**Jesus – The Bread of Life**

**A Bible Story From**

**John 6:22-7:1**

**Bible Story Number: 2010350**

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**Jesus – The Bread of Life**

**Bible Story**

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**Background**

At this point in his ministry, a crowd was forming quickly and following Jesus everywhere he went. His miracles were drawing large crowds. The crowd had some true followers and some that had other motives for following Jesus. In this story, Jesus addressed the crowd. He spoke to them about their motives for following him.

**Story from the Bible**

**John 6:22-7:1**

This is what the Bible says.

Jesus fed five thousand men with five small barley loaves and two small fish. He walked on the water during the night, and he joined his disciples in the boat, crossing to the other side of the lake (Sea of Galilee).

The next day, the crowd that had been following them gathered again. They knew that Jesus had sent the disciples across the lake. They also knew that Jesus was not on board with them.

There were some boats from Tiberias that had come ashore near the place where Jesus had miraculously fed the five thousand.

When the crowd could not find Jesus or the disciples, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. When they found Jesus on the other side of the lake with the disciples, they asked Jesus when he had arrived.

Jesus responded by talking about their true motive. He said they were looking for him, not because he performed miracles that proved he was the Messiah, but because they ate the bread and were filled. He cautioned them not to work for food that perishes, but invited them to look for food that lasts forever. He told them they could receive this food that gives eternal life from the Messiah (the Son of Man) because God the Father has demonstrated his seal of approval on him as the Messiah.

They asked Jesus, “What can we do to perform the works of God?” Jesus replied, “This is the work of God—that you believe in the One He has sent.”

They asked what sign (or miracle) Jesus was going to do so they could see and believe. They said that their fathers had eaten manna in the wilderness. They even quoted the Scripture that says that he gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus reminded them that the bread did not come from Moses, it came from God. He told them that God gives the real bread from heaven. He told them that the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

They responded and said, “Sir, give us this bread always!”

Jesus then said, “I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry and no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty again.”

Then Jesus said some things that were hard for even the Twelve to grasp. He pointed out that even though they had seen him, many still did not believe. He told them that God the Father gives men to him and he keeps them. Jesus explained that he had come down from heaven, sent by God. Anyone who sees him and believes in him has eternal life. He assured them that those who believe will be his forever.

The Jewish leaders in the crowd started to complain. They asked how this could be. They asked if this was not the son of Joseph. They said they knew his father and mother. He could not possibly have come from heaven.

Jesus responded to them and told them not to complain among themselves. He told them plainly that no one can come to him unless God the Father draws them. He reminded them what the prophets said, “They will all be taught by God. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.”

Jesus assured them by saying that anyone who believes has eternal life. Again he said, “I am the bread of life.” He went on to say that their fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. But he said again, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh.”

This really stirred up the Jewish leaders. They said, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”

So Jesus said to them, “I assure you: Unless you eat the flesh of the Messiah [the Son of Man] and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not the manna that your fathers ate, and they died. The one who eats this bread will live forever.”

(He said these things while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.)

After Jesus said these things, many of his disciples or followers stopped following him. They said that the things he was teaching were too hard. He asked if they were offended by what he was teaching. Then he asked what they would do if they were to see him ascending back to heaven. He told them that God gives life through the Holy Spirit. He pointed out that some didn’t believe because he knew that even one of the Twelve would betray him.

From that moment, many of his followers turned back and no longer joined the crowd that followed him. Jesus asked the Twelve if they were going to leave too.

Simon Peter answered, “Lord, who will we go to? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Messiah (the Holy One of God)!”

That concludes this story from the Bible.

**Retelling the Story**

Let’s review this story by retelling it as a group. We want to retell it as faithfully as we can to the story from the Bible. We do not want to add to it or leave out anything important. Who will get us started?

**Questions**

* Why was the crowd looking for Jesus?
* What did they want from Jesus?
* Why do you think Jesus cautioned them not to work for food that perishes but invited them to look for food that lasts forever?
* What do you think Jesus meant when he said he was the bread of life?
* What do you think Jesus meant when he told the crowd that he was sent from heaven?
* Why was it so difficult for them to accept that Jesus came down from heaven?
* What was so hard about what Jesus was saying that caused some of his disciples (or followers) to stop following him?
* What do you think Jesus was saying when he told them they were to eat his flesh?
* What is the difference in the manna or bread that their forefathers ate and the bread of life?
* What does this teach us about God?
* What should we do in response to this teaching?

**Prayer**

Prayer is more than a way to end the session. It is time to talk to God. Public prayer is a model for others. Boldly ask God to guide participants to use the Bible story with others. Ask God to give you and the participant’s insight and understanding as you think about this biblical event.