



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for January 21, 2007
Released on Wednesday, January 17, 2007**

“Jesus: Life-Giving Bread and Water”

Lesson: John 6:34–40; 7:37–39

Read: John 6:25–59; 7:37–39

Time: A.D. 29

Places: Capernaum and Jerusalem

GOLDEN TEXT: “And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’” (John 6:35 NKJV)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: John 6:34–40; 7:37–39

John 6:34–40

34 Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 7:37–39

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

37 On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

TEACHER’S NOTES ON THE LESSON

Physical and spiritual needs abound in our world today. In John 6:1–14, Jesus dealt with a group of hungry people by multiplying barley loaves and fish. When He sensed that they wanted to make Him kin, He left immediately. On the following day, when He met a group of them, He told them He knew they sought Him because He had fed them, not because of the message He had for them (vs. 26). They needed to recognize that their need for spiritual food was more important.

Jesus’ discussion on Himself as the Bread of life occurs in the context of a discussion about the *manna* God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness. They had no other food—though God did grant them quail later on. The manna was their only sustenance, and it came directly from God—not from Moses as Jesus corrected in John 6:32–33. This manna was discovered by the Israelites like clockwork each morning.

Jesus compared Himself to the manna—in that He too comes from God. Jesus also gives us life and strength. As the manna was one food given for many, Jesus too is the one we need; the only one who gives us eternal life.

Jesus made it clear that He was not talking about literal, physical eating. We receive this life-giving bread and this life-sustaining drink when we come to Jesus and believe in Him (John 6:35).

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that we need Jesus for our souls just as we need food and water for our bodies in order to live.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. Jesus said He is the Bread of life and the living Water.
2. We need Jesus as we need good food and water.
3. Jesus satisfies our souls.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Telling the Lesson, bring a sweet roll and a butter knife (use caution), a glass of water, and another container into which you can pour the water.

For Helping to Remember, bring a blank or paper bulletin board (as a poster). Bring a marker and a paper strip and glue if using a bulletin board. Have glitter glue pens for each student.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Have you ever been really hungry—so hungry that you felt desperate for food? Have you ever felt really thirsty—so thirsty that all you could think about was getting a sip of water? If so, you will better understand what Jesus meant in today’s lesson when He talked about Himself being the Bread of life and the living Water that satisfies our souls.

TELLING THE LESSON:

God's people who lived long ago knew what it was like to be hungry and thirsty. They had been living in a big desert. They had no food or water. They were desperately hungry and thirsty. When their leader prayed to God about their problem, He took care of them.

Jesus talked about that special food God sent His people long ago. They called it *manna*. Can you say "manna?" God sent it to them from heaven every morning for forty years while His people were living in a desert and needed food. The manna was sweet. It tasted good, and it was good for them. It gave their bodies strength. *(Teacher, show the sweet roll. Cut pieces of it for each child to taste.)*

The people listening to Jesus thought it would be good for God to keep giving them that food forever. Jesus wanted them to think about something else, though. He wanted them to think about Him.

God was giving them something better. He was giving them His Son, Jesus. Jesus said He is the Bread of life. Just as good food gives us life and strength, so Jesus gives us God's life.

Food satisfies us when we feel hungry. Jesus will always satisfy our souls. Water satisfies us when we feel thirsty. Jesus satisfies our hearts like cool, refreshing water. *(Show the glass of water, and pour some out into another container.)*

When we come to Jesus and believe Him, He gives us life and satisfies our hearts. Not everyone who saw Jesus believed in Him, but Jesus promised that when someone comes to Him, God will *never* turn him away.

Jesus came to do God's will, and it is God's will that Jesus should keep all those who believe in Him. Even if they die, Jesus will raise them up to life again someday. All who believe in Jesus will have eternal life from God and will someday be raised from the dead.

Another time Jesus was attending a feast when the people remembered how God had provided water in the desert. During the feast, Jesus stood up where many people could hear Him. He said that if anyone was thirsty, he should come to Him and drink. Everyone was invited. Jesus would give enough water that it would flow out from us.

Jesus was talking about how those who believed in Him would receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus satisfies those who come to Him. He blesses them so much that blessing flows out of them and they can share it with others.

We need good food and water to live. We need Jesus to have eternal life. It is not hard to get Jesus. He offers Himself freely to all who will believe in Him.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Do your friends know how Jesus can satisfy their hearts? Do you have a friend or neighbor you could invite to Sunday school? Here at church, your friend could learn how Jesus loves him or her and how to receive Jesus as their Saviour. That would be a wonderful gift to give your friend.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Write the words "Jesus: Life-Giving Bread and Water" to the poster describing what Jesus can do for us. Let the children trace the words with glitter glue pens and continue decorating the outside of the poster.

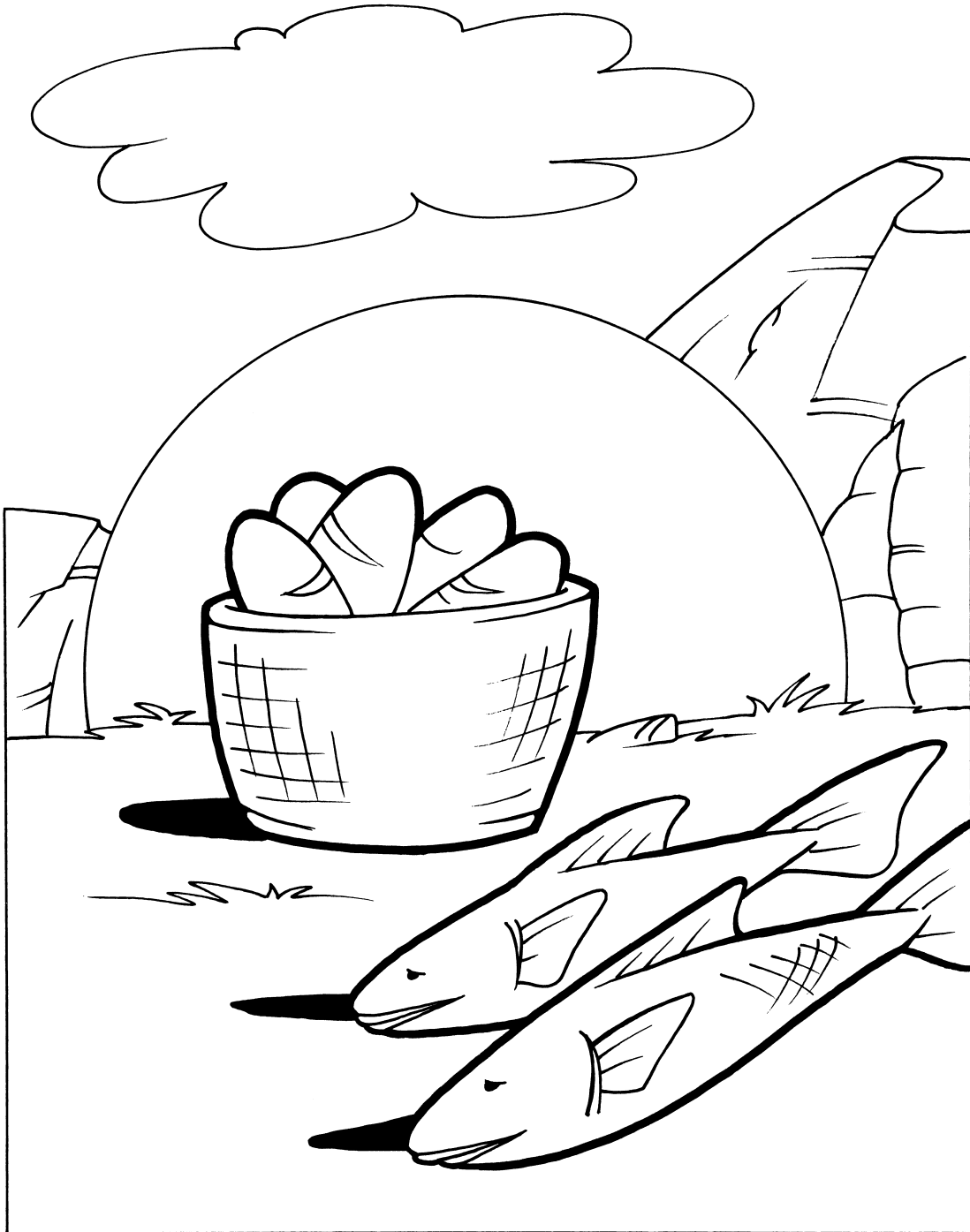
EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT:

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35 NKJV).

Jesus said that He is like bread to a hungry person. Jesus gives eternal life as food gives us life and strength. He satisfies our hearts as food satisfies our hunger.

Those who come to Jesus and believe in Him will always be satisfied. When we are hungry, we need food. When we are thirsty, we need water to drink. All the time, we need Jesus.

MUSTARD SEED LESSON ACTIVITIES:



"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35 NKJV).

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the people immediately know that Jesus was talking about spiritual bread and water?

No, they expected Him to continue to provide them with physical food like the manna and quail birds that God sent to their ancestors in Exodus 16:4 and 16. They knew that Jesus was at least a prophet (see John 6:14), but did not recognize Him as being the Son of God who had come to give them eternal life in exchange for their sins.

2. Did the people following Jesus believe Him because of what they had seen?

Some might have, but others who did not were simply following Jesus because they had previously seen Him feed the crowd of five thousand with two fish and five loaves of bread, and wanted to receive more food from Jesus. Jesus said in John 6:36 that the people saw the miracles that Jesus performed and still did not believe that He was the Son of God. Jesus later told (Doubting) Thomas in John 20:29, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Regarding spiritual things, there is a blessing in simply believing what you may not be able to explain right away.

3. Did Jesus do what He wanted to do in today's lesson, or was He on a mission for someone else?

No, He didn't do what He wanted to do. Jesus always acknowledged His Father in Heaven and gave God credit for all that He did. He set an example for us to live by—to obey God in our everyday lives because we are accountable to Him for our actions. Jesus confirmed this on many occasions, and in John 6:37–40 of today's lesson, He plainly explains that His mission was not His own, but that of God the Father.

4. What was Jesus talking about when He said "Out of his (the believer's) heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38b)?

Jesus was speaking of the person who accepted Him as Saviour—that person would be blessed from the Giver of life (Jesus Christ), and would be a blessing to others. In other words, Jesus is the source of living water, and believing in Him not only provides satisfaction for the believer but also allows him to become a source of information and satisfaction for others.

5. Do we know what God looks like?

Although no one has ever seen God in person and lived to tell about it, we know that Jesus looked and acted like God because Jesus tells us so in the Bible. God must be loving, forgiving, unselfish, and tell the truth—because these are words that describe Jesus. Jesus said that when we look at Him, we are also looking at God the Father because they are One (see John 10:30). They are One in harmony of thought and mission.

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

1. The disciples said that they forever wanted the physical [**feast, bread**] that God fed the Israelites in the Old Testament. (John 6:34)
2. Jesus told them that whoever accepted Him would never spiritually [**hunger, hear**] or [**trip, thirst**] again. (John 6:35)
3. Jesus promised that if anyone came to Him believing, He would never send them [**a plague, away**]. (John 6:37)
4. God sent Jesus from heaven to do God's [**will, homework**]. (John 6:38)
5. Jesus said that He would give never ending [**lunch money, life**] to those who believed in Him. (John 6:40)
6. Those who God [**blesses, borrows from**] will themselves be a blessing to others. (John 7:38)
7. The Holy Spirit had not yet [**sang, come**] because Jesus was still living. (John 7:39)

Answers: 1) bread, 2) hunger, thirst, 3) away, 4) will, 5) life, 6) blesses, 7) come

UNSCRAMBLE THESE WORDS:

1. odof _____
2. tarew _____
3. drbae _____
4. flei _____
5. reghnu _____
6. rithst _____
7. grentsht _____
8. usesj _____
9. taesf _____
10. nevaeh _____
11. eliveeb _____
12. losu _____

Answers: 1) food, 2) water, 3) bread, 4) life, 5) hunger, 6) thirst, 7) strength, 8) Jesus, 9) feast, 10) heaven, 11) believe, 12) soul

Lesson Summarized by:

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