waters, Jesus walked on them." [Daniel H. Fletcher, Signs in the Wilderness, p. 58]
- b. There's "a possibility of reading John 6:16-21 [Jesus' walking on water] as a reflection of 'the general symbolism of the crossing of the [Red] Sea at...the Exodus & the prerogative of YAHWEH to make a path on or in the waters'." –Raymond Brown

e. Jesus, the 'I AM'—More than Moses

- a. "In the feeding miracle, the Evangelist casts Jesus in terms...[of] Mosaic & messianic significance. When he walks on the sea, however, Jesus distances himself from his predecessor, Moses...his simple self-identification ['I AM; don't be afraid'], recalls those who have encountered God." [Christopher M. Blumhofer, John & future of Israel, p. 122]

f. Jesus is King of the Universe

- a. "The one main theme in [Jn. 6] is the matter of Jesus' divine identity & authority. The two miracles [feeding 5,000 & walking on water], the Exodus language, & the appearance of the ['I AM'] sayings, intersect to establish Jesus' divinity." [Stan Harstine, *Moses as a Character in the 4th Gospel*, p. 61]
- b. "Relating the [feeding 5,000] to Jesus' walking on water may seem odd...but makes good sense...In walking on the water & using the self-description 'It is I' (Lit. 'I AM') Jesus aligns himself with YAHWEH, the...liberator of people from darkness. What we have[here is, after], the crowd's misunderstanding of Jesus' identity at the end of the feeding...is a corrective. It is true, Jesus is a king, but, he's more than a king. He's the king of the universe—the great 'I AM'—who will redeem his people from spiritual exile." [Benjamin L. Gladd, *Handbook on the Gospels*, p. lxiii]

c. Jesus' Divine Declaration—"I AM"

- a. "He [i.e., God] alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea." (Job 9:8)
  - a. Not a nature miracle, but a theophany (a manifestation of God)
    - a. In the "feeding of the 5,000...Jesus is identified as a prophet and king by the crowd (6:14-15), then appeared in a kind of theophany[manifestation of God] to the disciples [on the sea]." [Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the 4th Gospel*, p. 41]
    - b. "The 4th Gospel does not narrate the stilling of the storm (Mt. 14:32; Mk. 6:51) because 6:16-21 is not a nature miracle, a demonstration of Jesus' power over...nature. It's a...theophany...the revelation of the divine in Jesus." [G.O'Day, *Jn*, p 506]
    - c. "Jn 6:16-21...focuses almost entirely on Jesus himself. To be sure, the disciples' fear is a factor, as in the parallel [Synoptic] story...but here the object of the [disciples'] fear is not the storm; it is Jesus. John's account is...of a divine manifestation—in this case a 'Christophany' (a...manifestation of Christ)." [Lamar Williamson, *Preaching the Gospel of John*, p. 72]
    - d. "How did the disciples reflect upon the multitude being fed & Jesus' appearing to them [walking] on the water? In both John & Mark, God's words to Moses at the burning bush are cited in identical Greek (Ego eimi Ex. 3:14 LXX; Mk. 6:50; Jn. 6:20). Yet in Mark the statement comes across as an identification ('It is not a ghost; it is I—do not be afraid'), while in John it comes across as a theophany ('I AM—fear not')." [Paul N. Anderson, *Riddles of the Fourth Gospel*, pp. 176-7]
  - b. Jesus does what "God alone can do"
    - a. "In the episode of Jesus walking on the sea (6:12-21), there's an echo of Job 9:8b ['He alone...treads on the waves of the sea' (9:8)] where YHWH alone is the one who treads upon the crests of the sea. Such implicit associations between the actions of Jesus & those of the Supreme Deity reoccur in [John]...Here it is significant...in view of Ex. 3:14, Is. 41 & 43 where 'I AM' is a formula of divine self-revelation, that Jesus declares 'It is I' [or 'I AM'] (6:20)...In this sign of Jesus walking on the sea, John records that Jesus was doing what the Scripture says God alone can do, thus identifying Jesus with YHWH." [Saeed Hamid-Khani, *Revelation & Concealment of Christ*, pp. 105-6]
- c. Jesus demonstrably superior to Moses
  - a. "When Jesus...uses 'I am' statement[s] his divine nature is reinforced. Behind such usage is God's call to Moses...[when] 'God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'(Ex. 3:14)...Jesus is (self) identified with the I AM...The author of [John] extends the allusion by making Jesus clearly superior to Moses(1:17; 5:46)." [MP. Middendorf, M Schuler, *Called by the Gospel*, p. 351]
  - b. "The close match between the circumstances in which Jesus uses the phrase here [Ego eimi 6:20] & the circumstances in which God uses it in the OT...lead the reader from viewing Jesus as only the Prophet & Israel's king to viewing him as Israel's God." [Frank S. Thielman, *Theology of the NT*, p. 158]

d. The Disciples' Fear Factor—John vs. the Synoptics

- a. Emphasis Not Rescue (Synoptics), but Revelation (John)
  - a. The 4th Gospel "magnifies the experience of fear & relief. 'They saw Jesus walking on the sea. He was coming near the boat, and they were afraid.' (6:19)...Jesus draws near...but his appearance only increases their fear because they are face to face with the numinous [divinity]...The Synoptics still the storm [but] the 4th Gospel is silent on the quieting, nor is their rescue at sea [recorded]...The [text] shifts from rescue to revelation ['I AM']...the revealing of Jesus to them—not their rescue...Jesus 'coming to them' is necessary for them to achieve their goal..." [James L. Resseguie, *Strange Gospel*, pp. 101-2]
- b. Disciples' fear not of a 'ghost, or storm' (Synoptics), but of Jesus, the 'I AM' (John)
  - a. "In John 6:20...ego eimi [Gk. 'I am']...for a casual reader may seem to be a mere 'I am he' self-identification by Jesus. Yet... there is some significant Christological intention. In...6:20, it's noticeable that John's account differs from that of the Synoptic Gospels, even though [it's] the same story...In the Synoptics, the disciples' initial fear stems from their suspicion that...they see a ghost(Mk. 6:49; Mt. 14:26), but in the 4th Gospel they are afraid because they actually recognize Jesus as the one who approaches the boat across the sea (6:19). If ego eimi does not serve here as a statement of identity ('It is I, Jesus'), its purpose must be to explain...Jesus' act of walking on the water...is the [means] whereby [Jesus] makes himself manifest as the one exercising the power that the Hebrew Bible attributes to God alone(Job 9:8 [etc.])' (Catrin H. Williams)." [Riku P. Tuppurainen, *Prologue to Studies in the 4th Gospel*, p. ]
  - b. "John 6:16-21...focuses almost entirely on Jesus himself. To be sure, the disciples' fear is a factor...but here the object of the [disciples'] fear is not the storm; it is Jesus. John's account is...of a divine manifestation—in this case a 'Christophany' (a...manifestation of Christ)." [Lamar Williamson, *Preaching the Gospel of John*, p. 72]

8. The Jews' Allegiance to Moses an Obstacle to Faith in Christ(Jn. 9:28)

a. A. Disciples of Moses OR Disciples of Jesus? (Jn. 9:28)

- a. The Jews "ridiculed [the formerly-blind man] 'You are that man's [Jesus'] disciple, but we are Moses' disciples'." (Jn. 9:28)
- b. "From the point of view of the Jews in the [4th] Gospel, the alternative is either to follow Moses or Jesus' (R. Alan Culpepper) John 9:28 [is] the verse that [substantiates] this dichotomy...discipleship to Moses and to Jesus are juxtaposed [as opposites]." [Carson Bay, "Philo... John & Two Moses Traditions," in DT. Runia (ed.) *Studia Philonica Annual XXXIII* (2021) p. 68]

- c. "The Pharisees...imply that they & the followers of Jesus are members of rival schools. They clearly cast Jesus as a rival to Moses in the gathering of disciples. Jn. 9:28-29 explicitly compares being a disciple of Moses with being a disciple of Jesus... The Pharisaic opponents of Jesus regard the 2 discipleships as antithetical, though Jesus claims that those who follow him are true disciples of Moses...The statement by the Jews in 9:28 is 'their profession of faith'...Moses is the central figure of Jewish allegiance." [John Lierman, Challenging Perspectives in...John,p. 224]
- b. Disciples of Peter OR Disciples of Paul?(1 Cor. 1:12)
- a. "Each of you says, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas [Peter],' or 'I belong to Christ'." (1 Cor. 1:12)
- c. Who is Your "Moses"?
- d. Tim Keller's Last Words: "There is no downside for me leaving, not in the slightest."
- a. "Keller's body of work is beyond impressive: 31 books, over 1,500 sermons, as well as hundreds of articles. He had a lot of brilliant things to say & always found engaging ways to say it. But even more impressive was his Christian witness. There was no scandal, no 'skeletons in the closet.' Happily married to Kathy for 48 years, the couple had 3 sons. Before Tim pastored an urban church[in NYC], he shepherded a rural [church]in Hopewell, Virginia, for 8 years. He was a low-key, cerebral clergyman who chose his words carefully & who didn't waste the words he chose. There was an intensity to him, but it wasn't borne of ego but an earnestness to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ."
- b. Parallels Between Moses and Jesus (Jn. 6)
- a. MOSES
- a. Ascends Mountain(Ex. 19:3, 20; 24:9-13)
- b. Peoples' Need(Num. 11:13)
- c. Provides Manna
- d. Promises Prophet like me (Dt. 18:15-22)
- e. Crosses the Red Sea (Ps. 77:20-1)
- f. Faces Peoples' 'murmuring' (Ex. 16:2)
- g.
- b. JESUS (John6)
- a. Ascends Mountain (6:3)
- b. Peoples' Need (6:5)
- c. Provides Bread & Fish; Offers himself as Bread
- d. Regarded as 'the Prophet like Moses' (6:14)
- e. Crosses the Sea of Galilee (6:16-21)
- f. Faces 'murmuring' of crowd & disciples (6:41, 61)
- c. [Michael A. Daise, Feasts in John, pp. 76-77]