

The Bread of Life

Bread is one of the most ordinary and familiar foods in the world, yet the Bible uses bread as a powerful symbol of God's provision, daily dependence, hospitality and life itself.

Our Old Testament reading from Exodus 16 tells how God provided manna and quail for the Israelites in the wilderness. Having been rescued from slavery in Egypt, they became frightened and hungry and began to grumble. Yet God did not abandon them. He heard their cries, had compassion on them, and provided food every day. For forty years, the manna reminded them that God was faithful and that they could trust Him one day at a time.

Centuries later, in John's Gospel, we see a similar story. Once again, God's people are gathered in a wilderness place and are hungry. Jesus sees their need, has compassion on them, and miraculously feeds thousands with five loaves and two fish. Everyone eats until they are satisfied, with twelve baskets left over.

These two stories remind us that God knows what we need, abundantly provides for His people, and is able to do miracles.

The Israelites saw an empty wilderness as a problem, while God saw unlimited resources. The disciples saw five loaves and two fish as inadequate, while Jesus saw what God could do. We too can become so focused on our problems that we forget the God who is with us. Nothing is impossible for Him, although He may not always answer in the way we expect.

Yet these miracles point beyond physical bread to something greater. Manna eventually ceased, and the crowd eventually became hungry again. But Jesus reminds us, "I am the bread of life." He is the true bread from heaven who gives life to the world (John 6:32–35).

So, as we come to Communion today, we remember God's greatest provision: Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life. He alone can satisfy the

deepest hunger of our hearts and gives us grace, peace and everlasting life.