

I Am the Bread from Heaven

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Date: 25 October 2020

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[0 : 00] All right, if you have your Bible with you, please open it up to John chapter 6. John chapter 6.

We'll start by remembering just where we are in the story of Jesus. Jesus is having a conversation with a crowd. Some of the crowd, the very ones that are talking with him, are those who were at the feeding of the 5,000 just yesterday on the other side of the lake.

And Jesus has been telling this crowd what they should do and how they should live differently, how they've got some of their priorities out of whack. And the crowd has basically said, okay, well, tell us, how does God want us to live?

What does he want us to do? And Jesus has said, this is the work that God wants you to do. He wants you to believe in the one he has sent.

We'll pick up the story here in verse 30. So they asked him, what sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you?

[1 : 16] What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness as it is written. He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus said to them, very truly, I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is the one that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. Sorry, I lost my place here.

Verse 34. Sir, they said, always give us this bread.

Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry. And whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All those the father gives me will come to me. And whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.

[2 : 32] For I have come down from heaven, not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me. So the crowd is asking Jesus to perform a great sign.

They want him to do a miracle that it seems is at least on the same level as when God gave the whole nation of Israel manna to eat in the wilderness. Do something like that.

And then we'll believe you. Jesus seems to correct their understanding of what happened back then. And he tells them that God is now giving them a better bread, a true bread from heaven.

One which gives life to the world. The crowd says, okay, give us this bread all the time from now on. And then Jesus says, I am the bread of life. And we talked last Sunday about how Jesus is the bread that gives us life. We had the Lord's table together.

[3 : 35] We talked about how he is the special provision of God that was broken for us so that we could be saved, so that we could have eternal life. Well, this morning we want to focus in on a few words that we see scattered throughout this conversation.

There's a particular phrase that's mentioned 10 times in this conversation with the crowd. 10 times in just 29 verses. 10 times in just 29 verses. And that should signal to us that this phrase is very important.

In fact, I would suggest to you that this particular phrase is at the very core of this whole conversation. And that phrase is from heaven.

From heaven. Sometimes as it appears in this conversation, it's with the word give or gave. Give from heaven. Gave from heaven.

Other times it's with the word come or came down from heaven. But 10 times this language of from heaven is used in this conversation.

[4 : 42] It all started with the crowd. They brought up the miracle of manna. They quoted the Old Testament. He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus corrected their understanding as I just said. He said, it's not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven.

But it is my father who gives you the true bread from heaven. Then again in verse 33. For the bread of God, says Jesus, is the one that, there it is again, comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Then the crowd asks Jesus for the bread that he's talking about. And he responds by saying, I am the bread. I myself am the bread of life.

But not just the bread of life as we talked about last Sunday. The way this conversation is flowing. He is saying, I am the bread that came down from heaven.

[5 : 53] We could ask it this way. What kind of bread is Jesus telling them that he is? Not just the bread that has been given from heaven.

He is bread that has come down from heaven. We might say it like this. The conversation is not just about the good that Jesus does for those who believe.

This conversation is also about where Jesus is from. From heaven. Come down from heaven.

It's sprinkled all throughout these 29 verses. And in case there's any doubt that this is what Jesus means to say, we need only to look to verse 38. He says it as clear as day.

For I have come down from heaven. Not to do my will. But to do the will of him who sent me. You want to see something like the manna which came down from heaven to feed the Israelites long ago?

[7 : 07] Here I am. I have come down from heaven. Sent from my father. We're going to skip down to verse 41. We'll come back to the verses we skipped in the weeks ahead.

But for now we want to stay on this particular theme. Verse 41. We get the response of the crowd to these words of Jesus. At this the Jews there began to grumble about him.

Why? Because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. They started to grumble.

So the crowd is listening. They may not be catching or understanding everything that Jesus is talking about. But they caught and understood one thing very clearly. They heard him say, I have come down from heaven.

And John tells us they began to grumble about that. Verse 42. They said, is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?

[8 : 13] How can he now say, I came down from heaven? Like, whoa, whoa. Hold the boat here for a second. We have a problem with that statement.

I came down from heaven. Like, who does this guy think he is saying things like that? And calling God his father. I mean, heaven is the realm of God alone.

How can he say, I came down from heaven? In fact, we know exactly where this man comes from. Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph?

Whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, I came down from heaven? That's preposterous. Whatever he does, miracle or not, I mean, he's, surely he's just a man like his brothers.

The other sons of Joseph. They grumbled. And they took issue with what Jesus said that day.

When he said, I came down from heaven.

[9 : 17] Skip down to verse 48. Jesus says, I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died.

But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

Whoever eats this bread will live forever. You can almost see and hear Jesus gesturing to himself as he says this.

As he says these words, Here is the bread that came, that comes down from heaven. And he says it again, as plain as day. I am the living bread that came down from heaven.

Comes down from heaven. Came down from heaven. Do you hear what Jesus is saying about where he is from?

[10 : 35] Fast forward again briefly to a moment in verse 61. This is kind of after the conversation with the crowd. The crowd wasn't the only one that was grumbling and took issue with what Jesus said that day.

Verse 61. Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, Does this offend you? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?

So this little conversation between the disciples and Jesus, even they had issues with what he was saying. Some of the things he was saying.

Even they were grumbling. And Jesus says these amazing words. Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?

In other words, this is no joke. The crowd may not like what I'm saying, but I speak the truth. Jesus claims in public to have come down from heaven.

[11 : 48] And he speaks to his disciples in private the same thing. Ascend to where he was before. In other words, there's a place where I was before all of this.

Before I came down from heaven. What if you see me go back up to heaven? Back up to where I was before. Would that do it for you?

I think Jesus is telling his own disciples to watch closely. There's going to be a special sign for you. You will see something that not everyone will see. You will see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before. You'll see him go up to heaven.

To the place from which he came down. And this is exactly what they saw. After Jesus was raised from the dead. Luke tells us the story.

[12 : 51] When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Luke gives a fuller, more detailed account in the first chapter of the book of Acts. This is another sign which confirms beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus came down from heaven.

From the Father is that he went back up to heaven. To where he was before. In the sight of all his disciples. This was the main subject or a big part of the conversation that day with the crowd.

I came down from heaven. Do you hear what Jesus is saying about where he is from?

The crowd heard it. They understood what he meant by it. And they took issue with what he said. They didn't believe that Jesus came down from heaven.

[14 : 02] How could he be from heaven? We know he was born of Mary and Joseph. Even the disciples seemed to have some issues with what Jesus said and taught that day.

It would be a little bit of time before they would see the ultimate signs that confirmed that it was true. And all of this is pointing to the reality that Jesus is no ordinary man.

His story doesn't begin with Joseph and Mary. His story doesn't begin on earth. This is something that John has been highlighting for us throughout his gospel.

The truth that Jesus has come down from heaven. That's why John starts his gospel the way he does.

Let's remember. In the beginning was the word. And the word was with God. And the word was God.

[15 : 06] He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made. Without him nothing was made that has been made.

The word, that one, became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, says John.

The glory of the one and only son who came from the father. We hear this truth come out in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.

John chapter 3 verse 13. Do you remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus? He said, no one has ever gone into heaven. Except the one who came from heaven. The son of man.

John wants us to have a clear understanding of where Jesus is from. He tells us in verse 31 of that same chapter. The one who comes from above is above all.

[16 : 14] The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth. And speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all.

None of them. Not even Jesus' disciples seem to fully grasp the reality of just who it was. Teaching in the synagogue that day. Standing right in front of them.

Walking with them along the road. At least some of the disciples themselves were offended. And grumbled about what Jesus said that day.

Until they finally realized just how truthfully he spoke. He really was. And is the divine son of God. The glorious son of man.

Given from heaven. Come down from heaven. An amazing gift of God. For the world. Most of this is not new.

[17 : 14] You've probably heard this before. So what should we do with it? What should we do with this truth this morning? Well for starters. I really believe if Jesus was here.

Standing right here in front of you. He would say the same thing he said to the crowd that day. Believe it. What God wants you to do is believe. In the one he has sent.

Do you believe that Jesus. Is God's special provision from heaven. Not just an earthly man. But one who has come down. From heaven.

Once we believe this truth. Our next stop. I think is to fall to our knees. And worship him. As John said.

The one who comes. From heaven. Is above all. If he's from heaven. Then he is worthy. Of our worship. Not only should we worship.

[18 : 20] But we should listen to him. We should take everything Jesus says. Very seriously. And we should do the things. That he tells us to do. John said.

The one who comes from heaven. Is above all. He testifies. To what he has seen. And heard. For the one whom God has sent. Speaks the words of God. If he has indeed.

Come from heaven. And speaks the words of God. Then we should listen to him. We should cling to his every word. And we should respond. And we should respond.

And do the things that he has told us to do. These are general things. That we should do continuously in our lives. Believe. Jesus. Worship.

Jesus. Listen to Jesus. And all because he is the one who has come down from heaven. But there is one more thing that I want to add today. Maybe something a little more tangible.

[19 : 21] We should celebrate that Jesus came down from heaven. Christmas is two months away. And we might not be quite ready to pull out the decorations yet.

Or to put on the Christmas music yet. But it's not too early to begin preparing our hearts. For what the season is all about. Probably Christmas will feel like it comes much quicker than we expect. It happens every year. So why not start thinking now. About just how we can celebrate. Perhaps in some new or fresh way. This year.

The wonderful truth. That Jesus came down. From heaven. To earth. A gift of love from God. So what can you do? What can you plan.

In this month ahead. To bring that reality. Into special focus. For your family this Christmas. Maybe it's the words you. Write in your Christmas cards.

[20 : 25] This year. A little different than last year. Maybe it's a devotional moment. That you plan to share at the table. As you have a Christmas meal. Maybe it's the way you decorate this year.

But this is what the Christmas story is all about. It's the story. Of how this one. Jesus. Came down. From heaven.

What can you do. To highlight. To highlight. And to celebrate. That gift. This Christmas. So to sum up.

We should believe. Jesus. We should worship Jesus. We should listen to what he says. And we should prepare to celebrate. In the months ahead. The one who graciously.

Came down from heaven. For us. Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord Jesus.

[21 : 28] We confess that. We have heard this. And we know this. And yet it's so easy. To lose the. The awe. And wonder. Of the reality. That you.

Have done this. Massive. Jump. From heaven to earth. To live among us. To rescue us. To save us. To be the one. Who gives us life.

Help us not to lose the wonder of that. We ask that you would put in our hearts. A holy. The reverence. And awe. Of you.

Like should be there. For who you are. Help us in these. These weeks ahead. As we. As we look towards Christmas. To prepare.

And to prepare well. For the occasion. And for the celebration. And Lord. We think of those. In our community. Who. Who do not know. This truth.

[22 : 28] Of where you are from. And we pray and ask. That you would lead us. In reaching out to them. And speaking to them as well. We love you. We pray these things.

In your name Jesus. Amen. Amen.