

I Am the Bread of Life, Part One

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. John 6:35 - "And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

B. Background

1. The Bread of Life sermon is believed to have been delivered near the synagogue of Capernaum. (Greek: ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς, artos tēs zōēs)
2. He had just fed the 5000 with a lad's lunch. The multitude wanted to force Jesus to be their king; He goes to a mountain to be alone, and His disciples attempt to cross the sea by boat.
3. Late that evening, a storm arises threatening the boat, and Jesus walks across the sea to them. He calms the water, and they go on toward Capernaum, where they encounter the same multitude. They crossed the sea on Tiberian boats in order to pursue Jesus.
4. It is often called the Bread of Life sermon, just as the Matthew 5 sermon is called the Sermon on the Mount.
5. It is actually part of a series of "I AM" sermons presented by Jesus as He was revealing Himself and His mission in this world.
 - a. "I Am the Light of the World"
 - b. "I Am the Door"
 - c. "I Am the Good Shepherd"
 - d. "I Am the Resurrection and the Life"
 - e. "I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life"
 - f. "I Am the True Vine"
 - g. "I Am the Christ"
 - h. "I Am the Son of God"
6. It has been mistakenly taught in liturgical faiths that this is Jesus' "Eucharist" instruction. This is untrue for several reasons:
 - a. The Eucharist would necessarily have to include dried fish; the adherents do not include fish in it -- inconsistent
 - b. It trivializes the context, which encompasses the entire incarnate God, not merely His body
 - c. If it is speaking of the bread of the Lord's Supper, it contradicts the texts that speak of the institution of the Supper on Passover
 - d. Some brethren also mistakenly believe this passage is talking about the Body of the Lord in the Communion. They are equally in error on this

C. Consider the following from John 6:22-59

1. The Significance of the Bread
2. The Source of the Bread
3. The Savoring of the Bread
4. The Supply of the Bread

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BREAD OF LIFE

A. What does the bread mean? - John 6:35

1. Bread is a universal comestible. Every country in the world has some form of bread. Even in ancient times they made bread, and it has been found fossilized in many archeological digs. It can and has been made from every form of grain and seed on earth
2. Bread is this associated with life, health, nourishment, and prosperity.

B. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life."

1. This is an exclusive claim. This kind of bread cannot be obtained anywhere else.
2. John 14:6; Matt. 27:43; John 1:34, 14:9; Acts 4:12
3. These statements cannot be reconciled with the statements or claims of any other man or faith. Whatever bread Jesus happens to be is unique in this world
4. There is only one Christ; and therefore, there is only one manifestation that is the bread of which Jesus speaks - Matt. 23:10; Isa. 9:6
5. Jesus and Jesus alone is the bread of life.

C. Jesus, as the Bread of Life, is the One who gives and sustains life

1. He is the One Who gives the food that leads to eternal life - 27
2. He is the One God the Father sealed and ordained to this purpose - 27
3. He is the One that God the Father sent - 29, 40, 57
4. He is the One in Whom we must believe - 29
5. He is the True Bread from heaven - 32
6. He is the One Who came down out of heaven - 33
7. He is the Bread that gives life to the world - 33
8. He is the Bread of Life - 35, 48
9. He is the One Who promises to end our hunger - 35
10. He is the One Who does the will of the Father - 38
11. He is the One Who will raise up believers in the last day - 39, 40
12. He is the Son - 40
13. He is the One Who declares the Father's will - 40
14. He is the One Who grants eternal life to believers - 40, 47
15. He is the One men approach who have learned of the Father - 45
16. He is the One Who has seen the Father - 46
17. He provides the bread of which those who eat will not die - 50, 51
18. He is the Living Bread which came down from heaven - 51
19. He is the One Who gives His flesh for the life of the world - 51
20. He is the One Who gives His flesh and blood for food - 54, 55
21. He dwells in the one who partakes of Him - 56
22. He is the One in Whom partakers of Him dwell - 56
23. He is the One Who lives according to the Father - 57
24. He is the One of Whom partakers of Him will live by Him - 57

D. What is the "bread" in this context?

1. Jesus refers to it as food in 27
2. It is that which gives eternal life - 27, 33, 35, 48, 50, 51
3. He says that this bread is His flesh - 35, 48, 51

4. It is contrasted with manna of which those who ate died - 49
5. It is not referring to the Lord's Supper
 - a. In this context, the bread is Jesus himself.
 - b. It is not a loaf of bread that gives eternal life, but Jesus Himself that gives eternal life.
 - c. It is the teaching from and about Jesus which we must believe in order to be saved, namely:
 - 1) That He was sent from God the Father
 - 2) That He always did the Father's will
 - 3) That He represents the Father
 - 4) That He teaches what the Father wants us to hear
 - 5) That this teaching includes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - 6) That this teaching includes the fact that those who believe and obey Jesus will have eternal life.
 - d. The key that unlocks this sermon is 45

Conclusion:

- A. "The need of the immaterial is the most deeply rooted of all needs. One must have bread; but before bread, one must have the Truth." (Victor Hugo)
- B. "As well as physical hunger, man also suffers from another form of hunger that cannot be sated with ordinary food. It is a hunger for life, a hunger for love, a hunger for eternity. Manna was the sign that prefigured the food that satisfies this profound hunger present in man. Jesus gives us this nourishment, or rather, He Himself is the living bread that gives life to the world. It is not a simple form of nourishment to sate our bodies, like manna; Christ is the bread of the last times, able to give life, eternal life, because the substance of this bread is the love of God." (John Lateran, 6/20/14)
- C. We will consider: The Source of the Bread, The Savoring of the Bread, and The Supply of the Bread in the next lesson