

He Loved Me . . .

He Loves Me Lots

The Gospel of John

Text

John 6:22-40

Topic

Jesus invites Israel to believe He is the Living Bread that comes down out of Heaven

Title

“The Invite of the Living Bread”

You won't find these at Panera. They are the world's four most expensive breads.

- The Shepherd Loaf (Great Britain. \$21 per loaf).
- Harrods Roquefort and Almond Sourdough Bread (Also Great Britain. \$24.50 per loaf).
- The Royal Bloomer (Yes. Great Britain. \$97.34 per loaf).
- Gold Leaf Bread (\$120.73 per loaf).

Gold Leaf Bread is the creation of master baker Moreno, owner of the *Pan Pina Bakery* in Spain. The 70 year-old family bakery produces 50 different types of bread. What makes this one so special is that Moreno uses *250mg of edible gold dust in every loaf.*

There is a priceless bread

"I am the bread of life," He explained. "He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (v35).

Bread & water are basic material needs, which is why we sometimes use them to represent all of our material needs. We call money "bread," or "dough" and those who earn money "breadwinners."

Jesus appealed to bread to represent our far more pressing *spiritual* need for salvation and continued growth. He presented two menus:

- There is material bread, we'll call it the world's bread, "which perishes" (v27).
- There is "the [heavenly bread] which endures to everlasting life" (v27).

It isn't hard to determine which menu to order from.

I'll organize my comments around two points: **#1 The World's Bread Can Never Satisfy You**, and **#2 The Lord Is The Bread Who Always Satisfies You**.

#1 - The World's Bread Can Never Satisfy You (v22-27)

C.S. Lewis wrote, "If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."

All human beings have desires "which nothing in this world can satisfy." We are more than material boys and girls living in a material world. We were created to be spirit, soul, and body, with our spirit taking the lead. Adam and Eve sinned, died spiritually, and their descendants are born spiritually dead. Our material appetites dominate us.

The crowd was driven by their material appetites to follow Jesus.

It wasn't only full bellies they were seeking. They were determined to make Jesus King by force. They longed to be free from Roman domination in order to enjoy the material world of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Jesus made a sincere offer to inaugurate the Kingdom, but only *after* the Jews repented and received Him as their Savior. Their prerequisite need was spiritual.

You remember prerequisites in school, right? Algebra, geometry, and trigonometry need to be taken before calculus. The Jews could not enter the Kingdom of God on Earth without repentance and belief (faith) in Jesus as Savior.

Joh 6:22 On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone -

Joh 6:23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks -

The crowd saw the disciples leave on a boat without the Lord, and they watched His solo climb.

Jesus and his disciples were under surveillance. I'm reminded of the song lyrics, *I always feel like ... Somebody's watchin' me*. People **are** watching you, believer. Instead of resenting it, receive it, realizing that you are being used to reveal Jesus. What are you doing that you don't want anyone to see or hear?

The twelve departed and Jesus seemed settled for the night. The crowd quit paying attention just when it was about to get good.

You never want to miss something the Lord wants you to see or hear. Stay attentive.

Joh 6:24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

Estimates of the crowd's size are upwards of 10,000. Few could fit on the small boats that had come to shore that morning. The rest continued on their annual pilgrimage to the Temple for Passover.

Joh 6:25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

Jesus chose not to reveal how He had come to be in Capernaum. He kept the miracle of walking on water between the disciples and Himself.

If you witnessed a miracle, would you keep it quiet? The Lord might want you to. God likes to mix things up, do things differently, in order for Him to reveal His glory to the watching world.

Joh 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

Joh 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

Of course we must work to meet material needs. Jesus was establishing priority. Spiritual beings require spiritual food first and foremost.

Is breakfast the most important meal of the day? Some say, "Yes," and won't leave home without it. How much more important to feed on God's Word. An old slogan put it like this: *No Bible, No breakfast.*

Physical hunger and thirst, and other appetites, make themselves known. Your stomach starts making awkward, growling noises, for instance.

Spiritual hunger and thirst are not so obvious. They don't have physical 'tells.' That's why we talk about pursuing spiritual disciplines. We read the Word, pray, fellowship with others, and serve the Lord, to interact with the living bread to receive consistent nutrition.

You want to be sure that spiritual bread is genuine. There is a lot of poison out there masquerading as spiritual food. God thus put His "seal" on Jesus:

- John the Baptist attested to the genuineness of Jesus, introducing Him as “the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world.”
- God the Father attested to Jesus, speaking from Heaven that Jesus was His “beloved Son,” in whole He was well pleased.
- The miracles Jesus performed attested to His genuineness.

No other ‘religious’ figure bears God’s seal of genuineness and approval.

Captain Barbosa explained the curse that was upon the Caribbean pirates of the *Black Pearl* by saying, “The drink would not satisfy, food turned to ash in our mouths, nor the company in the world would harm or slake our lust. We are cursed men. Compelled by greed, we were. But now, we are consumed by it.”

An eternal being can never be satisfied by material bread. Rather than consuming it, the material world consumes us.

#2 - The Lord Is The Bread Who Always Satisfies You (v28-40)

There’s a bizarre tradition of weighing each member of the English royal family *before* and *after* Christmas dinner. The more weight gain, the merrier.

The bread of life isn’t a matter of taking in the Word of God until we must push away from the table. We don’t build-up spiritual fat. Your spirit won’t weigh more when you leave this morning.

Jesus doesn’t give us the bread of life, He IS the bread of life.

We don’t consume Jesus as a commodity. We are to be consumed with Him and be totally satisfied in life knowing Him.

Joh 6:28 Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”

We earn our bread, working hard for the dough as breadwinners. Does it not follow we would work, or do works, for spiritual bread? No, it does not follow.

“What must I do to be saved?” Every religion and philosophy is an attempt to give a satisfactory answer to that question. They all, without exception, require some *work* or *works* in order for you to earn and deserve salvation. You cannot ever hope to earn or deserve salvation because you are born dead in trespasses and sins.

Nothing can be done *by* you. Something must be done *for* you. It has been done: Jesus came as God in human flesh and took your place on the Cross so that God the Father could declare you righteous by believing in Jesus.

Joh 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

One commentator writes, “The only ‘work’ that you can do *is not to work*, but rather to believe in Jesus, the one whom the Father has sent to provide salvation through His death and resurrection.”

Joh 6:30 Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?”

Joh 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.’ ”

Their argument was not without biblical merit. Jesus seemed lesser than Moses:

- Jesus fed a multitude; Moses fed millions.
- Jesus did it once; Moses did it for forty years.
- Jesus provided ordinary barley bread; Moses gave them “bread out of Heaven.”

Joh 6:32 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from Heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from Heaven.

Joh 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from Heaven and gives life to the world.”

Moses did not give them manna. *God did.*

If I were to ask you, "Which country in the world has sent out the most missionaries?" you'd probably guess Great Britain or the United States. It's a trick question. Countries do not send out missionaries. The church sends them out.

God must occupy first place in all of our thinking.

Joh 6:34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

They were missing the point. The bread was already given; Jesus is the bread. Joh 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.

"Comes" and "believes" are interchangeable. Come to Christ, believe in Him, and as Adam Clarke writes, "you shall be perfectly satisfied, and never more feel misery of mind. All the guilt of your sins shall be blotted out, and your soul shall be purified unto God; and, being enabled to love Him with all your heart, you shall rest, fully, supremely, and finally happy, in God."

Jesus promised you will *never* hunger or thirst. This doesn't mean that you will not want to know more and more about Him. It means that you can always be satisfied with Him.

You need never hunger because knowing Jesus satisfies the spirit in any circumstances.

Joh 6:36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

They "did not believe," largely because of their attention on the material world. Roman domination and cruelty distracted them from spiritual pursuits. It affected their leaders in particular. The Jewish Supreme Court, called the Sanhedrin, had become worldly rather than remaining consecrated to God. They were mired in politics, not prayer. They were murderers.

Jesus is with us in our difficulties to prove that He, His grace, is sufficient for us. Whether we are delivered *from* our troubles or *through* them, in the long run it doesn't matter. We are delivered with Him *in* them.

Joh 6:37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

We will go astray in our comments unless we identify these people. Who are, "All that the Father gives Me [who] will come to [Jesus]?" We need to take a quick look at a few additional verses in this Gospel. Drop down to verse forty-five:

Joh 6:45 It is written in the prophets, "AND THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT BY GOD." Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me."

The "all" that the Father "gives" Jesus are "everyone who has heard and learned from the Father." They are people (in this case, Jews) who heard the Gospel and responded favorably. They were saved, otherwise they could not be described as going on to "learn" from God.

In chapter three Jesus said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (v14). He was alluding to the time when a plague of deadly poisonous serpents were in the camp of Israel. The solution God provided a brass serpent on a pole that was lifted up so everyone could see it.

Anyone who looked at it was saved. Looking was believing God to be saved.

In chapter twelve Jesus will say, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself." This He said, signifying by what death He would die" (v32-33). God provided Jesus on the Cross lifted up so everyone could see it. Something supernatural happened at the Cross when Jesus was lifted up such that all mankind is described as being "drawn" to Him.

To say that no one can come to Jesus without having been drawn by God the Father is not to say that every person drawn comes to Christ. It is an acknowledgment that all those who do come to Christ will have been drawn.

Look at verse forty: "Everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life."

Here is what we know thus far from our brief survey:

- Jesus being lifted up on the Cross in your place is how you are saved by a holy God. It solves the problem of sin, overcoming Satan and death, promising a person eternal life.
- The Cross exerts a supernatural influence on every man so they *can* be saved.
- Men are saved when they believe in Jesus. Elsewhere in the Bible we are told Jesus "is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe" (First Timothy 4:10).

OK, now we are ready for verse thirty-seven. "All that the Father gives Me" is describing Jews who repented and believed in preparation for the Kingdom Jesus was offering. For example, multitudes of Jews submitted to being baptized by John the Baptist as a sign of their repentance and belief. "All" these would "come to [Jesus]" and be received by Him forever.

The crowd that followed the Lord to Capernaum was all-about materialism. They would not believe in Him. But many Jews would, and Jesus would receive them and never "cast [them] out."

Joh 6:38 For I have come down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Jesus was on a mission from God. This crowd might mostly reject Him, but God's plan for Israel could not fail.

In the context of eternal life, what is the will of God? "The Lord is... not **willing** that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (Second Peter 3:9).

Joh 6:39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

Believers are safe for eternity. Jesus cannot "lose" you on the way to Heaven. You will enjoy a glorious resurrection.

Joh 6:40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

"See the Son and believe." Remember the serpent on the pole? When an Israelite saw it, he was spared. It was equivalent to believing. It is that illustration, that type, Jesus was alluding to.

William MacDonald writes,

To see the Son here means not to see Him with the physical eyes but rather with the eyes of faith. One must see or recognize that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Then, too, he must believe on Him. This means that by a definite act of faith, he must receive the Lord Jesus as his own personal Savior. All who do this receive everlasting life as a present possession and also receive the assurance that they will be raised at the last day.

When is "the last day?" John is talking about the last day in relation to when a person is resurrected from the dead. It is different for different groups of believers. In a previous study we described in-depth the series of resurrections the Bible describes for both believers and nonbelievers.

As far as we are concerned, the "last day" will be when Jesus comes in the air to resurrect the dead in Christ, and rapture living believers. Whether we have died or are alive and remain, we receive our forever glorified bodies.

I want to address a false criticism of the rapture. A criticism, by the way, that comes from Christians who are not futurists when it comes to prophecy. They call it “the secret rapture.” They thereby identify us with all the crazies who set dates and such.

The resurrection and rapture of the church won't occur in secret. It will be terribly obvious when millions of believers come forth from their graves, or the oceans, and millions more are transformed to be taken into Heaven. There will be global chaos. Millions will die. It will, in fact, be the most terrifying event in history thus far.

Restaurants have different menus, or menu choices, to accommodate your diet and allergies. If you suffer with Coeliac Disease, you really need to avoid the gluten that triggers it.

If you were to write a menu describing your overall worldview and your current spiritual diet, would it prioritize the food that perishes? Or the bread of life?

Would that elderly lady in the *Wendy's* commercials say, “Where’s the bread?” Or, “Pastor Gene runs on Jesus?”