

BFF473 Jesus, the Bread of Life

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith and Family" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I am OK. How are you?

Scott: Fantastic. Ready to go.

Steve: Well, that's good. What makes it fantastic?

Scott: Sheer act of the will.

Steve: It helps me when I go outside to walk the dogs, so I have a 20-minute walk in the cold, and that refreshes me, and the sun's shining, it is very helpful.

Scott: Helps me to wait till almost the last minute before we're going to start recording and then just jump out of bed and run downstairs.

Steve: OK. I hope you put your slippers on. We're going to continue our study on the bread of life. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." We're going to start with a little review of the names for God in John 6. I came up with one, two, three, four names for God, names for Jesus in that chapter.

One is, 'True Bread.' Another is 'Bread of God.' Another is 'Bread of Life.' Another is the 'Living bread.' I'm going to read from John 6. Listen for them.

"Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' Jesus then said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'

"They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.'" Then later, He says, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven." When you look at the Scriptures, these names pop out at me. It is helpful because there are many "I am" expressions in the Gospel of John. "I am the door. I am the way." It's interesting that He identifies Himself as the bread of God, the bread of life, and "I am the living bread," all having to do with bread.

Scott: I should know better than to ask this, but are those all actually different in the Greek? Like, living bread and bread of life sound very similar. I'm curious.

Steve: The English is pretty close to the Greek in that living is a participle, whereas bread of life is not. They are similar in that all of them have the word "artos", which we talked about last time means bread, but bread of life, living bread, different forms, and then bread of God is different, so yeah. English gets it correctly.

Scott: Nice.

Steve: Even though they're very similar, they are different. Good question. Let's pray before we jump into some more sightings of Jesus. Father, thank You for Your son, Who You have called the bread of life, the living bread, the true bread from heaven, and we want that to be written on our hearts.

We don't want to gloss over it. You took time to express these names for Your Son, and we want to embrace them. We also want to see more about where bread and where Jesus as the bread come from in Scripture. Give us eyes to see today what You're showing to us from the Scripture.

Help us to speak well, help us to ask good questions, and help us to work with You and have ears to hear what Your Spirit is saying. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: The more I dig in this, the more I find, and it's fascinating. I was going to jump right into the New Testament, but I think we need to go back and get more of our foreshadowing that God does in Scripture. One of the things that He did was He named the town where Jesus was born Bethlehem, which means house of bread. Beth means house, lehem means bread.

Jesus we know, was born of the tribe of Judah, but He was also the son of David. I'm going to read a couple passages here, and this is the first time I believe that David appears in Scripture. It's in 1 Samuel 16 when Saul was being afflicted by an evil spirit. He said to his men around him, "Provide for me now a man who can play well and bring him to me. Then one of the young men said, 'Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man, and Jehovah is with him.'"

I think that one verse cleared the air that David was not 11 years old. This young fellow was a man. I would like to be described that way. Skillful musician, mighty man of valor, warrior, prudent in speech, good looking. The biggest thing is, and Jehovah is with him. They went and sought David, and David came up. He's first described as "the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite."

This is not the only time that this town appears, because in Ruth, the primary characters are from Bethlehem. "When Ruth and Naomi returned," it says in Ruth 1:19, "The two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the woman said, 'Is this Naomi?'" She was of the town of Bethlehem.

As we know, God gave Ruth and Boaz a son. They are David's grandparents we're talking about here. I didn't want to get too far into David with recognizing that this is where David's forebears lived.

Then, when God was looking for the next king because Samuel was His man, Samuel was the prophet. Saul had dropped the ball and disobeyed God, one of the saddest

chapters in scripture, and in 1 Samuel 16, "Samuel did what Jehovah commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling."

Then, in the next chapter, "David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah named Jesse who had eight sons." David is from Bethlehem. David and his forefathers are from Bethlehem, but now we're going to jump into Luke 2.

"Joseph also went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David." This was for the census.

Then in Matthew 2, "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem saying, 'Where is He who was born king of the Jews? For we saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled in all Jerusalem with him. And assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea. For so it is written by the prophet.'"

It was Micah who declared, "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel." Jesus was born, the son of David in the town which is called House of Bread.

I find that fascinating. There's another Old Testament connection, and that is in the showbread. I'm going to read in Leviticus, and then I'll read in Matthew. Leviticus 24:5–9. "You shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. You shall set them in two rows, six to a row, on the pure gold table before Jehovah. You shall put pure frankincense on each row, that it may be a memorial portion for the bread, even an offering by fire to Jehovah. Every Sabbath day he shall set it in order before Jehovah continually.

"It is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. It shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, for it is most holy to him from Jehovah's offerings by fire, his portion forever." We have spent at least one, maybe two podcasts two years ago when we were studying the tabernacle on the showbread.

I continue to study this, and there's a couple components here that are foreshadowing Jesus. The first is, it's to be a memorial portion, and it has frankincense on it, which stimulates the senses so that they can smell the frankincense and remember this bread.

You can hear it already in my voice, but this is what Jesus said, "When you take the Lord's Supper, do this in remembrance of Me." Then, this offering by fire is going to be to Jehovah every Sabbath day. They're going to have it once a week, but you know who's going to eat it? Aaron and his sons.

Aaron the priest and his sons were going to eat this showbread in a holy place for it is most holy to him from Jehovah's offerings by fire, his portion forever. I don't know how much more holy you can get than Jesus' body, but it's connected because Aaron and his sons were going to eat this showbread.

They were going to remember, it's a memorial portion. It's for remembering, and number two, it's food for the priests.

I find it fascinating because in all three Gospels, Jesus talks about this experience they had when they were walking through the grain fields on the Sabbath. Isn't that interesting that they're going to eat this on the Sabbath? They're walking through the grain fields on the Sabbath. This is building on 1 Samuel 21.

"His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat, but when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, 'Look, your disciples are doing what it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.'

"He said to them, 'Have you not read what David did when he was hungry and those who were with him, how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?'"

That was in 1 Samuel 21, and quoted in Matthew 12, Luke 6, Mark 2. I think the bigger picture is He's declaring Himself to be Lord of the Sabbath. But I think it's fascinating that this is what Jesus let His disciples do, and what David and his followers did, they ate what was only lawful for the priests.

Hold that thought. Remember that Jesus, right before He was going to be crucified, kept the feast of the Passover with His disciples. I'm going to come back and read more of this later, but the first thing that they did after they had the feast of the Passover, Jesus washed His disciples' feet.

I've mentioned this before, but I think it's important that we get this picture because Jesus feeds His disciples bread. He breaks the bread, He gives it to His disciples. Then He washes their feet, and if you remember, Peter protested. He said, "No, no, no. What are you doing?"

He says, "Why are you washing my feet?" Jesus answered and said, "What I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." I think we're in the afterward. We can look back now and see that Jesus had made His disciples priests that night.

He gave them food like David gave it to his followers, just like the priests. This was a priestly meal. It's like the showbread, and then He washed their feet, which we've covered before, but I could read it again if you want. This is what Aaron and his sons had to do before they went into the holy place.

They had to wash their feet. I believe that this is what Jesus was doing. He was telling these young men, these 12, you are not simply my followers, you are apostles, and you are priests in this era of the new covenant. This is what priests do. They eat the sacred bread. They wash their feet.

These were priestly functions, which even they didn't get it because He said, "You won't get it now, but you'll get it later." Later, Peter wrote some of the most sublime passages about the fact that we are priests. I think Jesus was foretelling this, but it all revolves around bread.

It revolves around fine flour, 12 cakes of baked bread, only for the sons of Aaron, the priests. I think David was also saying that he was a priest, and we know David was a priest. He was also a king. How's that? We're getting deep now.

Scott: Yeah.

Steve: We're going to get deeper.

Scott: Keep going.

Steve: Do you know where the first temple was built? I'll read it. This account is in 2 Samuel 24. It's also in 1 Chronicles 21. I'm going to read the 1 Chronicles passage. This was right after David numbered the people. You have to read both accounts to get it.

At first, it looks like David is being prideful or dense. Even Joab knew this is not right. You don't need to be numbering the people. It looks like Satan was the one that prompted him to do it, but if you read both accounts, it's because God had an issue with Israel, and He's the one that was behind this.

We're not going to get into that, but what happened was is He gave him three choices. You can either fall into the hands of your enemies, or famine. He said, "No, let us fall into the hand of God." The angel of Jehovah smote, if I remember 70,000 men, it was awful.

Then it says, "The angel of Jehovah was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Then David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of Jehovah standing between earth and heaven with his drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem.

"Then David and the elders, covered with sackcloth, fell on their faces. David said to God, 'Is it not I who commanded to count the people? Indeed, I am the one who has sinned and done very wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done? O Jehovah my God, please let Your hand be against me and my father's household, but not against Your people that they should be plagued.'

"Then the angel of Jehovah commanded Gad to say to David that David should go up and build an altar to Jehovah on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. So David went up at that word of God which he spoke in the name of Jehovah.

"Now Ornan turned back and saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid themselves, and Ornan was threshing wheat. As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David and went up from the threshing floor and prostrated himself before David with his face to the ground.

"Then David said to Ornan, 'Give me the site of this threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to Jehovah for the full price you shall give it to me, that the plague may be restrained from the people.'

"Ornan said to David, 'Take it for yourself, and let my lord the king do what is good in his sight. See, I will give the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give it all.'

"But David said to Ornan, 'No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for Jehovah or offer a burnt offering, which cost me nothing.' So David gave Ornan 600 shekels of gold by weight for the sight.

"Then David built an altar to Jehovah there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and he called to Jehovah, and He answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering." Shortly thereafter, Solomon is going to build the temple at God's direction, and that's where he built it, right there on the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite. You see this?

Scott: Yeah.

Steve: As soon as I see this, what comes to my mind is when Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit." I think of the wheat being threshed. This is threshing. This is making fine flour, which is how they make the showbread. This whole concept of threshing and grain of wheat dying is consistent with Jesus.

I noticed in Luke 24, that wonderful time when, Cleo and his friend were with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. When He was at table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened and they knew Him.

A couple verses later, it says, they were recounting this to their friends, and they said, "He was known to them in the breaking of the bread."

I thought, I wonder how many times these disciples of Jesus, these followers had seen Him break the bread, not knowing that He wasn't taking it apart so you could eat it, and He wasn't cutting it up into small pieces so they could pass it around, but He was showing that He was going to be broken. He was going to be threshed. He was going to be killed. There you go. What do you think?

Scott: I think the next time I take communion, it's going to have some layers and layers of meaning that I didn't realize were there, so man.

Steve: I was going to read those passages, but I think most of our listeners are familiar with these, but this is what He did. This is in Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke

22. "He took bread when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave to them. 'This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.'"

Like you said, communion pulls it all together. I probably ought to say that one more time. Communion, the last supper, pulls it all together. This is the broken body of Jesus. This is the bread of life for the life of the world. This is My body, which is given for you. Do this not only in remembrance of Me, but as you remember Me.

That's our savior. He doesn't do anything haphazardly. He doesn't have any off moments. He knows when He's breaking that bread. He knows when He's letting His disciples eat the wheat on the Sabbath day.

He knows what He's doing. He's foreshadowing. He's foretelling. He's laying a foundation, so later, the disciples can look back with the help of the Holy Spirit, and they can see Jesus all the way back in the tabernacle, all the way back in the threshing floor, all the way back in the son of David being born in Bethlehem. It's amazing.

Scott: Yeah. I wonder how many of them got that in the moment when they saw Him break the bread.

Steve: I don't think they got it in the moment.

Scott: Whenever it hit them. I can almost see it like one of those montages in a movie where it's like they have this surprise look on their face and they see it all at the same time in their head.

Steve: That's a great picture. Yes. A montage in their head. That's what it says. "The Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance all these things at the proper time," and that's what He did and He's doing it for us.

This morning, I saw a scripture on Facebook, and it says this, "Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked." When I saw that, I thought this is consistent because Jesus was poured out. He was broken.

He gave Himself for others. I thought this would be a good place to stop today, that He would help us to be poured out, to be broken, to give our lives for others, just as He did for us.

Father, thank You for being broken. Thank You for watching Your son be broken. Thank You for all these insights that You've given us from Your scripture, how Jesus was present in the name Bethlehem, present in the showbread, present in the breaking of bread.

Thank You for this grain of wheat that died and has borne so much fruit and has become the source of life for the world. We embrace the bread of life, the bread of God, the living bread in a whole new way today. Thank You for Your word that points us to Jesus over and over again. We worship You and we love You in Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith and Family podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@Gmail.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.