



=I AM SERIES=

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION: We are beginning a series of lessons on the "I am's" of the Bible. It would be wise to go back to Exodus 3:14 to acquaint ourselves with the purpose of our Lord using the term "I am." when Moses was called of God to lead the Israelites out of the land of bondage, he was commanded to go before Pharaoh and seek the freedom of the children of Israel. Moses asked the Lord what he should say when Pharaoh would ask him who sent him. Moses then told the Lord that he would say, "The God of your fathers hath sent me." Then he asked, "What will I say when they ask me, "What is His name?" The Lord responded by saying, "I AM THAT I AM." Later on in Exodus 3:14 He told Moses to say, "I AM hath sent me unto you." What God is saying is that He always is, He always was and always will be, but He is always in the present tense. The Christian never has to look back to better days or forward to better days. Today is the best day. The truth of the matter is that there is only one day and this is today, for yesterday was today yesterday and tomorrow will be today tomorrow. The time to serve God is now! The time to seek God's blessings is now. The time to win souls is now. There are a lot of "use-to-was-ers" and "going-to-be-ers: in the family of God. Thank God there are some who serve an I AM God. You will recall that Jesus said, "Before Abraham was I AM." He is a very present help in time of trouble. He is our God today. He is our help now. He is our strength now. His promises pertain to now.

He then proceeds to use the term I AM over and over and over again. In other words, He wants to tell us the many things He is now. One of the most important of these is the Bread of Life.

POINT OF CONTACT: Teacher, bring to class a loaf of bread and some seed. Show them to the class; we will use them later in the lesson.

- 1. THE LESSON ON THE BREAD OF LIFE WAS GIVEN JUST AFTER OUR LORD HAD FED THE 5,000.**
 - John 6:1-14 gives us the story of the feeding of the 5,000. Then Jesus starts talking in verse 22 and goes through verse 59 discussing the fact that He is the Bread. It is interesting that the feeding of 5,000 is one of the few stories that is recorded in all four Gospels which leads us to see the tremendous importance of this story.
- 2. THIS BREAD IS LIKE THE MANNA WHICH GOD GAVE TO ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS.**
 - For forty years as they journeyed, He fed them with manna. This manna came from Heaven and covered the ground as frost each morning. Exodus 16:14, 15.
- 3. BREAD IS A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST FOR IT IS MADE OF PLANT LIFE WHICH WAS CREATED ON THE THIRD DAY OF CREATION.**
 - The third day is the resurrection day. The plant symbolizes the resurrection-a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ rising from the dead.
- 4. BREAD COMES BY DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION.**
 - Here again is a picture of our Lord. Just as the bread on our tables comes by death, burial and resurrection, even so the Living Bread (Jesus) comes by the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. In John 12:24 He speaks of himself as a corn of wheat that would fall in the ground and then spring

up. (Teacher, this would be a good place to take the seed and show it to the pupils. The seed is planted in the ground, but later it springs up—a picture of our Lord being planted in the ground and springing up after three days and three nights. Show them the plan of Salvation here. Liken bread to salvation. Liken being saved to receiving the bread.)

5. BREAD GIVES LIFE.

- Bread is called the staff of life. In John 6:58 Jesus tells us that He, as the Bread of Life, gives us eternal life. (Teacher, take the loaf of bread. Offer a piece to each pupil. When they take it, show them that is exactly the way a person is saved. To be saved is as simple as receiving a piece of bread.) Jesus offers himself as life eternal. All we have to do is receive Him.

6. BREAD SUSTAINS.

- a. Not only does bread give us life, but it sustains our lives. Jesus as the Bread of Life sustains us. When the Jews had the Passover, they offered the lamb as a sacrifice. Then for a week they ate of the lamb. Salvation is that way. We receive Christ by faith; then we keep strong as we feast on Him.
- b. Bear in mind that the bread from Heaven came every morning. The Jew was to gather it every morning. He could not gather a two-day supply but on one day. That was the day before the Sabbath for they were not to gather bread nor work on the Sabbath. This shows us something. Tomorrow's bread cannot do for today. Yesterday's bread cannot do for today. We must gather our bread every day. We must feed upon Christ every day. We must pray every day. We must stay close to him every day.
- c. This is pictured in the Table of Shewbread in the Tabernacle. Just inside the main Holy Place in the Tabernacle on the right as one entered was the Table of Shewbread. This bread was 12 loaves. It was for the feeding of the priests, but it had to be changed every day. We are priests. Our bread must be fresh from God's Word every day.
- d. (Teacher, it might be wise to take some pills of some kind. Spread them on the floor of the class. Have the class members pick up the pills showing how the Israelites picked up the manna every day for that day.)

7. THE BREAD IN THE WILDERNESS AND THE BREAD THAT JESUS IS PICTURING HIMSELF AS BEING HERE HAD THE TASTE OF FRESH OIL.

- Numbers 11:8 Ah, here is a beautiful picture. When we receive Christ, the Bread of Life, and feast upon Christ, the Bread of Life it has the taste of fresh oil. In other words, since oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, when the Christian receives Christ, he receives also the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (Teacher, spend some time to discuss that the Holy Spirit lives with us; He is always present, He never leaves us. Explain the fact that He is a person, that He comes in at salvation, leads us, teaches us the Bible, gives us wisdom, comforts us, etc.)

8. THE BREAD IN THE WILDERNESS CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN.

- This is a picture of Jesus coming down from heaven to give us life.

9. THE BREAD WAS CALLED "ANGEL'S FOOD."

- In other words, angels eat this bread that came down from Heaven.

CONCLUSION: Notice John 6:35, 48, 51. In these verses Jesus explains to us that He is the Bread of Life. He offers us all we need if we will feast upon Him. Salvation is just as easy as taking a piece of bread. It is by faith. The bread is made by another. It was placed in the oven and baked. Our salvation was made in the "oven" of Calvary when Jesus dipped His own soul into hell and paid our penalty. Salvation is completely made. All we have to do is receive it just like we reach out and take a piece of bread.

MEMORY VERSE: John 6:35 *"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."*

