

JESUS IS THE BREAD OF LIFE

"WHO IS JESUS?" FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE - Week 27, February 11

JESUS IS THE BREAD OF LIFE

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

JOHN 6:35

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for them too.

Jesus was starting to become pretty popular. Crowds followed him, hoping to see more miraculous signs. They wondered if he could do something amazing for them too.

It was almost time for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when the Israelites celebrated their deliverance from Egypt. It was a time of looking back, but also a time of looking forward. They knew another prophet was coming, and they sure were sick of those Romans ruling over them.

Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, more than five thousand people. He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" (John 6:5). It wasn't that Jesus didn't know what to do, but he said this to test his disciples.

The disciples thought this was an impossible task. They didn't have enough money to feed all these people. They found a boy with five small loaves of bread and two little fish, but really, how could that help?

Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down.

Then he took the boy's bread, gave thanks, and passed it out to the people. He did the same with the fish. Everyone had enough to eat, and there were even twelve baskets of leftovers!

The people were amazed and said, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world" (John 6:14).

They should make him king! He could heal people and he could give them bread, just like Moses! Maybe he was the one who would free them from the Romans and make their lives easy again!

Jesus knew what they were thinking and withdrew to a mountain by himself. Evening came, and the disciples got in a boat to sail to Capernaum. A storm came, and the seas became rough. Suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward them. They were frightened, but Jesus assured them, and they took him in the boat. Immediately the boat reached the shore.

The next day everyone was confused. How did Jesus get to the other side of the lake? He didn't leave with the disciples. So they asked him.

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill" (6:26).

Jesus knew they were coming because they wanted

physical things. They wanted food, health, freedom, and prosperity. But Jesus hadn't come to fill their bellies; he had come to fill their souls and save them from their sins. The people desired more bread, but Jesus wanted them to desire *him*!

The people asked for another sign, and still thinking about bread, they reminded him of the manna in the desert. "Do a miracle like that!" they begged.

Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world" (John 6:32–33 ESV).

"Sir, give us this bread always," they said (6:34 ESV).

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (6:35).

But the people didn't get it. They grumbled about what he said, wondering how he could say he had come down from heaven. Didn't they know his parents?

They continued to argue, and Jesus continued to teach them. "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53). What? How could they possibly eat

his flesh? This sounded crazy to them, and many followers turned away.

But Jesus was indeed the bread from heaven. He was the Bread of Life, born in Bethlehem, the "house of bread." And the night before his death he would offer his disciples the Passover bread, saying, "This is my

body, broken for you. Eat it in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19, paraphrase).

You see, Jesus wants us to desire him like we desire food. Jesus, the Bread of Life, can satisfy our souls. When we want him, crave him, depend on him, and believe in him—it is then that we receive life.³



REFLECT

1. List all the Bible stories you can think of involving bread. How might they point us to Jesus?
2. Have you ever made bread from scratch? It's a lot of work! Read Genesis 3:19. (Note that some translations say "bread" and some say "food.") We have it pretty easy, but for most of human history, people have had to work very hard to make their daily bread. What work must we do to receive Jesus as our bread? See John 6:27–29.
3. What are we doing when we celebrate the Lord's Supper today? See 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.
4. Do an online search for Passover bread. What does it look like? How might it point us to Jesus? See Isaiah 53:5.