

## SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT

**JOHN 6:25** 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.**

**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.**

### NOTES

# Jesus: The Bread of Life

Lesson Text: John 6:25-40

Related Scriptures: John 6:41-52; Matthew 16:1-4

TIME: A.D. 29

PLACE: Capernaum

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**GOLDEN TEXT**—"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29).

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## *Lesson Exposition*

### **INQUIRIES—John 6:25-29**

#### **Seeking bread (John 6:25-27).**

Following the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus had sent the disciples away in a boat while He went up on a mountain to pray. During the night, a fierce storm had arisen on the Sea of Galilee. At the height of the storm, Jesus came walking on the water to the disciples' rescue. After He entered the boat, they immediately found themselves on shore where they were headed (vs. 21). The next morning the crowds back on the other side of the lake were unable to find Jesus.

The people, therefore, got into boats that had just arrived from Tiberias (vs. 23) and sailed to Capernaum in hopes of finding Him (vs. 24). Upon their arrival and seeing Jesus there, they were puzzled. They knew He had not sailed with the disciples, and they knew there had been no other boats available (vs. 22). They expressed their confusion by asking Jesus when He got there. They were mystified by His presence in Capernaum when there seemed no means for Him to have traveled there.

Jesus responded by ignoring their actual question, speaking instead di-

rectly to what He knew was the motive for their search. They were not seeking Him to benefit spiritually from His teachings. Rather, they were just hoping to get more bread to eat. Their pursuit was not for the spiritual sustenance that His presence and teaching offered, but merely for more free food. Jesus said their motives were wrong. They sought material satisfaction when what they really needed was true, spiritual food.

Instead of chasing after physical bread, they needed to focus their energies on gaining the eternal bread that is Jesus Himself. Eating physical food might sustain them for another day, but eternal life would allow them to live forever. Moreover, it was Jesus' to give because of His Father's full approval of His mission.

#### **The work of God (John 6:28-29).**

Since God had set His seal of approval on Jesus (vs. 27), they asked what works they could do that would likewise gain God's approval. They had misunderstood what Jesus had said. He was able to give them eternal life, and there was nothing in His statement that indicated they needed to work for it. Their question implies that whatever

God might require of them, they would do it to earn His favor.

Jesus explained that the work of God was genuine trust in the One He had sent, referring to Himself. Salvation has never required works and still does not. It is a matter of believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

### **DEMANDS—John 6:30-34**

#### **Demanding a sign (John 6:30-31).**

In a blatant manifestation of spiritual dullness, the crowd asked, "What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?" They had just seen Jesus abundantly multiply five loaves of bread and two small fish to feed over five thousand people and had found Him across the sea with no conventional means of transportation available, yet they asked for an additional miracle to prove who He was! Jesus was claiming to be the Authorized Representative of God Himself, so they were still asking for something visible beyond what they had already seen.

The crowd used the same word John uses throughout his Gospel to refer to the miracles of Jesus: *sēmeion*. It was the word indicating that His miracles were not just extraordinary phenomena, but signs that pointed to His divine mission and deity. They then slyly asked Him to provide miraculous bread as Moses had done when the Israelites were in the wilderness. How could Jesus deny such an evident display of spiritual interest?

They even quoted Scripture as proof of their sincerity: "As it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat" (John 6:31; cf. Ps. 78:24; 105:40). They were trying to sound spiritual when all they really wanted was another free meal. But their request betrayed the spiritual blindness of their thinking. "They thought God's order is see and believe. But the divine order is believe and see (cf. John 11:40). They did not

have faith or spiritual perception, but they understood that Jesus was proclaiming something new" (Walvoord and Zuck eds., *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Victor).

The question and statement from this crowd reveals the hardness of their hearts. They seemed to esteem the bread Jesus had provided for the five thousand as a very minor miracle compared to what Moses had done; so in their estimation He needed to do something bigger.

**True bread from heaven (John 6:32-34).** Jesus explained that it was not Moses who had accomplished the provision of bread for the Israelites. The real giver of bread had been His Father in heaven.

Jesus then made reference to "the true bread from heaven" (vs. 32) that God was offering; something distinct and greater than the food provided through Moses. Physical bread gives temporary satisfaction, but now God was offering something spiritual and eternal. He was offering them a new type of bread from heaven, and it was provision enough for giving "life unto the world" (vs. 33). The difference was that physical bread provided only for physical life, but what was needed was provision for spiritual life, and God was now making provision for that life.

### **EXPLANATIONS—John 6:35-40**

**The Bread of Life (John 6:35-36).** As soon as the people asked for the bread He had described, He identified Himself as that bread from heaven. He called Himself "the bread of life" and claimed that "he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." In a carefully worded statement, Jesus claimed to *be* the bread, not merely that He had that bread. He Himself is all anyone needs for total, eternal spiritual satisfaction; by contrast, physical

food and drink satisfy for only a short time.

We must understand that Jesus was offering spiritual fulfillment in the ultimate sense. He was not promising that a believer would no longer suffer disappointments or trials; He was offering Himself as the supreme source of help in every situation.

Those standing before Jesus that day could see Him, but they nevertheless were not responding to Him in faith. There could be no spiritual satisfaction without faith. We must seek Jesus for the spiritual, eternal contentment He provides, not primarily for the comforts of this present life.

**Assurance of salvation (John 6:37-40).** Jesus had just made the first of seven "I am" statements recorded by John (vs. 35). Although many of the people were not responding in faith toward Him, God's plan was not failing. There nevertheless were some few who were coming to Him in true faith. He spoke of them as gifts from His Father, and assured them that He would never lose anyone the Father gave Him.

What a reassurance it is for us to be able to offer salvation through faith in Jesus to anyone. We can be certain that they will always be received by Jesus. The ability to genuinely trust in Jesus Christ comes from the divine enabling of the Father accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot take credit for our salvation because even our faith is a gift from Him (cf. Eph. 2:8-9). But all who believe are accepted.

Once again, Jesus claimed to have come down from heaven. This time He explicitly added that it was in order to accomplish His Father's will. He had not come to do His own will, only that of the Father.

It is the definite will of the Father that everyone He has given to the Son will remain His forever. Jesus put a

great deal of emphasis on the importance and work of His Father in this enterprise. He had been sent by the Father, believers are given to Him by the Father, and it is the Father's will that every believer have eternal life and be raised to new life on "the last day" (vs. 40).

Jesus would later expound on this further by saying, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). Jesus will never lose anyone who belongs to Him! Once we have received Jesus as Lord and Saviour, we possess eternal life.

—Keith E. Eggert.

## QUESTIONS

1. What caused the Jews to be puzzled when they found Jesus in Capernaum?
2. What response did Jesus give to their question?
3. What contrast did He make with their desire for physical bread?
4. What did the people ask about works?
5. Why was their request for an additional sign ridiculous?
6. How did the Jews attempt to lend validity to their request?
7. What did their request reveal about their true attitude?
8. What did Jesus mean by referring to Himself as the Bread of Life?
9. What did Jesus say about those the Father gives to Him?
10. How can we have assurance of eternal life?

—Keith E. Eggert.

## PRACTICAL POINTS

1. God knows when we are truly seeking Him and when we have an ulterior motive (John 6:25-26).
2. Our focus must be on the eternal things in life, not the temporal (vs. 27).
3. We can do nothing to earn God's favor; rather, we receive it through Jesus Christ (vss. 28-29).
4. God's spiritual gift of Jesus Christ is greater than any physical blessing we can receive (vss. 30-33).
5. Our greatest spiritual need can be met only by Jesus Christ, for only He can save us (vss. 34-35).
6. When we turn to Jesus for salvation, we are kept for eternity (vss. 36-40).

—Brandon Byler.

## RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. What do you think the people were trying to determine in their question in John 6:25, and why was it important to them?
2. What things in life make focusing on eternal values so difficult (vss. 27-29)?
3. Have you found yourself sometimes desiring the gift more than the Giver? How can you change this (vss. 30-34)?
4. Why do many people not believe in Jesus even when given all the facts? How should we deal with them (vs. 36)?
5. In what sense is "seeing" the Son necessary for believing upon Him (vs. 40)?

—Brandon Byler.

## Golden Text Illuminated

**"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29).**

Those who believe in Jesus have everlasting life (cf. John 6:47). Salvation is neither gained through religion nor earned by works. Salvation is both unearned and undeserved.

The Jews had missed Jesus' point that He alone is the Bread of Life (cf. John 6:26-27). They were only thinking about their physical needs and not their spiritual needs.

Are you missing the point too? Do you think that your good works, ministry services, or prestigious title merits salvation? Those things are good, but without faith in Jesus Christ, they are like filthy rags before the Lord (Isa. 64:6).

Man is spiritually dead and cannot save himself (cf. Rom. 3:10-18, 23; Eph. 2:1-2). If you do not trust Jesus as Lord of your life, there is no other way to salvation.

Believe that Jesus is the Son of God (cf. John 20:31; I John 5:5, 13). No one can come to Jesus unless the Father, who sent Him, draws him or her (cf. John 6:37, 44, 65). In other words, God is the initiator in the entire salvation process. Christ affirms that He was sent by God into this world to save sinners (cf. John 3:16,17; I John 4:9-10).

Are you hungry for truth? Have you ever trusted in Jesus Christ by faith alone? It is the work of God that you believe in Him, for He alone is the Bread of Life.

—Kenneth E. Ware.