

The Wednesday Word, June 14, 2023: Jesus, the Bread of Life for the Hungry Soul

In John's Gospel, we find the seven 'I Am' scriptures, spoken by Jesus to declare His Deity. Among them, we discover John 6:35,

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Listening to this, we must conclude that, if Jesus is not God, He can hardly be viewed as a repository of deep humility. Here, He declares Himself as the Bread, the one who sustains life. What a cheek to make this claim ... that is if He is not God!

Indeed, when we read the discourse, in John 6, we discover that Jesus makes a sevenfold reference to Himself as the Bread of Life (see verses 32, 33, 35, 48, 50, 51, 58). According to Jesus, this is the very bread that must be eaten, by faith, to receive everlasting life (see verses 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58).

We should note that the Roman Communion makes much of this discourse to establish her wretched doctrine of the Mass. They painstakingly fail, however, to point out that this discourse has nothing whatsoever to do with the Last Supper and the breaking of bread. They also fail to note that Christ's language in this passage is figurative, not literal, the Lord's Supper not being in existence until about a year later.

The bread to which Christ refers is Himself. He, as our High Priest, offered Himself on the altar of Calvary, redeemed His people and answered the sin question as He satisfied the justice of God. When we receive Him by faith alone, we are figuratively eating His flesh and drinking His blood.

In verse 33 He says, *"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and gives life unto the world."*

Notice how Jesus referred to Himself as, *"He which cometh down from heaven."* By this term, Jesus is again asserting His deity! In the Old Testament, to "come down from heaven" meant a divine descent from the throne of God to accomplish a task of either grace or judgment.

In **Genesis 11: 4 and 7**, for example, God "came down" in Judgment against the Tower of Babel.

In **Genesis 18:21**, God, regarding Sodom, says "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me."

Regarding the people of Israel in **Exodus 3:8**, the Lord says, "I am come down to deliver them."

In **Exodus 19:20**, God "comes down" upon the mount of Sinai to give His law.

In **Psalms 18:9** He "... bowed the heavens and came down" in answer to cries of distress.

Since to come down from heaven is God's work and prerogative, we once more see the Master making the grand declaration that He is God manifest in the flesh.

In summary:

Jesus as the Bread of life is the giver and sustainer of life. That means He is God.

Jesus declares He has come down from heaven ... again that means He is God.

Jesus claims that union with Him is essential to eternal life ... again that means He is God.

Now here's the question. Have we eaten of the Bread of Life for ourselves? Have we tasted and seen that the Lord is Good (Psalm 34:8)? Are we still looking anywhere and everywhere but the Gospel for satisfaction?\

In Greek mythology, Tantalus was made to stand in a pool of water, right under the branches of a fruit tree. However, when he tried to reach for fruit, the branches would go higher and out of reach. When he tried to drink a sip of water, the waters of the pool would recede. A symbol of utter frustration, his name is immortalized in the English word "tantalize." So, too, the world may at times tantalize the Child of God. It promises much but delivers nothing. Only Christ can give us a cleansed conscience. Only Christ can remove our guilt and give us genuine peace. Only Christ can give abundant life. He is the Bread of Life.

And that's the Gospel Truth!