

Summary Handout

‘I Am the Bread of Life’

Lesson

12

Summary

John 5–6; Jesus heals an invalid on the Sabbath—Why men must honor the Son—Jesus promises to take the gospel to the dead—Man is resurrected, judged, assigned his glory by the Son—Jesus obeys divine law of witnesses.

Mark 6:30-44; Jesus feedeth the five thousand—He walketh on the sea—He is the living manna sent from God—Salvation gained by eating living bread—How men eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus—Peter testifies that Jesus is the Messiah.

Matthew 14:22-33; Our Lord feeds the five thousand, walks on the water, and heals multitudes. Those who touch the hem of His garment are made whole.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

How Bread, Water and Rocks are Similar: The words Bread, Bread of Life, Leaven, Rock, and Water are some of the more frequently used names of the Lord. That teaches is that He is everywhere and that the common necessities of life reflect how necessary He is to our lives. Note the following involved Jewish ritual and tradition that relate with bread and water.

Bread to be Respected: “The rabbis . . . instituted a special benediction . . . before eating bread . . . (popularly called *Ha-Mozz*). After pronouncing this benediction, other food or beverages may be eaten . . .” “Bread must be treated with special regard. Raw meat should not be placed on it nor spilt wine be allowed to spoil it; it should also not be thrown across the table. Providing bread for the poor was regarded as a great religious duty; the withholding of it from the hungry, a sin. Bread with salt was regarded as the poor man's food but sufficient for the humble student of the Torah, and it has remained a custom to sprinkle a little salt on bread partaken at the beginning of meals. In Jerusalem it is the custom to greet official guests of the City Council with bread and salt as they enter the city's limits.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Special Sabbath Bread: “Hallah is a form of bread . . . the bread portion which was brought as an offering . . . in the days of the Temple. Loaves of *ballab* appear in forms associated with special occasions and different areas. The most distinct special occasion is Passover, when *ballab* appears as *mazzah*, unleavened bread. The sweet *ballab*, often round in shape, is traditional for Rosh Ha-Shanah, to symbolize the prayer for a sweet and a full year. Another popular form for the Sabbath is the braid, two loaves of three strands each, or one of six strands --- the number six representing the weekdays, handmaidens of the Sabbath. A *ballab* of 12 small sections symbolizes the 12 tribes of Israel. Each variation enriches the beauty of the tradition.” *Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Heavenly Bread: “Manna was the miraculous food which sustained the Israelites during the 40 years in which they wandered through the wilderness of Sinai. Manna is called "bread from heaven" in the Book of Exodus, and "bread of the angels" in Psalms. The English name "manna" comes from the words, *man boo?* ("What is this?" in classical Hebrew) which is what the Israelites exclaimed when they saw manna for the first time.” *Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Lord is Bread: Every time the term bread is used, it should be an automatic reminder to look for the Lord in the meaning of the phrase. The lack of bread may be an indication of the lack of accepting the Lord. He just wasn't there. “And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.” (*Genesis 47:13*) The bread of affliction refers to Him, who was afflicted more than anyone was, is or will be afflicted.

Bread and Water is Great! Since the Lord descended below all things and then rose above all things, He came from the rocks below and ascended to the heaven above. The following verse is one of several ways of remembering Him. “And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.” (*Nehemiah 9:15*)

Water, Rock and Heaven Connected: Remember, that the Hebrew word for water is “Ma-yim” and that the word for heaven is “She-ma-yim” (from the waters). The Fountain of Living Waters came from heaven. Moses struck the rock and out came water. It became the Rock of Salvation. The term rock is an ancient metaphor for the Lord. Simon, son of Jonah (Bar Jonah in Aramaic) was affectionately nicknamed Petrus (“rock” in Greek) by Jesus. In that sense, Simon became “Rocky-1” in the scriptures! Jesus, knowing that He was the “Rock of Salvation,” was establishing a profound lesson for one who would be the Lord’s mouthpiece and chief witness. “*Adon Olam* (Lord of the world) is a rhymed

poem . . . appears in the Ashkenazi service . . . four verses are . . . personal in nature . . . God is much closer to the individual worshiper, his hopes and his fears. "He is my God, my Redeemer, my Rock in time of trouble." *Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Uninhabited Area Rather than “Desert:” During Jesus’ three year ministry, Peter and other Disciples were being taught numerous lessons of the eternal and spiritual nature of the Lord and the many physical witnesses of Him. This training was necessary so that when He was gone from their physical presence, they could fulfill their Apostolic mission, witnessing of Him. One of those lessons took place at the uninhabited eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Even today, the few archaeological ruins indicate the deserted nature of that area. At times, Jesus went there to be alone.

Fishes and Loaves: When the people heard that He was on the other side, they followed Him out of their cities. He blessed them and preached to them until the disciples urged Jesus to let them go home to buy food to eat. He said, “Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes . . . he said to his disciples, make them sit down . . . he took the five loaves and the two fishes . . . he blessed . . . brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. And they did eat, and were all filled: and there . . . remained . . . twelve baskets.” (*Luke 9:13-17*)

Who Must Change Their Mind? Jesus told the disciples to feed the people, and they said it couldn’t be done. Still, Jesus did not change His charge. He took what they had, prepared it and returned it to the disciples. Then they fed the loaves and fishes to five thousand - not counting women or children. There was even enough left over for each disciple to have a basket of food for himself. Would it have been more dramatic if there had been fourteen basketfuls left over? Or would it have been less dramatic if only ten basketfuls remained? The remaining twelve baskets full of food would surely suffice them as Jesus sent them by ship to the other side of the lake. “. . . the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves . . . Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea . . . disciples . . . cried out for fear.” (*Matthew 14:22-26*)

It’s a Ghost! Faced with what they supposed was a spirit, the only instruction they might have had at that point was that fasting and prayer was necessary to drive spirits away. After they had eaten a miraculous meal the previous evening and had twelve baskets or provisions with them, they were full, not fasting! They may have therefore thought, “We cannot command the spirit.” “But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.” (*Matthew 14:27:33*)

Walking on Water: Many people believe that with enough faith, they can walk on water. However, the personal nature of the Lord’s miracles leads us to view the event more closely. Peter cried, “Lord save me.” Jesus responded, “Wherefore didst thou doubt?” This may have been a personal lesson for the Prophet-to-be. The dialogue might be imagined to have continued, “. . . Wherefore didst thou doubt, I came to save.” It is possible that the Savior, having named Simon, Peter (Rocky), was now teaching him that rocks sink . . . to be raised by the “Stone which the builders rejected.” (*Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17*).

Being Raised: Just as bread needs to be raised, we need to be raised by the Bread of Life, the Leaven, the Rock of Salvation.

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