

1. The feeding of the 5000 is found in all four Gospels: Mt. 14:15-21; Mk. 6:35-44; Lk. 9:12-17; Jn. 6:4-13. Please read all four accounts. The Synoptics (Mt., Mk., Lk.) tell us that before this miracle Jesus taught the people and spoke of the Kingdom of God and healed the sick. The Synoptics tell us about the end of the day when the worried disciples ask Jesus to dismiss the 5000. John includes what happened earlier in the day. Everything that Jesus says in all four Gospels to the disciples tests their faith to make them look to the Provider. But they fail.
2. Jn. alone speaks of signs, vs. 2 and 14. Jn. calls miracles "signs". He records six great signs: 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 5:1-18; 6:1-15; 9:1-41; and, 11:1-44. They reveal Jesus' divinity, 2:11. Their goal is the eternal salvation of the believer, 20:30-31. In many cases people did not believe but rejected the signs. Cf. 11:46-54. The raising of Lazarus was one of the causes of Jesus' death.
3. The signs of Jesus attracted these people to Jesus. Jn. 6:2. He says later in vs. 26: "You seek me not because you saw signs but because you ate of the bread and were filled." They were seeking only earthly bread, not eternal life. Vs. 27. Vs. 15 tells us that they wanted to force Jesus to become their king. They wanted an earthly king and an earthly kingdom. But Jesus' kingship and kingdom are not of this world. See Jn. 18:36-37.
4. Jesus was tempted in all things just as we are but He did not sin. Heb. 4:15. Jn. 6:15 tells us that when they wanted to make Him King He returned again to the mountain alone. The Synoptics tell us that He went there to pray (Mt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46). He was severely tempted by the people to make Him King. He needed to pray. Furthermore, evidently the disciples were tempted too. That's why Jesus quickly sent the disciples away. Also, Jesus knew that all these people would leave Him the next day and that the disciples too would be tempted to leave Him when He did not feed them more bread. Jesus even asked them whether they wanted to leave. Jn. 6:67. Jesus' prayers were answered. The disciples gave a wonderful confession. Vss. 68-69.
5. Jesus can sympathize with us when we are tempted to sin. Heb. 4:15. He can help us when we are tempted. Heb. 2:18. And we know that He intercedes for us. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25.
6. Vs. 4 tells us that the Passover was near. This happened just a year before Jesus suffered and died. We don't know whether or not Jesus attended this Passover in Jerusalem.
7. *this* ~~At this point~~ (Jn. 6) Jesus is at the zenith of His Galilean ministry but from <sup>that</sup> point on rejection of Him becomes more intense.
8. Jesus had compassion on these people (Mt. 14:14; Mk. 6:34) and so He told them about the kingdom of God and cured those who needed help. Then He fed all of them bread and fish.
9. A denarius (the coin mentioned in vs. 7) amounted to a day's wage for a man. Therefore, two hundred denarii amounted to about eight months' wages. That was very likely the amount the disciples had in their treasury. Judas was the treasurer.
10. Luther said: "The great need of the disciples on this occasion was that, though they could think and figure, they did not believe or realize what kind of Lord they had in Christ. And that is the universal need even today, not only when we need food but also when we realize all sorts of necessities. We know how to figure and calculate carefully so that our needs might be filled. But when help does not come immediately as we would like it, we get nothing out of our careful figuring and calculating except sorrow and loss of spirit; It would be much better for us to commend the whole matter to God and not think so much about our needs."
11. Though the people used the correct terms (the Prophet, the One Who is coming) their interpretation was carnal and spiritually dead. And they did not appreciate the miracle in its true character.

Sermon Outline for Jn. 6:1-15, Lent IV

Theme: THE SAVIOR OF ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE

Introduction: Our theme is quoted from I Tim. 4:10. God has special care for His own. Similarly, Paul says at Gal. 6:10 "Let us do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith." A good father cares for all the children in his neighborhood but he cares especially for his children. Jesus is the Savior of all men but especially of those who believe in Him.

I-JESUS THE SAVIOR OF ALL MEN

- A-Jesus meets a great multitude. All four Gospels tell us about this. Mt. 14:14; Mk. 6:34; Lk. 9:11; Jn. 6:2. When one reads the entire account one sees that these people were not believers. They merely wanted signs. They merely wanted bread and fish. They wanted to make Jesus their king. When He preached to them the next day (Jn. 6:22-59) about Himself, the bread of life, they left Him. They were unbelievers.
- B-Jesus loved the great multitude. All four Gospels speak about this. He felt compassion for them and healed their sick. He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He taught them many things. In particular He spoke to them about the Kingdom of God. Although He knew that they only wanted signs He healed their sick.
- C-He proved to them that He was the Son of God. Jn. 20:31 tells us that Jesus performed signs to prove to people that He was the Christ, the Son of God and that by faith in His name they would have eternal life. In His sermon the next day Jesus offered them eternal life again and again. Ps. 104:27 and 145:15 tell us that God feeds all creatures and man all the time. But this miracle of multiplying the loaves and fishes was a special sign to these unbelievers that Jesus was the Son of God Who had compassion on them.
- D-In spite of His great love, these unbelievers rejected Him. They called Him the Prophet who was coming into the world but they wanted only an earthly king. Jn. 6:14,15. The next day (vs. 60) after Jesus taught them more they left Him.

II-JESUS THE SAVIOR ESPECIALLY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE

- A-He is compassionate with their weaknesses. At this point the disciple had been with Jesus two years. They had seen many miracles. But their faith was weak. Jesus tested them. He said: "You give them something to eat." They should have said: "We don't have enough but we know that You do." He also said: "Where will we buy bread so that these people can eat?" They should have said: "We don't know but You know. Jesus did not scold them. He multiplied the loaves and fishes.
- B-He shields them in their temptations. Mt. and Mk. tell us that at the end of this day Jesus commanded the disciples to get into a boat and cross the sea. This happened while the multitude was trying to make Him an earthly king. When the disciples left Jesus went back up the mountain alone to pray. Why? Very likely the disciples were tempted to join the multitude. We know that the disciples often wanted an earthly king and kingdom. Jesus shielded them from this idea. He sent them away and He prayed for them.
- C-He tested and rescued His disciples the next day. Read Jn. 6:22-59. The multitude came back the next day. Jesus did not feed them bread and fish. He preached the Gospel. He offered Himself, the bread of life from heaven Who gives everlasting life. The multitude left. Then Jesus asked the disciples: "You do not want to go away also, do you?" Peter answered for all: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God." Jesus tested, supported and strengthened His disciples. Jesus is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe in Him.

## Sermon Outline for Jn. 6:48-57, Lent IV

### Theme: THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN

Introduction: After Jesus fed the 5000 they came back because they wanted more bread for their stomachs. But Jesus wanted to give them not only physical bread but also the Bread from heaven, Himself. To eat Him, to believe in Him gives eternal life. The first vs. of our text guides us at all times: "I tell you the absolute truth, the one who believes in Me has life eternal."

#### I-THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The main passages are: Ex. 16:14-36; Num. 11:7-9; Deut. 8:3.16; Josh. 5:12; Ps. 78:24.25. It is mentioned at Heb. 9:4 and Rev. 2:17.

A-It was miraculous. It was not Moses who gave the children of Israel bread from heaven but rather the heavenly Father. It did not grow from the ground. It rained daily, except on the Sabbath Day, from heaven. This lasted for forty years while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. When they arrived in the promised land the heavenly bread ceased to fall.

B-It was only temporal. The fathers ate the manna in the wilderness but they died. Manna only sustained life. It did not give life. It was the kind of bread we pray for in the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." Daily bread keeps the body alive and active. It is necessary. But more than that is necessary. When Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread Jesus repeated what Deut. 8:3 says: "Man will not live on bread alone but on every word which comes from the mouth of God." Even the O.T. children of God knew this. Deut. 8:3 reads: "God humbled you, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord." The miraculous manna served the purpose of reminding God's children that they needed spiritual bread from the Word of God.

#### II-THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A-It is miraculous. Jesus says: "I am the bread of life." That means: "I am the bread which gives life, eternal life." Manna could not do that. Our bread today cannot do that. Jesus said "I am the way, the truth and the life." He also said: "I am the resurrection and the life." That is why He says in our text: "I tell you the absolute truth, he who believes in Me has life eternal."

B-It is eternal. Four times in this chapter Jesus promises: "I will raise him up on the last day." Vss. 39, 40, 44, 54. Think of how bodies grow old, waste away and die. Think of how they decay in their graves and are forgotten. But, Jesus will raise the believer on the last day and give him a spiritual body (I Cor. 15). That is why He says in our text: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever, and the bread which I will give is my flesh (given) in behalf of the life of the world." He is speaking of the atonement for all people.

C-It gives life now already. Jesus says in vs. 53: "I tell you the absolute truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves." He is not speaking about the Lord's Supper. He is talking about faith in the Lifegiver. What makes people spiritually alive now already? Faith in Jesus. What makes new creatures out of sinners? Faith in Jesus. What makes people joyful over the prospect of being raised on judgment day to be with their Lord forever? Faith in the Lifegiver.

Conclusion: Most of these people left Jesus. Vss. 60 and 66. But Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words which give eternal life. And we have come to believe and know that you the Holy One of God." Lord, make us like the disciples!

1. The feeding of the 5000 is found in all four Gospels (Mt. 14:13-21; Mk. 6:32-44; Lk. 9:10-17; Jn. 6:1-13). But the bread of life discourse (Jn. 6:26-58) is found only in Jn.'s Gospel.
2. This large group of people did not believe in Jesus. See vs. 36. They wanted only physical bread, not the Bread of Life. Vss. 26-27. At the end of the discourse they left Jesus, still in unbelief. Vss. 60 and 66. They grumbled. Vs. 41. They fought with each other. Vs. 52. They remained spiritually dead. Jesus did not satisfy them.
3. Natural man cannot become a Christian by his own powers. Only God can do such a miracle. See vss. 44, 29, 37, 39. Faith and conversion is a work of God, not of natural man. These people were still unconverted.
4. Moses gave Israel manna which can only sustain life. But the Father gave Jesus, the Bread of Life. This Bread gives life. Four times Jesus says: "I will raise him up on the last day." Vss. 39, 40, 44, 54. Who is "him"? The one whom the Father gives to Jesus, the one who believes in Jesus, the one whom the Father has drawn to Jesus, the one who eats Jesus' flesh and drinks His blood. In this chapter Jesus is earnestly inviting these unbelievers to believe in Him. He is not celebrating the Lord's Supper.
5. Vss. 29, 35, 40 and 64 show clearly that this discourse is only about believing, not eating and drinking the Lord's Supper.
6. Jesus says "I am the bread of life." He does not say: "I am the bread and wine of life." He is not talking about the Lord's Supper. That was instituted one year later.
7. In vs. 54 Jesus says: "The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." He is talking about how a person becomes a Christian, not the eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper. St. Augustine rightly said: "Here eating and drinking simply means to believe."
8. In vs. 53 Jesus says: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood you do not have life in yourselves." This cannot be speaking of the Lord's Supper. If Jesus were speaking of the Lord's Supper it would mean: "Unless you go to the Lord's Supper you don't have God's life in you." That would automatically eliminate all the O.T. saints.
9. Jesus speaks here about "flesh and blood" not "body and blood" as He does when speaking about the Lord's Supper.
10. In vs. 51 Jesus says: "The bread which I give is my flesh (given) in behalf of the life of the world." He is talking about what He has done for the whole world, not the Lord's Supper which is only for Christians.
11. In vs. 51 Jesus says: "If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever." That is not what He said about the Lord's Supper. Read I Cor. 11:27-32. If anyone eats and drinks the Lord's Supper unworthily, that is, in unbelief, he eats and drinks condemnation to himself. The bread of life is for all. The Lord's Supper is only for those who repent of their sins and believe Jesus' Words.
12. At Mt. 4:4 Jesus quoted Deut. 8:3: "Man will not live on bread alone but on every Word which comes out of the mouth of God". The 5000 wanted bread alone, not the Word of God. At the end of this chapter (Jn. 6:67) when Jesus asked the disciples: "You don't wish to go away too, do you?" Peter answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that You are the Holy One of God." That's what Jn. 6 is all about. It is talking about spiritual eating. The Formula of Concord, Art. VII says: "This spiritual eating, however, is precisely faith--namely that we hear, accept with faith, and appropriate to ourselves the Word of God, in which Christ, true God and man, together with all the benefits that he has acquired for us by giving his body for us into death and by shedding his blood for us (that is to say, the grace of God, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and everlasting life), is presented."