

# HOW TRINITARIANS BURN THE TOAST IN JOHN 6!

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**“I am the bread of life ... I came down from heaven ... What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before?” (John 6: 38, 48, 62)**

One of my childhood memories is the gorgeous smell of freshly baked bread. When we carried a newly baked loaf it always arrived home with finger holes in the end of it ... the smell was irresistible! There’s nothing like bread straight from the oven to get the taste buds salivating. And if you are an Aussie, adding a little creamy butter and some Vegemite to your bread lifts the experience to a whole new level again.

This little study from **John chapter 6** is devoted to the living bread that came “down from heaven”. The chapter progresses from bread for the body to bread for the inner man --- much like Jesus’ interview with the woman at the well moved from the physical water in Jacob’s well to the living water springing up to eternal life.

Unfortunately though, trinitarian interpretation of John chapter 6 manages to mix the pure dough ‘from heaven’ with that proverbial little lump of corrupting yeast (1 Cor. 5: 6-7 & Col. 2: 8). I will demonstrate in this article how Jesus’ teaching has been changed at its most fundamental level, and how the toast has been burnt!

Let’s go back to the start of that memorable day ...

## SWING HIGH, SWING LOW SWEET CHARIOT!

After a long eventful day, Jesus and the disciples want to just relax in the green grass on a high hill by the seaside. Perhaps they want to take in the sunset and review the day. But still the crowds keep pressing in. Everybody is hungry and Jesus asks Philip, **“Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?”** And the rest is history, as they say. A crowd of 5,000 men had more than enough to eat from just 5 barley loaves and two small fish (in those days only the men were counted, so there may have been many more thousands of women and children fed as well).

This miracle is called a **sign (v. 14)**. Given that signs point to something, we naturally ask what the sign of the miracle-feeding in the desert pointed to.

A popular view amongst the commentators, is that John wrote his Gospel with a “high Christology”. They reckon John’s purpose in penning his Gospel was to prove that Jesus is the incarnate God. Starting at **John 1: 1-3** their default position is that Jesus himself pre-existed in heaven as the Word. In eternity past the “eternal Son “ along with God the Father and “God the Spirit” created the universe. <sup>1</sup>

Having *a priori* established their Three-in-One trinitarian theology, they naturally look for any indication in John’s narrative that might support this thesis. And wallah! Digging into the mine of Jesus’ supernatural miracles they come up with the nuggets they have set out to find --- miracles supposedly pointing to their “high Christology”.

In contrast to the Gospel of John, we are told, the three Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke present Jesus with a “low Christology” --- and by that they mean the human Jesus. (This is tacit acknowledgement that Matthew, Mark and Luke know nothing of a Jesus who had a beginningless beginning!?) Thus, according to this trinitarian pitch, the high and low Christologies of the four Gospels harmoniously combine to create their ‘God-Man’. And unless you believe it, they warn, you are in serious danger of losing your soul and ‘burning in hell forever’. <sup>2</sup>

Well, let’s put this thesis to the test as we unpack “the bread from heaven” statements in John chapter 6. I think we may be able to spread a little jam from the jar of sweetness onto this trinitarian burnt toast (yes, I have taken the Vegemite away for all you international readers!).

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<sup>1</sup> No such description of Jesus is found anywhere in all Scripture. Trinitarian doctrine states that Jesus is “the eternally generated Son”, an oxymoron if ever there was one, for to be generated is to have a beginning!

<sup>2</sup> Such anathemas go way back to the pronouncements of the Church Councils at Constantinople and Chalcedon in the 4th and 5th Centuries. This term “the God-Man” is nowhere to be found in Scripture. It is found in pagan religious texts!

## HOW DID JESUS PERFORM THIS MIRACLE ?

John simply explains that **Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks, he distributed to those who were seated (v. 11)**. Matthew, Mark, and Luke add a little more detail telling us that after Jesus took the loaves and fish he was **looking up toward heaven (Mk 6:41)**.

Throughout the Bible, when anybody looked up to heaven they were acknowledging their absolute dependence upon God for His help. Jesus was surely indicating that he too was dependent upon His God and Father. He had earlier testified under solemn oath, **“Amen, Amen, I tell you the Son can do nothing of himself ... ( John 5: 19,30)**.<sup>3</sup>

As he was looking up to heaven in this attitude of dependence, the next thing we are told is that Jesus **gave thanks**. We naturally ask, What was Jesus giving thanks to his God for? We normally answer, He was thanking His Father for the bread and the fish. That is no doubt part of the answer, for Luke says, **and looking up to heaven, he blessed them and broke them ... (Lk 9:16)**.

However, I think there is more to it. Consider another time when Jesus looked up to heaven for a miracle and **“gave thanks”... the raising of Lazarus from the dead**. Remember how Jesus stood before that tomb of Lazarus, and **lifted his eyes upwards and said, “Father, I thank You that You heard me, and I knew that You always hear me ...” (John 11: 41-42)**?

Before calling Lazarus forth, Jesus thanks his Father that He has *already heard* his prayer-request. God the Father raised up Lazarus from the dead in response to Jesus’ prayer of faith! God approved and honoured His Son --- gave an attesting miracle --- showing that Jesus was doing the work of the long-awaited Messiah in Israel.

Now I want us to observe carefully that the language of looking up to heaven and giving thanks before the raising of Lazarus from the dead, is an **exact parallel** to the language describing the feeding of the 5,000!

His **looking up** shows how dependent Jesus knew he was upon his Father. His **giving thanks** before handing the bread out, is the expression of Jesus’ faith --- he knows God has already heard him. Jesus thus walks in the knowledge that His Father God will back him, proving he is the agent through whom God was working.<sup>4</sup>

To put this negatively, Lazarus was not raised from the dead to demonstrate Jesus’ Deity, nor does the miraculous feeding of the multitude attest to Jesus being the second member of the multi-personal godhead of trinitarianism. And just in case you want to argue the point, all you have to do is turn to the inspired apostolic testimony concerning the origin of Jesus’ works and their purpose. Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost,

**Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst ... (Acts 2: 22).**

The Bible says, the miracles and wonders were **performed by God the Father through the man Jesus of Nazareth!** Nothing can be more clearly stated than that. Jesus’ miracles were signs attesting to the fact that God was behind this man, working through him to bless. Indeed, straight after feeding the five-thousand, Jesus says the same thing:

**Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, because the Father Who is God has sealed him (v. 27).**<sup>5</sup> Jesus’ own explanation is that this miracle is proof that his Father is God who has authorised him, that is, **sealed him**, to be the divine agent for eternal

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<sup>3</sup> Trinitarians who say that Jesus had two natures, the Divine and the human, point to the different titles, “the Son of God” and “the Son of Man” for evidence. However, note it is as “the Son” that Jesus says he can do nothing ... “the Deity nature” admits it can do nothing ... surely good reason to rethink what the title “Son of God” really means!?

<sup>4</sup> There was something uniquely arresting about *the way* Jesus gave thanks. A hint is found in **v.23**. On the next day after the feeding, the place is also remembered as the place where the Lord had given thanks. Think about that.

<sup>5</sup> These are Jesus’ exact words --- as Professor Anthony Buzzard correctly renders them --- **“Do not work for perishable food, but for the food which remains for the Age to Come, which the Son of Man will give you because the Father, who is God, has authorized him to provide this.”** He notes that, **This is one of the 1300 references in the NT to the Father, who is the One God of biblical monotheism ... Jesus was a confessed unitary monotheist, as is proven by Mark 12:29**. Sir Anthony F. Buzzard, MA (Oxon.) MATH, Hon. PhD., *The One God, the Father, One Man Messiah Translation: New Testament with Commentary*, Restoration Fellowship, 2014. Footnote 85, p 257

life to flow to mankind. The Bible presents Jesus Christ as **the man** who is **the mediator between God and mankind** (see **1 Timothy 2: 2:5** which was written after Jesus had been raised and gone into heaven).

I might add, that if the argument is that, because Jesus performed attesting signs and wonders he must be “God in the flesh”, then the apostles by the same logic also must be members of the same godhead for, **Many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles** (Acts 2: 43)! Clearly, the power to perform miracles is no proof of one’s alleged deity!

## OBJECTION!

Whilst I am enjoying my cuppa and toast I anticipate an interruption ...

“But Greg! Jesus says, **I came down from heaven ... I am the bread of life (6:48)**. Don’t you know this is the first of the **seven “I am” titles** of Christ found in this Gospel, and found nowhere else? <sup>6</sup>

“Surely you must see that all these “I am” statements look back to when God appeared to Moses at the burning bush, telling him to go to Pharaoh and let the people go so that they might worship God in the wilderness. And when Moses asked, “Who shall I say has sent me?” the answer was, **“Thus shall you say unto the children of Israel, I AM has sent me unto you”** (Ex. 3:14).

And here in John, we have a **sevenfold** filling out of the “I am” --- I am the bread of life, etc. Christ’s employment of these titles at once identifies Him with the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and unequivocally demonstrates His absolute Deity. <sup>7</sup>

“Furthermore, Jesus himself states directly or indirectly **seven times** in John chapter 6 that he is **the true bread out of heaven** and that he **gives life to the world** (vs. 33,38,41,42,50,51,58). Seven is God’s number for perfection. So there are **seven** “I am” statements in John, and **seven** times in John chapter 6 we are told that Jesus is the one who has come down from heaven, and don’t forget the **seven miraculous signs** already mentioned.

*“Seven signs. Seven “I am” statements. Seven affirmations that Jesus is the bread come down from heaven. Put it all together and you come up with **three sevens!**”*

“Since 7 is God’s number for Divine perfection, and 3 is the number for the Trinity, here is John’s ‘code’ for the mystery that Jesus is God in the flesh! In the mouth of two or three witnesses a matter is established under the Law, so **three sevens** is proof of Jesus’ pre-existent Deity if ever it was needed. What “high Christology” is this!”

That’s how the argument runs for a lot of folks. So when they hear Jesus saying to the crowd, that he is the bread of God come down from heaven to give life to the world, they are already in their minds reading a “high Christology”. For them, surely Jesus is saying in unequivocal terms, that he has literally descended from his pre-existent state. What else can this statement mean, **“For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me”** (v. 38)?

To our modern ears this does sound as if Jesus is claiming personal pre-existence in heaven before coming to earth, does it not? But is this reliable Bible exegesis or just reading some fancy theory into the text?

I would suggest that if ever there was a time and a place to read the Bible out of its own historical setting --- rather than reading backwards and super-imposing our own Western thinking upon the text --- then this is it. Let’s try to spread some sweet sense onto this trinitarian toast!

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<sup>6</sup> The other “I am” statements from Jesus are: **“I am the light of the world”** (8:12); **“I am the door”** (10:9); **“I am the good shepherd”** (10:11); **“I am the resurrection and the life”** (11: 35); **“I am the way, the truth and the life”** (14: 6); **“I am the true vine”** (15:1).

<sup>7</sup> Arthur W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John: Three Volumes Complete and Unabridged in One*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1945, p341. I cite Pink as typical of this trinitarian reasoning. For a fuller treatment of the I AM see my article “Yahweh”.

**1. FIRST CONSIDERATION.** When Jesus says, “I am the living bread which comes down out of heaven ...” he is not speaking literally, but figuratively.

Many times through John’s Gospel Jesus uses figurative language to describe spiritual truth. Nicodemus is told he must be “born again”, yet this leader in Israel took it the wrong way. He thought Jesus was talking about literally entering the second time into his mother’s womb (John 3: 4)! The disciples themselves misunderstood Jesus to be speaking literally when he told them he was the door to the sheep pen. But later reflection has John explain, **This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which he had been saying to them (John 10: 6-7).**

Just so here in John 6. When Jesus says he is the bread come down from heaven, a woodenly literalistic method violates common sense interpretation its First Century setting demands.

Few modern readers of the Bible today are aware just how common in Jesus’ day was the belief that all our blessings come down to us from heaven. Significantly for our discussion, the Jews believed their Torah pre-existed in heaven before God gave it to Moses;

The Torah is older than the world, for it existed ... before the Creation. <sup>8</sup>

Whoever denies the heavenly origin of the Torah will lose the future life. <sup>9</sup>

From the earliest times the Synagogue has proclaimed the divine origin of the Pentateuch ... <sup>10</sup>

Naturally, this notion is reflected in the NT. When something or someone is said to come down “from heaven”, it means the hand of God (another figure of speech since God is Spirit and has no physical hands!) has supplied something. We are to understand this as classic Hebrew idiom for divine origin. A few examples prove this point.

On one occasion the chief priests and elders challenged Jesus, “**By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority? (Matt. 21:23).** Jesus responds with his own question, “**The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men? (Matt. 21:25 NASB)?** The context makes it clear that John’s baptism was “from heaven” in the sense that John’s ministry came with the full backing and instigation from God Himself.

Another example. The Bible says, **every good gift comes down from above (James 1:17).** None of us for a moment imagines that our families and food and all blessings we enjoy literally drop down from heaven for us to enjoy. No. In Bible-speak we understand this to be a Hebrew idiom expressing the truth that the true source of everything we have is from the Sovereign goodness of God.

God promised that those who brought their offerings and tithes for His work would find **the windows of heaven** opened wide to **pour out for you a blessing until there is no more need (Malachi 3: 10).** It goes without saying those blessings do not literally pre-exist in heaven and physically drop down from windows in the sky.

I am currently looking out my study window and the rain is bucketing down cats and dogs. OK, so you know exactly what I mean. You understand I am speaking figuratively. But imagine if some hundreds of years down the track (another figure of speech!) a future linguist should read this article. Should he interpret my statement literally or figuratively? If literally, he would conclude that I belonged to an ignorant society indeed, or was on hallucinogens!

Surely that linguist would respect the fact that I have come from another world ( another figure of speech that has nothing to do with the fact I am an alien from outer space!) and am using culturally accepted idiom to state a narrative fact. I would feel aggrieved if he did not pay me the respect of delving into my cultural idiomatic expression, and if he took me to mean that cats and dogs were being poured out from a giant bucket in the sky!

It therefore makes good linguistic and contextual sense to respect the cultural setting into which Jesus said, “**I am the bread that came down from heaven? (Jn 6:41)?** Jesus is using a figure of speech.

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<sup>8</sup> Gen. R. viii., and parallels; Weber, ‘Judische Theologie,’ p 15.

<sup>9</sup> Sanh. x.1

<sup>10</sup> a-c, Jewish Encyclopedia.

Let's cement this idea firmly in our minds when we read John 6. Jesus' oft-repeated expression "from heaven" and "from God" is classic Hebrew idiom. Not to recognise this figurative language will tie us up in knots, because we will have to treat some parts of John chapter 6 as literal and other parts as figurative.

This was precisely the mistake the crowd listening to Jesus that day made. They took Jesus' literally when he told them, "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him" (vs. 55-56). Their literalistic interpretation caused them offence. They took Jesus to be speaking about cannibalism! Yet trinitarian doctrine makes the exact same literalistic error when it insists that Jesus personally came down from a pre-existent God-status in heaven! Another puts this *faux pas* succinctly;

If it be said, 'Christ is to be understood literally, as speaking of an actual personal descent from heaven,' then let us apply this mode of interpretation to the other parts of the passage and surrounding context. If Christ came down personally from heaven as the true bread, then he tells us, this very "bread that he will give is his flesh" [Jn 6:51]; "my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" [Jn 6:55]; and that it is necessary to eat the one, and drink the other, in order to secure the possession of eternal life, verse 58. "This" he concludes, "is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth of this bread (Christ's flesh and blood) shall live forever." Now if we interpret Christ's statements here literally, it is thus proved, not only that he came down from heaven, as Trinitarians believe, but that he came down in real flesh and blood, in human nature, not in a Divine nature, for that is not stated. Now will [Trinitarians] pursue the literal interpretation of Christ's language to this, its legitimate conclusion?"<sup>11</sup>

When reading the Bible we must put our Hebrew reading glasses on! It simply will not do to infuse our own definitions into the classic Hebrew idioms Jesus is using. These expressions "from heaven" and "from God" are Jewish idiom pointing to divine origin --- not literal heavenly existence.

Many things in the Bible are said to have come to us "from heaven", without any thought of them literally materializing from God's Throne room. Right here in John chapter 6 the manna that fed the Israelites is said to be **bread out of heaven** (v. 31). This is classic Bible-speak. It does not mean the manna literally dropped out of heaven, but rather that God Himself miraculously supplied the bread for the nation's needs.

First thing to consider when Jesus says he is the bread come down "from heaven", is that he is using metaphor --- the language is figurative and not to be taken literalistically.

**2. SECOND CONSIDERATION.** Jesus is defending his Messianic credentials, and not his eternal Deity. The subject Jesus is discussing is *the heavenly source of his authority* --- not his personal origin from eternity. We have already touched upon this idea, but let's enlarge a little.

The dialogue about the bread from heaven started with Jesus' challenge to the Jews who wanted to forcefully crown him as their king and messiah, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on him the Father who is God has set His seal" (vs. 26-27).

In response the crowd asks, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent" (vs. 28-29).

Note. The question concerns the origin of Jesus' *authority*. Has God the Father, *set His seal* on this man doing these signs? Has Jesus been *sent* by God or is he some self-styled prophet, just a loose cannon? Does Heaven stand behind his ministry and calling? That is the question. Jesus claims to be *sent and sealed* by his Father God. He does not claim to have this authority because he himself is literally God from above.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> George Harris (ed.), "The Christian Pioneer, No. 160, Vol. X111," *The Christian Pioneer, January 1839 - December 1839*, London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co, 1839), pp. 451-452 as quoted in Kegan A. Chandler, *Ibid*, pp 388-389. My underlining.

<sup>12</sup> Remember there are no chapter breaks in the original Greek texts. And the careful reader will observe that all the way through the preceding chapter 5, the same topic of Messiah's God-given authority spices up the whole conversation (e.g. **John 5: 20,22,26-27,30,36-38**). All those verses say **the Son of God has been given** all his words and works by God and

John has already told us that, **there came a man sent from God, whose name was John (John 1: 6)**. This does not mean John the Baptist personally existed in heaven before coming to do his work on earth!

Similarly, many OT prophets are said to have been sent from God, with no thought of them pre-existing before coming into the world. This language of being “sent” ...

[U]nderlines the heavenly origin of *commissioning*, but not of the one commissioned. <sup>13</sup>

When Jesus prayed for his own disciples he said, **Just as You sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world (John 17: 18)**,

The words “just as” should not escape us here; in the same way that Jesus was sent, so his disciples were also sent. This is certainly through commission, not through incarnation. The idiom “coming into the world” seems to have carried then a surprisingly similar meaning to our own modern sense, as even now a parent may remind their child they they “brought them into the world.” ... Jesus furthermore says of all mothers, upon giving birth, experience “*joy that a human being has been brought into the world*” (Jn 16:21). We should recognise that much of the biblical language bears no more metaphysical connotation than it does today. If we ever want to truly understand Jesus and his contemporaries, they simply must be allowed to use figures of speech. <sup>14</sup>

It is special pleading to say that Jesus “came into the world” means he pre-existed his own conception, when the Bible says *every human being also comes into the world (John 1:9)*! I know of no trinitarian who proposes that we humans personally pre-exist our own births because we have come into the world!

Second thing to consider then: Jesus is defending his Messianic commission, his God-given authority --- not his eternal Deity. He has been commissioned --- **sent** --- with heaven’s power to do heaven’s work. This is the note on which the discussion in John 6 finishes. On behalf of all the disciples, Peter confesses, **“We believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the holy one of God”** (v.68 -69).

And come to think of it, this is the whole *raison d’etre* John himself gives for writing his entire Gospel;

**Many other signs Jesus did before his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name (John 20:31).**

By his own admission then, John wrote his Gospel **not** to prove that Jesus is God, **not** to prove Jesus is “God the Son” (another trinitarian term that does not exist in the Bible), but to demonstrate that He is the Son of God, the one commissioned as the Christ whom God appointed to save the world. <sup>15</sup>

**3. THIRD CONSIDERATION.** As always, Jesus has his eye on the future resurrection glory of the New Age.

I imagine somebody interjecting and arguing, “But Greg, aren’t you forgetting a critical piece of information? Doesn’t Jesus tell the crowd, **“I came down from heaven ... What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before” (John 6: 38, 62)?** This surely sounds as if Jesus is going back to the heavenly existence he knew prior to his coming into this world!” Answer that!

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that by himself he can do nothing. John certainly presents a “low Christology” perhaps even more powerfully than the Synoptics!?

<sup>13</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation, Second Edition*, SCM Press, 1989, p 39

<sup>14</sup> Kegan A. Chandler, *Op. Cit.* p391

<sup>15</sup> In light of John’s clear purpose for writing his Gospel, is it not high time for trinitarians to re-examine their interpretive suppositions at **John 1: 1-3**? John writes from his unitary monotheistic Jewish heritage, and over 1,500 times in the OT “the word of God” is never a second person within the so-called ‘godhead’! John is not about to introduce *two* who are God now! Surely “the word” that was “with God” is not a personal “he” but an “it” (i.e. a purpose) as many grammarians acknowledge!

OK. Have you ever noticed how many times in this passage Jesus mentions the future resurrection? It is surprising to me that such an obvious point is usually overlooked. Observe how **again and again Jesus connects the coming resurrection from the dead as the great sign that he really is the bread of life;**

And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all that He has given me I lose nothing, but **raise him up on the last day**. For this is the will of my Father, that every one who beholds the Son, and believes in him, may have eternal life (literally, the life of the Age to Come); and I myself will **raise him up on the last day** ... No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will **raise him up on the last day** ... He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life; and I will **raise him up on the last day** ... As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also shall live because of me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven, not as *the fathers ate, and died*. [But] he who eats this bread **shall live forever** (vs. 39,40,44,54, 58).

The great overarching theme concerns whether Jesus' is the one to raise up from the dead on the last great Day all who have died. Jesus claims to be the Anointed one (Messiah!) authorised to bring into the future Age of Glory all who believe in him. Only the true Bread from heaven has this life-giving power. Consistent with his whole gospel message, Jesus is emphasising the coming new world order --- eschatology and not the old Genesis creation!

It is this dominant prophetic theme of the future Kingdom-glory that we must keep in mind when we read, **"I came down from heaven ... What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before"** (John 6: 38, 62)?<sup>16</sup>

Given that Jesus' burden is to prove he is the one who will raise up the believing dead to bring them into the life of the Age to Come, he is logically asking the crowd if they would be offended if they saw him **"going up" from the grave to stand upon the earth where he was before he had died**.

In other words, Jesus is **predicting his own resurrection from the dead** as the ultimate sign that he himself truly is the Messiah whom God the Father commissioned. Come to think of it, can we think of any greater sign than Jesus himself being raised from the dead, as proof to the world that he is indeed the living bread "from God"?

The manna from heaven that the Jewish nation ate sustained them only temporally. In contrast, the living bread from heaven has power to sustain forever in the New Age. Jesus is announcing he will ascend up from the grave as the first ever immortalized man --- the head of the new humanity to come after him.

To add weight to this meaning, note that Jesus defines what the bread that "came down from heaven" is. He says, **"What then if you should behold the Son of Man ascending where he was before"** (v.62)? It is **the Son of Man --- the flesh and blood human being** --- who is said to go up where he was before.

Even the most convinced trinitarian would never say it was the flesh and blood human Jesus who came down to earth!

The resurrection of Christ is God's vindication of Jesus' claim to having been "sent" from God. The world condemned him. But God justified him. And whoever believes in him, has the same hope of being raised to immortality to enter "eternal life" (which is "the life of the Age to Come");

**"As the Living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also shall live because of me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven ... he who eats this bread shall live forever"**. And then to explain his figurative language, the Lord Jesus states plainly that the bread is his Gospel teaching, **"The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life"** (v. 57,58,63).

Our response? **"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life" ... We believe and are sure that You are the Christ, the holy one of God"** (v.68 -69). Ah, the aroma of fresh bread --- who can resist? Especially when it is spread with the sweet jam of contextual and exegetical sense. Don't eat burnt toast anymore!

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<sup>16</sup> The word for **ascending** (*anabainonta*) is a present, active verbal participle meaning 'going up', 'ascending'.