

THE BREAD OF LIFE

BIBLE TEXT : John 6:22-65

LESSON 94 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: 'Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life' (John 6:27).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

John 6:22-65 (KJV)

²² The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

²³ (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

²⁴ When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

²⁵ And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

²⁶ Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

²⁷ Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

²⁸ Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

³⁰ They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

³¹ Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

³² Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

³³ For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Those Who Seek Jesus for the Loaves and Fishes

1. The multitudes return to Capernaum to find Jesus, John 6:22-25
2. Jesus rebukes them for seeking Him for the loaves and fishes, John 6:26-29
3. God has given the true Manna from Heaven, John 6:30-35

11 The More Important Life Which Jesus Brought

1. He promises a resurrection unto everlasting life for those whom the Father hath given Him, John 6:36-40
2. The Jews murmur because Jesus said, "I am the bread," John 6:41-43
3. Only those drawn by the Father can come to Jesus, John 6:44-46

III Jesus' Assertion that He Himself is the Bread of Life

1. The promise of everlasting life is repeated to those who believe on Him, John 6:47, 48;

John 1:12 (KJV)

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even to them that believe on his name:*

2. Life is imparted and maintained through the "living bread," John 6:49-51
3. They must eat His flesh and drink His Blood, John 6:52-58;

Exodus 12:8 (KJV)

⁸ And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

John 1:29 (KJV)

²⁹ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

4. Jesus explains the "hard saying," John 6:59-65

NOTES:

Meat that Perisheth

When the multitudes came seeking Jesus the day after the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus knew their hearts and said, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." He then used that miracle of feeding the five thousand to teach them the true purpose for which He was sent into this world - to feed the souls of men. The natural man is bent upon taking care of the physical body to the neglect of the spiritual. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught that life was more than food and raiment. He also taught that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). The world is filled with greed and violence today because man has sought to possess much of this world's goods and has neglected the Bread of Life on which his soul could feed.

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Everything that a man accumulates from the cradle to the grave is "meat which

³⁴ Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

³⁶ But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

³⁷ All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

³⁹ And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

⁴⁰ And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁴¹ The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

⁴² And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

⁴³ Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

⁴⁴ No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

⁴⁶ Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

⁴⁷ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

⁴⁸ I am that bread of life.

⁴⁹ Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

⁵⁰ This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

⁵² The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man

perisheth." It is all temporal and will soon pass away. Even the body for which man will give all that he hath will soon return to dust. Only the soul is immortal and lives forever. It is therefore of infinitely more importance that we care for the soul than that we care for the body.

Bread of Life

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Day after day people partake of the natural food that sustains their physical bodies. Just as the body derives strength from food, so does our soul derive spiritual strength from Jesus, the Bread of Life. David said, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray" (Psalm 55:17). If we fail to partake of the Bread of Life we become weak spiritually. Soon we find the enemy overtaking us and we have not the strength to resist his assaults. When Jesus prayed for 40 days and nights He was hungry and no doubt His body was weak, but His spiritual strength was great. The devil attacked Him from every angle; but with grace and power Jesus was able to refute every argument the devil presented, and came out of the wilderness with the power of the Spirit resting upon Him.

We like to look upon a person who has a fine physique - one who looks as if every physical need has been supplied. The Christian admires the one who has dug deep, laid well the plan of his spiritual house, and feeds his soul daily in the spiritual manner. Certainly the Lord, too, must look with pleasure upon the one whose heart has been cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb and who is daily feeding on the heavenly manna.

When the Lord taught His disciples to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," it had a far deeper meaning than just the bread we have on our table day after day. We need that hidden manna that builds and fortifies our soul for the hard things which come across our pathway.

Spiritual Food

Isaiah comes forth with the statement, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Isaiah 55:2). By this he points out the fact that spiritual food far surpasses the natural food. Our bodies will return to dust but our souls will live forever.

It takes life to maintain life. Even our natural food is produced from things that are alive. Food is not made from inanimate things. So in the spiritual, it takes Jesus, the source of life, to produce life in us. He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever."

Manna

The manna the Lord gave the Children of Israel in the wilderness must have had in it every element necessary to sustain physical life. They lived on it for 40 years. The Lord who made our bodies with all their intricate parts, knew just what to put into that tiny little manna that was like the hoarfrost, to build every bone and tissue of the body. That manna took the place of bread, meat, fruit, and vegetables. Jesus the true Manna from Heaven is all we need to sustain our spiritual being

give us *his* flesh to eat?

⁵³ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

⁵⁴ Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

⁵⁶ He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

⁵⁷ As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

⁵⁸ This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

⁵⁹ These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

⁶⁰ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

⁶¹ When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

⁶² *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

⁶³ It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

⁶⁴ But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

⁶⁵ And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

and keep us strong and healthy in the Lord. The manna was miraculously given, and so is our spiritual food.

"Bread of heaven, Feed me till I want no more."

Murmuring

Human nature seems to remain the same down through the centuries. The Children of Israel murmured about the manna the Lord gave them day after day. Their soul loathed the light bread.

When Jesus was telling His disciples that He was the Bread of Life and said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they murmured and said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" From that time forth, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Today people are saying that the Gospel is too strait, too narrow; they cannot live it. They are murmuring at God's great plan of redemption and turning their back upon it. They are refusing to partake of the Bread of Life, to eat of that Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, thereby cutting off their hope of Heaven and eternal life. God help us not to murmur and bleach our bones in the wilderness as did the Children of Israel!

There was a time when David was envious at the prosperity of the wicked and he thought he had cleansed his heart in vain, until he went into the sanctuary and partook of that bread of Heaven. Then his spiritual understanding was opened and he saw their end (Psalm 73).

The Emblems

Just before His crucifixion, when Jesus had eaten the Passover supper with His disciples, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28). We can see how necessary it is to eat of the true Bread which came down from Heaven, that we may have eternal life abiding in us.

The Invitation

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The poor in this world have many times been turned away hungry by those who were able to give them something to eat. But Jesus never turns a hungry soul away, be they rich or poor, bond or free, black or white. The Gospel reaches out to whosoever will.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What food is called the staff of life?
- 2 Who is the Bread of Life?
- 3 What food did God give the Children of Israel in the wilderness?
- 4 Did they have the true Bread from Heaven?
- 5 Why did the people murmur?
- 6 Why did many people turn back from following Jesus?
- 7 What does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of God?