



JOHN 6:26-36 | JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE

- Verse 26 –
 - Here Jesus chastises the crowd for not going deep enough in their understanding. To follow Him **because ye saw the miracles** would be a *good thing*.
 - The miracles testify to His identity as Messiah, and Messiah *should be followed*. However, their level of satisfaction was of a baser sort: *they enjoyed the food*.
- Verse 27 –
 - The followers were told to **labour**, but that it must be for the right thing. Not for **the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth**. He is certainly not giving dietary advice, but spiritual instruction.
 - There is an interesting contrast between *work* and **give**. They are instructed to *work* for that which will be *given*. The gift is **meat which endureth**. The promises of the Kingdom included provisions unto **everlasting life**.
 - The bottom line of this passage is that it is incompatible with a grace message. They are told to *work for the Kingdom, which is given to you from above*.
 - The **Son of man** (the theocratic name of Jesus) is **sealed by God the Father**. This phrase is important for thoughts beginning in verse 37, in which Jesus discusses the appearance that He may lose some of what the Father has given. Jesus here says that losing *any* would be an impossibility.
- Verse 28 –
 - The people clearly understood that they were to **labour** (v. 27), and seem to indicate that their motivations had not been up to the standard.
 - Their question, **what shall we do**, should be commended and shows a desire on their part for greater understanding, as well as a willingness to **work the works of God**.
- Verse 29 –
 - Though the emphasis here is on **believe**, nothing is given that says, “only believe,” or “faith without works” as would come later (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - Belief was always fundamental to the fulfillment of the Torah by a Jew, but works were also fundamentally involved (else Paul would not have to later teach freedom from works).
 - Because of the experience of our dispensation, we tend to read grace into passages such as this. On the flip side, we also read works into our dispensation through passages like this.
 - We should take care to only allow the text to say what the text says. In this case, it says that belief is foundational, and nothing more.
- Verses 30-31 –
 - If God wanted His people to **believe on him whom he hath sent** (v. 29), then the *Sent One* should have a sign to prove His origins. In the demand for a sign by Jesus, the people were saying, *we believe in God, we are still deciding on you*.

- As a Biblical basis for their demand for a sign, they mention the work God did through Moses, providing **bread from heaven to eat** (a quote of Nehemiah 9:15, and similar in Psalm 78:24). Perhaps the people were thinking that the feeding of the 5,000 would be an ongoing provision, as it was in the days of Moses.
- Verse 32 –
 - Jesus corrects the crowd: *the bread did not come from Moses, but from heaven*. He then says that **true bread** comes from the Father.
 - There is a comparison being made, as well as a spiritual lesson.
 - The comparison: the *manna* was perishable, something better is needed.
 - The spiritual lesson: something better than **bread** is the answer to your problem.
 - Certainly **true bread** is not *better-quality bread*, but sustenance for eternity.
- Verse 33 -
 - In case the audience did not pick up on the meaning of **true bread**, Jesus says that the **bread of God** is a *person, he which cometh down from heaven*.
 - Notice that NASB and Young's Literal say, "that which" rather than **he which**.
 - The article is masculine, but bread itself is a masculine noun in Greek, thus grammatically it would normally be *that which*.
 - The context of verse 35 we know clearly that the reference is to Jesus.
- Verse 34 –
 - The response of the people displays the grammatical possibility of *that which* rather than **he which**.
 - The people desired **this bread** in that they desired their physical needs to be taken care of in the coming Kingdom fulfilment.
 - The people wanted this bread **evermore**, recognizing the need for continual provision, and giving evidence that, indeed, they did desire Jesus to do the miracle of the feeding as a daily provision (see note, vv. 30-31).
- Verse 35 –
 - Now clearly Jesus removes all roads that may lead to misinterpretation and says, **I am the bread of life**.
 - Jesus claims to be the one who is the *sustaining provision* for hunger and thirst.
 - This hunger and thirst was certainly physical, but likely meant to be understood spiritually and emotionally as well.
 - Jesus gives two requirements: *come to Jesus* and *believe on Jesus*.
 - Once again, be reminded that this is not the Gospel which we preach, though it would not be untrue to our Gospel.
 - In our dispensation we ask people to *come* and to *believe*. But for those hearing Jesus, *what were they to believe?*
 - They did not even know about (nor would they have believed) in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (compare Luke 18:33-34).
 - Their belief was that Jesus was sent from God and was the promised Messianic Redeemer/King.
- Verse 36 –
 - These words contain a strong indictment on the people. Jesus *was the sign* they were looking for, yet they **believe not**.
 - This reminds us of the introduction to the book in which **his own received him not** (Jn. 1:11).