

John 6:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

This verse constitutes the first major 'I am' statement in John's Gospel. Jesus declares *ego eimi ho artos tes zoes* - employing the sacred formula *ego eimi* that echoes YHWH's self-revelation in Exodus 3:14. The metaphor of 'bread' would resonate powerfully following the feeding of five thousand (6:1-15), but Jesus transforms physical imagery into spiritual reality. The genitive construction 'bread of life' indicates not merely bread that gives life but bread that is life itself. The dual promises - 'shall never hunger' and 'shall never thirst' - use emphatic double negatives (*ou me*) in Greek, indicating absolute, permanent satisfaction. This transcends physical sustenance to address humanity's deepest spiritual hunger. Coming to Christ and believing are presented as synonymous, revealing that faith is fundamentally relational approach rather than intellectual assent.

Historical Context

Spoken in the Capernaum synagogue following the miraculous feeding, this discourse occurs during Passover season when Jews commemorated the Exodus and manna provision. The crowd sought Jesus for physical bread (6:26), but He redirected them to spiritual reality. Jewish expectation held that Messiah would restore manna as Moses had provided it. Jesus claims to supersede Moses - the manna sustained temporarily, but Christ provides eternal life. This passage precipitated the first major crisis in Jesus' ministry, with many disciples departing (6:66). Early church liturgy incorporated this discourse into eucharistic theology,

though Jesus' primary reference is to faith rather than sacrament. Church Fathers like Ignatius and Irenaeus cited this passage defending Christ's true humanity and the reality of spiritual nourishment through faith.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' claim to be bread address humanity's fundamental spiritual hunger beyond physical needs?
2. What is the relationship between 'coming' to Jesus and 'believing' in Him in this verse?
3. Why does Jesus use the emphatic 'I am' formula, and how does it connect to Old Testament divine self-revelation?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν	δὲ	αὐτοῖς	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	Ἐγώ	εἰμι	ὁ	ἄρτος	τῆς
said	And	unto them	G3588	Jesus	I	am	G3588	the bread	G3588
G2036	G1161	G846		G2424	G1473	G1510		G740	
ζωῆς·	ὁ	ἐρχόμενος	πρός	μέ,	οὐ	μὴ	πεινάσῃ	καὶ	ὁ
of life	G3588	he that cometh	to	me	G3756	G3361	hunger	and	G3588
G2222		G2064	G4314	G3165			G3983	G2532	
πιστεύων	εἰς	ἐμέ	οὐ	μὴ	διψήσῃ	πώποτε			
he that believeth	on	me	G3756	G3361	shall	G4455			
G4100	G1519	G1691			G1372				

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

John 6:41 (Parallel theme): The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

Isaiah 49:10 (Parallel theme): They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

Revelation 7:16 (Parallel theme): They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

Matthew 11:28 (Parallel theme): Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

John 6:37 (Parallel theme): All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Luke 6:25 (Parallel theme): Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

John 6:65 (Parallel theme): And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

John 5:40 (Parallel theme): And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.