

The Bread of Life and the Manna in the Wilderness

John 6:41-59

In our text this morning Jesus addresses the crowds and the Jewish leaders. This teaching was given in the synagogue in Capernaum. (6:59) John clearly records for us the scene as it brought to the mind of the people the provision of God in the wilderness.

John 6 has many elements reminiscent of the Exodus narrative: mention of the Passover, the Lord on the mountain praying, the divine provision of bread, the people seated in groups of fifty, and even the grumbling! This is a picture of a new Exodus, with Christ as a new Redeemer, a new Deliverer.

- **The confusion of the Jews. (41-43)** There seems to be a great deal of confusion among the Jews concerning both the origin of the manna and the origin of Jesus!

The Jews credited Moses for giving their fathers manna in the wilderness, when clearly it was God the Father Who provided for them! Adding to their confusion was the statement from Jesus, that He was the true bread of life that had come down from heaven!

Manna: The manna in the wilderness was a type or foreshadow; Jesus is the substance and the reality!

“What is it?” The Hebrew word for “manna” means “what is it?” taken from the people’s response when they first saw the provision of God.

- ✓ **It was supernatural.** This was no ordinary bread; it was bread from heaven! It was given by God to sustain His people! There are no natural explanations! (Psalm 78:23-28)
- ✓ **It was sufficient.** God’s provision was “just right.” Those who gathered much had no excess and those that gathered little had no lack! It was sufficient until they entered the promised land.
- ✓ It was described as “bread from heaven;” bread is the staff of life! Bread sustains life! This provision may not have been what they desired, but it was what they needed to survive!
- ✓ **It was sacred.** God was doing more than filling their stomachs; He was teaching them of the sacredness of His care for them. Some of the manna was to be placed in the Ark of the Covenant.

God was teaching as He provided! God is always up to more than our physical comfort!

Jesus, the Bread of Life: Jesus fed the multitudes with the loaves and the fishes, which reminds the people of the manna God provided in the wilderness. Jesus reminds the people that He is the “True Bread from heaven.”

- ✓ **Jesus is the sovereign LORD.** Jesus makes a bold statement, “I Am the Bread of Life.” Jesus had just made His first of seven “I Am” statements, each revealing a unique attribute of His nature.

The phrase “I Am” reflects Exodus 3:14, where God introduces Himself to Moses with the expression “I Am Who I Am.”

- ✓ **The Bread of Life is sufficient.** The Person and work of Christ is more than sufficient to all those that come to Him! Jesus said, “All that the Father has given Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast away.”

As we partake of Holy Communion this morning, let us remember the sacrifice of our Lord, the True Bread from heaven. Let us eat of the bread, remembering His body broken for us. Let us drink of the cup, remembering the precious blood shed for our redemption.