

# John 6:48

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Preacher: Rev George MacAskill

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Seeking the Lord's blessing, let us now turn to the portion of scripture that we read together in the Gospel of John and chapter 6.

And we'll read from verse 48. I am that bread of life, who fathers to eat manna in the wilderness and are dead.

This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.

And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world, and so on. At the beginning of this chapter, we find the only miracle performed by Jesus that is recorded for us in the four Gospels.

Each Gospel lay a different emphasis on the miracle. Matthew and Luke were most interested in the miracle itself, while Mark stresses for us the compassion of Christ.

[ 1 : 1 7 ]     But John focuses on the great significance of the miracle itself as a testing time and also as a turning point in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

He tells us of how Jesus presents himself as the bread of life. The bread that spiritually satisfies people.

It is only in John that we learn that the miracle took place at the time of the Passover. That the loaves of the young lad were barley loaves, which was the poorest kind.

And the reason for gathering up the fragments that remained and the effect that the miracle had on the crowd. John tells us that sometime after the events recorded for us in the fifth chapter of his Gospel, that Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias, where he was followed by a great crowd.

Now Jesus knew that the crowd were beginning to get hungry. So he turns to Philip and asks a question, When shall we buy bread that these may eat?

[ 2 : 4 2 ]     And Philip answered to the effect that there was no place to buy it. And even if there was a place, they did not have enough money to pay for it. And John tells us that Jesus asked Philip the question in order to prove him.

For he himself knew what he would do. And in the response of Philip, we have a confession of the failure of human resources in this situation.

John is going to show us how Jesus is the one who will meet with all our needs. Now, John had a very distinctive way of writing about the miracles of Jesus.

For he uses the word sign when he is talking of the miracles. For instance, you will see that when he writes about the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine at Cana of Galilee, he says that it was the first of the signs.

And these signs were given as pointers. It is Jesus pointing to himself by the things that he was doing.

[ 3 : 5 9 ]     Each miracle is not so much about what is done, but it is meant to be for us and to us a disclosure of the identity of the one who has performed the miracle.

In other words, they were meant to point us that the person who performed the miracle was truly Jesus, the Messiah.

However, as we shall see, although he performed these signs that were pointing to who he was, most of the people missed the sign, never coming to know who Jesus truly was, never coming to know his identity.

The response of the people here is given to us in verse 14, where he says, this is of a truth, that prophet that should come into the world.

They were convinced that he must be the prophet of whom Moses had told them that should come into the world. Then they said, let us make him a king.

[ 5 : 17 ] The knowledge of God's promise to Moses that one day he would raise a palita like himself, and seeing and having partaken of the miracle of the bread and loaves, the miracle that Jesus had performed, convinced them that Jesus was that prophet.

So they wanted to make him a king. Their motive, of course, was to make him their political messiah, the one who would drive out the Romans.

They failed to see that Jesus, as well as being a prophet and a king, he also had to be a priest who would offer himself for the sins of his people.

When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain by himself alone.

The truth of the matter was that he was God's prophet of whom Moses spoke, and he is also God's king. So why, you may ask, did Jesus act in the matter in which he did, to the suggestion that he was the prophet of whom Moses spoke, and the desire to make him a king?

[ 6 : 46 ] Why did he depart into a mountain alone? Well, I think that at least part of the answer may be that although they spoke of him as the prophet promised, of whom Moses spoke, they failed to understand what his mission was into the world.

And I think this is hinted at later on in this passage as we read of the conversations that continued to take place between Jesus and the crowd. They failed to understand that he is the bread of God, that he is the one who will give his life for the world.

They understood his function as prophet, and as such they also had some understanding of his function as king, but they had no idea whatsoever of his function as a priest, as the one who was going to sacrifice himself for the sins of the world.

You don't really come to understand who he is, who Jesus is, until you can appreciate his identity as the one who came into the world to give his life as a ransom for many.

Jesus' mission into the world was not simply to speak God's word and to exercise God's authority, both of which he did in his miracles, but his real mission into the world was to give his life.

[ 8 : 34 ] There are many today who will tell you that the main emphasis of the gospel is to follow the words of Christ, to practice the sermon on the mount, to do good, to show compassion and so on, and all that is true.

However, if we miss the point that his mission into the world was to give himself as a ransom for many, to give himself as the substitute for his people, to bear in his own body what they deserved as sinners, then we have missed his true identity as the one who is the ransom price in order to set us free.

The crowd knew that he was no ordinary person, but they missed the sign, and therefore they did not appreciate his identity as the one who came into the world to give his life as a ransom for many.

We'll read here in the narrative that in the evening the disciples went across the sea to join with Jesus, and we have recorded for us the storm and Jesus coming to them walking on the sea, and this was a time that Peter asked permission to walk towards them, which he did for a time, but John omits that part of the story.

We have it in other gospels. John tells us that the disciples were afraid, and Jesus said to them, It is I, be not afraid.

[ 10 : 20 ] Then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land where they went. And the next day, the people upon whom Jesus performed the miracle of the five barley loaves and two fishes, known as the feeding of the 5,000, when they saw that there were none other boat there save the one where into his disciples were entered and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that the disciples were gone away alone.

When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus.

And when they found him, they asked him, Rabbi, when comest thou hither? And Jesus did not answer them directly, but instead he dealt with the matter of seeking him.

Because Jesus knew that they were seeking him for the wrong reasons. So Jesus tells them what their true motive was in following him and in seeking him.

He says, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves and were filled.

[ 11 : 51 ] And then he says to them, Labor 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 whom hath God the Father sealed.

You see, Jesus has done this miracle of multiplying the bread and satisfying their hunger. And now, all they can see really in front of them are mountains of bread.

The night has passed and they are hungry again and they are wanting breakfast. They haven't understood that this was a sign for them, that the miracle was a sign for them.

That in this miracle that Jesus is pointing a finger by the things he was doing, that he's pointing a finger to himself. That he is the bread of life.

That he's the bread of life that could bring satisfaction. And so Jesus here warns them. Yes, it looks good when people are interested in Jesus.

[ 13 : 01 ] But there is more than one reason why one should be interested in Jesus. And Jesus is here saying to them, you are interested in me for the wrong reason.

You are seeking me not because you saw the sign. All you saw was really loaves and fishes. Don't seek me for the bread that perishes, but for the bread that endures forever.

In other words, he was saying, your motive for seeking me is wrong. You're just wanting your breakfast. You're wanting me to do for that miracle again of multiplying the bread and fishes.

The true motive should be that you will be seeking me for that bread that endures forever. For I am the bread of life.

That you should be seeking me to give you life. He tells the crowd around him that they have sought him out for food, that they have just eaten of the multiplied bread.

[ 14 : 14 ] But he reminds them that they should seek everlasting food. That the food that he could provide, which endures to eternal life. Jesus has shown before the very eyes of these people the sign of who he was, and yet they have missed the sign.

They have missed his true identity. It was an invitation for them to come and embrace him, but all they were interested in, and they chased him across the lake, was that they would get more bread.

They missed the whole point of the miracle that he had performed on them. It is possible to be near to Jesus and to see what Jesus does, and yet in a sense not to see at all.

They responded by asking, how can we get that food that you are talking about? Where can we find this bread that you keep telling us that can bring satisfaction?

This bread that endures to eternal life. Their response shows that they missed the point about the gift, instead they thought that the giving would be in response to having earned.

[ 15 : 38 ] that food. The question that the crowd asked is surprising, or perhaps not surprising. They said, what shall we do that we might work the works of God?

But Jesus had just told them. He had just said to them, 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.

Again, they totally missed the point. Their mindset was that they had to do something. They had to earn the spread that he's talking about that brings satisfaction and that endures to eternal life.

They had to earn it in some way, so they asked, what shall we do that we might work the works of God? This is always the battle of mankind.

It is always faith or works. People want to earn salvation. While Jesus answers them, this is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent.

[ 16 : 55 ] You see, it is not so much what you can do for God, but what God has done for us. It is not so much what you can do for God, but what God has done for us and sending his Son into the world and delivering his Son up to the cross and there pouring upon his Son what our sins deserved.

deserved. And all that is required of us is that we believe it or that we trust in it.

The Philippian jailer asked the same question of Paul. What must I do to be saved? To which Paul replied, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

It is not that you have to earn salvation. And it's not what you can do for God, but what God has done for you.

What God requires of us is that we give up trying to please him by our own efforts and instead commit ourselves to him, to what he has done.

[ 18 : 29 ] However, the people were puzzled by his answer. So they asked Jesus to prove who he was and being at the time of the Passover, they brought their thoughts back to the Exodus.

so they asked, what sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert?

As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jesus has just fed over 5,000 with bread and providing this miracle, Jesus in the presence of the crowd is, as if it were, playing out the Old Testament history, which the Jews would know so well.

And as we have already noted, that this was, at the time of the Passover and the Exodus, would be very much in the minds of the Jews.

So they asked him for a sign. just as the children of Israel had been provided with manna in their wilderness journey, Jesus provides bread to those in the wilderness.

[ 19 : 53 ] It is also interesting that when they gathered all the fragments that remained in that miracle, there were twelve baskets. And that might be an indicator there to the twelve tribes of Israel, a basket for each tribe.

but what Jesus wants the crowd and us to focus upon is not the fact of the miracle, not even about the abundance of the miracle, but the person who has performed the miracle.

Could he produce a sign of his authority like that of the manna that was given to the children of Israel in the wilderness?

they wanted a sign. Well, there is no new thing under the sun as it was then, so it is today. People are still seeking signs.

It was one of those things that kept coming up time and time again during the ministry of Jesus. People wanting signs. Matthew records for us, the Pharisees also with the Sadducees came and tempted desire to him that he would show them a sign from heaven.

[ 21 : 13 ] He answered and said unto them, when it is evening you say it will be fair weather for the sky is red and in the morning it will be foul weather today for the sky is red and low O ye hypocrites!

You can discern the face of the sky but can you not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and there shall be no sign given unto them but the sign of the prophet Jonah.

And he left them and departed. Paul writes to the church at Corinth and says for the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

And things have not changed. Today people will say Lord show me something that shows me that you are real. Lord if you do this thing I will believe in you and follow you.

They're still seeking signs. Asking for a sign from God only denies all the wonderful evidence that we already have of his existence of his mercy of his love and of his power.

[ 22 : 27 ] Paul writing to the Romans says for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made even his eternal power and Godhead so that they are without excuse.

on another occasion Jesus says regarding the rich man in the story of Luke 16 the rich man and Lazarus and you remember that the rich man said father Abraham if one went unto them from the dead they will repent and he said unto him if they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead people still are seeking signs and now this crowd here want to see a sign they want to see a sign that would show them the authority of Jesus and in Jesus' response to them he shows them he corrects any misunderstanding that it was

Moses who provided the manna for he says to 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 he is instructing them that it was not Moses who gave them that bread but God and then he comes back to his point and he says for the bread of God is sea which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world he is trying to make them understand the identity of the one who fed them with the five barley loaves and the two fishes who he truly was and his mission into the world he says it was God to fed your fathers in the wilderness with the manna who is it that fed you in the wilderness with the five barley loaves and two fishes again the crowd that was following asked to be given this bread

Lord they said evermore give us this bread to which Jesus replied I am the bread of life he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst but I said unto you that ye also have seen me and you believe not I suppose that here we have perhaps the crisis point of the whole narrative this is the point that is so difficult for people to overcome that they were quite happy to follow Jesus if they grasped the hope that there was something that they could do to earn this bread of life but when they were told that they could do nothing to earn it it was too much for them the Jews then murmured at him because he said

I am the bread which came down from heaven and they said it's not this Jesus the son of Joseph whose father and mother we know how is it then that he saith I came down from heaven then Jesus went on to tell them how he was going to become the bread of life for them I am the living bread which came down from heaven if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world for Jesus to become the bread of life for us he had to give his and the crowd murmured again how can this man give us his flesh to eat and in this conversation that is taking place Jesus is making quite clear that we cannot build up that belief or that trust or that faith in ourselves that it is the gift of

[ 27 : 06 ] God it is God that gives me the faith that opens my hungry mouth it is God that opens my hungry mouth to hunger and thirst for the satisfaction that the Lord Jesus alone can give to put that hunger and thirst after righteousness it is God that plants such a hunger in me it is all of God it is not something that we can do on our own because we are spiritually blind and dead and without strength we cannot believe in Jesus in an unaided way Jesus says you need the father to draw you no man can come to me except the father which has sent me draw him it is interesting that it was at that point particularly that the people said enough is enough because he is daring to tell them that there is something that they cannot do in order to have the bread that lasts forever that they need

God's help because they are powerless sinners and they said enough is enough and it is the same even tonight when a person is told that there is nothing that they can do of themselves to build up faith in themselves that they need help that they need help that they need help from God that they need God's help because they are powerless sinners they say enough is enough we read then many therefore of disciples when they had heard this said this is a hard saying who can hear it so we read from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with

Jesus and then Jesus turns to the twelve disciples and he says to them will ye also go away and this was probably Simon Peter's greatest hour when most people had gone Simon Peter said to Jesus Lord to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the son of the living God Jesus has taught the crowd by reminding them of the way in which God had fed his people in the wilderness bread had come to them literally from heaven and for forty years God provided manna for his people during the wilderness journey however glorious that provision in the old testament was it is nothing in comparison with the provision that there is now in

Jesus Christ for he was a true bread sent by the father from heaven that would give everlasting life your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead this is the bread which cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die I am the living bread which came down from heaven if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever but these people were blinded and they were blind they were dead they were they were not coming to understand the sign that was given to them and because they could not earn this bread they didn't want to have anything to do with it when they were told that they would need the drawing of the father in order to receive this bread that was too much for them they said enough is enough this is a hard saying enough is enough you know if you have come tonight to the place where you see your need of a saviour where you see your sin where you see that you cannot do anything of yourself that you are bankrupt as far as your salvation is concerned that hasn't come to you because the natural man is blind he is blind to those things he is dead to those things that can only come to you through the spirit of

God and enlightening your understanding to give you that knowledge of your need of a saviour to give you that knowledge that you can't have the salvation unaided that you need God's help that you cannot earn the salvation that you need to put your trust in Jesus Christ it's not something you earn it's something that is given to you in which you accept and you take by faith you put your trust in it it is not what you can do for God but what God has done for you when you come to accept that then that is through the spirit of God because the natural man cannot have such thoughts it is the spirit of God striving with you striving with you and we are told that we should not despise at any time the strivings of the spirit of

[ 33 : 41 ] God this bread is necessary because Jesus is the difference between being condemned in our sin and of us having life for the children of Israel in the wilderness the manna would do them would not do them any good on the wilderness floor it needed to be gathered and taken in and consumed it would do them nothing if they went out to the morning and they were admiring the manna on the wilderness floor and they were observing it and even smelling it and even touching it it was of no use to them unless they gathered it and ate it and only then did they find that which satisfied them and dear friend it is the same with the bread of life it is the same with

Jesus Christ it will do us no good to admire Jesus to observe what Jesus has done unless we eat this bread and by that I mean unless we exercise trust in the bread trust in the bread and it is only by exercising trust in Jesus Christ that we find the satisfaction that comes from Jesus Christ just as it was for the Israelites it was only by eating the manna that they found the satisfaction that the manna gave and it is only by faith and trust in Jesus that we come to understand the satisfaction that there is in Jesus it is no use as it was for them to admire it or to observe it or even to touch it they had to eat it in order to know the satisfaction that came from it there is no doubt that

Israel in the wilderness had reached a crisis point in their journey when God provided manna for them but may I ask you tonight how you reached such a crisis point in your life is your life empty is your life disappointing is your life frustrating maybe you dabble with what the world has to offer and yet there you find no satisfaction have you come to the position that you recognize that there is nothing that you can contribute to your salvation you don't even have the power to make the decision you need to make about trusting in Jesus Christ unless by God's grace the Father works in your heart opens your eyes and you come and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ the only way to eat this bread of life is by faith where are you looking for lasting satisfaction well what do you see in

Jesus what do you see in this bread of life you see the bread of life without whom you know you cannot live do you know do you have somewhere else to go to find this life this eternal life well listen if you have somewhere else to go and find eternal life you better go as quickly as you can but there is nowhere else is there there is nowhere else where we can have this eternal life the world cannot offer us eternal life there is no other place Peter was right was he not when he said Jesus you alone have the words of eternal life to whom Lord Lord to whom shall we go you alone have the words of eternal life have you come to that place where you can say with Peter

Lord to whom else shall we go have you come to an end of yourself an end of trying to earn your salvation have you come to the place where you say Lord to whom shall we go I've tried here and I've tried there I've tried my best to earn my salvation I've tried to be good I've tried to do this and that and yet I haven't got any satisfaction I dabble with the world and it doesn't give me satisfaction it doesn't give me this eternal life Lord to whom shall I go well Peter tells you he tells you that Jesus alone has the words of eternal life that in Jesus alone there is salvation and this bread is suitable for all

[ 39 : 15 ] Jesus said I am the living bread which came down from heaven if any man any person eat of this bread he shall live forever if any person exercises faith upon Jesus he shall live forever this bread is available for us it is within the reach of us all it is not simply for other people it is available for all people the manna covered the wilderness floor and God said that there was enough for all we saw that this morning there was enough for all the spread has come down from heaven and it is available for all tonight are you turning away from him like those disciples who turned back and followed him no more who said this is a hard say who said enough is enough if we cannot earn it we are not having it or are you saying tonight like Peter

Lord to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life and you might be here tonight and you say well what can I do you have said that I cannot do it of myself and that is true it is when you come to an end of yourself and you throw yourself on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ that you'll find salvation you cannot do anything yourself you cannot earn it you simply throw yourself to the mercy of God in Jesus Christ oh that you would say like Peter Lord to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life and we believe and are sure that thou art that

Christ the son of the living God that you will come to know him Jesus Christ as the bread of life as the only place the only one that can give true and lasting satisfaction he is the bread of life he is the one who can have and give us everlasting life won't you come and taste and see that God is good who trusts in him is blessed may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray we have have come all done to to