

Seven Signs of Messiah: Feeding the Multitude

Main Text: John 6:1-13

Parallel Texts: Mark 6:32-44, Matthew 14:12-21, Luke 9:10-17

Feeding of the 5000 stats

Where:

- A desolate place on the east side of the Sea of Galilee
- Near the town of Bethsaida
- On a hill covered in green grass

When:

- After the death of Yochanan
- Close to Passover, when grass is green
- As the day was ending

Numbers:

- 5,000 men, plus women and children
- Cost of 200 denarii -- roughly \$20,000
- Arranged in groups (rows) of fifties and hundreds
- Five loaves and two fish
- Twelve baskets

Matthew 16:5–12 - The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

“Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered?”

Matthew 15:32–39 - Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

Psalm 72 – Messiah and the Abundance of Grain

Ecclesiastes Rabbah 1:28

Reb Berekiah said in the name of Rabbi Yitzchak: “The latter redeemer will be like the first redeemer. What does the Torah say about the first redeemer?” ... The first redeemer made manna to descend, as it is written, “Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you.” In the same way the latter redeemer will make manna descend, as it is written, “May he be as abundant grain in the land.”

Numbers 27:15–18 - Sheep Without a Shepherd

The Two Fish

Sanhedrin 98b

What is the Messiah's name? ... The school of Rabbi Yannai says: Yinnon is his name, as it is stated: "May his name endure forever; may his name continue [yinnon] as long as the sun; and may men bless themselves by him" (Psalms 72:17).

Pesachim 54a

The name of Messiah was created before the world was created, as it is written in the chapter discussing the Messiah: "May his name endure forever; his name existed before the sun" (Psalms 72:17).

Shabbat 115b-116a

Apropos the portion: "And when the Ark traveled," the Gemara cites that which the Sages taught in a baraita. It is stated: "And when the Ark traveled and Moses proclaimed: Rise up, God, and Your enemies will scatter and those who hate You will flee from before You." And The Holy One, Blessed be He, made signs in the Torah for this portion, above and below, i.e., before and after it, in order to say that this is not its place, as the previous portion does not discuss the nation's travels. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: It is not for that reason that signs were inserted. Rather, the signs are there because this portion is considered a book unto itself.

The Gemara asks: According to whose opinion is that which Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahman said that Rabbi Yonatan said, that with regard to the verse: "With wisdom she built her house, she carved its seven pillars" (Proverbs 9:1), these are the seven books of the Torah? According to whose opinion? It is according to the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, as by his count there are seven books of the Torah: Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus; Numbers until: "And when the Ark traveled"; the portion: "And when the Ark traveled," which is considered its own book; the remainder of Numbers; and Deuteronomy.

Bread of tomorrow

Rashi on Psalm 72:16

May there be an abundance of grain: Heb. תפ, an expression of spreading (פיון), increase and abundance. Our Sages, however, explained this as an expression of loaves of white bread during the messianic era (Keth. 111b, Shab. 30b), and the entire psalm as referring to the messianic era. Another explanation: תפ is an expression of good will, like פיו, placating; the people are appeased and accepted by the Holy One, blessed be He, when He gives plenty in the world.

Ketubot 111b

And Rabbi Hiyya bar Yosef further said: In the future Eretz Yisrael will produce cakes [geluskaot] and fine wool clothing [meilat] that will grow from the ground, as it is stated: "Let abundant [pissat] grain [bar] be in the land" (Psalms 72:16). The term pissat is interpreted in a similar manner to ketonet passim, Joseph's valuable clothing of many colors, while bar can mean bread.