

John 6:32-40

Sermon: **God is a consistent God**

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THE KEY THAT OPENS THE DOOR

1. By *KEY* I mean the idea of who God is, and by *DOOR* I mean the biblical passages we understand more clearly when we have that key.

Right at the start, let's go to a verse whose meaning is easier to grasp when we change our belief paradigm. In **John 6:27** it says: "For on Him God the Father has set His **seal** of approval." How did God seal Jesus? The word *SEAL* is used often in the Book of Revelation. Here are a few examples: "Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven **seals**¹.'" And another: "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a **seal** on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Then I heard the number of those who were **sealed**: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel².

1.1. If I understand correctly, the word *SEAL* in the Bible indicates something very important — what will happen, or to whom it will happen, now and in the future. In the second example, we see that God sealed those who would not be destroyed during a military invasion of Israel, when most Israelites would be killed. For the purpose of this sermon, I won't go deeper into the Revelation passage; I simply want to show you that *SEAL* is often used in the Bible, and by context we see that the authors always used it to indicate the importance of God's action within our reality.

1.2. Coming back to John 6, where Jesus said to His people that God had sealed Him — in other words, I believe He is telling all of us that God the Father chose Him to be the Messiah who will reign eternally over God's kingdom.

¹ (Revelation 5:5)

² (Revelation 7:3–4)

1.3. I'll use a comparison to deepen the idea of the relationship between God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. In Genesis, where we recently spent some time, Pharaoh declares before his court that Joseph will be the ruler over his household and that all Egypt will obey Joseph's commands. After saying this, Pharaoh took his *signet ring* from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand³. By doing this, Pharaoh authorized Joseph to be his right hand, giving him the ring as a public sign that from now on, the people must listen to Joseph just as they listen to Pharaoh. At that moment, Joseph sat at Pharaoh's right hand — biblically speaking.

1.4. The same is happening here: God authorized Jesus to be king over His people, and with the *seal* (the miracles Jesus performed), God showed His people they must listen to the words and commands of His Son.

INTRODUCTION

2. In sermon 57, I said that the people actually didn't care about Jesus' teaching. Instead, they wanted Him — just as Moses had done for their ancestors — to literally feed them bread. They wanted nothing more than for Jesus to fill their stomachs. In other words, their minds were focused only on the material.

2.1. Alright, let's go into the text slowly. Let's read **John 6:32–36**: “Very truly I tell you,” Jesus said, “it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

“Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen Me and still you do not believe.”

OUR GOD IS THE FOCUS, NOT MOSES

2.2. In the Gospels, we see reports of how the religious leaders of Judaism often referred to Moses and Abraham, both before Jesus and before the people:

“We are Abraham's⁴ descendants,”

“We are Moses' disciples,”

“We know that God spoke to Moses⁵.”

What were they actually saying with these words? Probably something like this:

“We are Abraham's descendants. We believe in Moses' teaching and follow his law to the letter. We are Israelites, blood relatives of the fathers of the faith. The kingdom of God belongs to us because we are God's people.”

³ (Book of Genesis 41:37–45)

⁴ (John 8:33)

⁵ (John 9:28–29)

2.3. This is what the religious leaders believed, and what they taught the people. Through these *lenses* they viewed Jesus' words as He taught them. Jesus knew this, and so He boldly confronted them: *"Neither Moses nor Abraham should be at the center of your focus — only God the Father matters. He is the One who decided from the beginning that through you (Israel) He would bring blessing to the whole world, and that blessing is called: the Kingdom of God."*

2.4. In other words, Jesus wanted to remind His people that they had misunderstood the event in Exodus. And what do I mean by that? In the event where God, through Moses, feeds the people in the wilderness, the goal was not just to keep them from dying. God primarily wanted to continue with His plan. In other words, the focus was not the food, but the fulfillment of the promises made to their fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses).

2.5. The people listening to Jesus misunderstood the message: manna was not given to their fathers just so they wouldn't die in the wilderness — though that was important — but primarily as proof that God would not break the promise He gave to Abraham: *"Because you have obeyed My command, all nations on earth will be blessed through your offspring⁶."*

2.6. When Jesus said: *"It is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but My Father who gives you the true bread from heaven,"* He was essentially saying: *"Your fathers, and Moses with them, would have died in the wilderness if our Father had not fed them for forty years. You now seek bread only to fill your stomachs, but they were in real danger of dying. And yet even that is not the most important point — you have misunderstood the meaning of the Exodus event. God was not just feeding them to meet their needs."*

2.7. Unfortunately, as the biblical record shows, their fathers also misunderstood why God gave them manna — which is why they did not enter the Promised Land. Their children did, but they did not.

2.8. Jesus continues: *"Do not be like that first generation in the wilderness. Their hearts were not primarily focused on God's promises, though they should have been. Through the manna, our God simply wanted to prove to them that He is a faithful and consistent God who will fulfill His promises. Manna was never the focus in God's plan — the more important bread is the one God is now giving you. That bread is Me. My coming among you is proof that God the Father is STILL a faithful and consistent God who will fulfill the promises given to our fathers and to the prophets: 'I will place over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the Lord will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them⁷.'"*

3. In that tone, let's continue with Jesus' words: *"Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry or thirsty..."* His words strongly remind me of the Lord's words spoken in **Isaiah 55:1–3**: *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on*

⁶ (Book of Exodus 22:18)

⁷ (Ezekiel 36:23–24)

what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to Me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to Me; listen, that you may live.”

3.1. In Isaiah, the Lord calls His people to return to Him. What did an Israelite have to do to truly return to the Lord at that time? My short answer would be: He had to *listen* to the Lord! From the very beginning, the Lord taught His people what pleased His heart and what did not.

3.2. Although the Lord, through Moses, commanded His people to carry out ceremonial aspects of the law (offering sacrifices, not working on the Sabbath, eating kosher food...), these were never as important as God’s moral law. In other words, to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength meant to reflect the image of the invisible God in your life. God primarily wanted every Israelite to display the personality of God Himself in their lives. That is what it meant to *listen* to the Lord.

3.3. Through this lens, if we read the verses above, God is telling His people that those who listen to Him, those who seek above all to reflect His image in their lives, will never be hungry or thirsty. And why not? Because such people will inherit the Kingdom of God. They will freely receive the gift of: a new body without sin, protection, perfect health, abundance of all good things. It will be a life without sorrow or pain, because the Lord will finally be their God who will dwell among them — literally.

4. Alright, let’s go back to Jesus. When He tells His people that He is the bread of life, I believe He means this: *“The day has come when the Lord, our God, is once again reminding you what matters to His heart. The day has come when, by My presence, God is telling you that He has not abandoned you and will not break the promises made to our fathers. In Isaiah, you have the words of our Lord, who told our ancestors what they must do to be blessed; that food is Me. I am the living moral law of Moses. My teaching, My life, My behavior, My reactions, My values, My interpretation of the law (civil, ceremonial, moral) — all are in line with what God has required from the very beginning that we do as His chosen people.”*

4.1. With this statement, Jesus is telling the people that He is the first true Israelite who perfectly lives out God’s law⁸. Because of this, those who choose to follow His example are the ones who truly love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Whoever does not love Jesus with all their heart does not love God the Father with all their heart. Whoever does not love the law of Moses does not love the goodness and mercy of Jesus and His heavenly Father. Whoever does not seek the free bread (Jesus’ teaching) to eat will not inherit eternal life.

4.2. Jesus finishes the above passage with the statement: *“But as I told you, you have seen Me and still you do not believe.”*

⁸ For those who may not know: God’s law IS the Law of Moses—they are one and the same. Sometimes I use the term “Law of Moses,” and sometimes “God’s law.” I hope I’m not confusing you by doing so.

4.3. Is He addressing *everyone* here? Is there not even one who believes in Him? In the following verses, we see that Jesus shifts His focus from those who do not believe to those who do. In other words, He will now tell His people — and by extension, us who are reading the Gospel — how reality actually works; who are those who will inherit the Kingdom of God?

4.4. These next verses, I believe, cannot be fully understood unless you accept the idea that God is the Author of our reality — at least that's how I see it.

WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE

5. In **John 6:37–40** it says: *“All those the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do My will but to do the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that I shall lose none of all those He has given Me, but raise them up at the last day. For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”*

5.1. Let's not forget — Jesus is speaking to His own people, not to us. By that I mean: for two thousand years, we have been taught that Jesus is God, seated at the right hand of the Father. The people listening to Him at that moment saw Him as a member of their community — a man from Nazareth, whose mother was Mary and father Joseph. And now this “ordinary man,” their neighbor, the same Jesus who had played in the streets of their village just years earlier, is telling them that He has the authority to decide who will inherit the Kingdom of God and who will not. And who gave Him that authority? His Father — their God.

5.2. It's truly powerful how Jesus nails down everything He's been saying: *“All those the Father gives Me will come to Me.”* Here we see that Jesus believes exactly what I believe and what I wrote to you in the last sermon: God the Father is the Author of our reality. When we view this text through that belief paradigm, we understand that God, as Author, predestined before the foundation of the world — before time and space began — who would be chosen for that destiny and who would not. From the biblical text above, we see Jesus uniting two truths into one thought: *“Yes, the Father gives Me those who will inherit eternal life. And how do I know who they are? I know because, of their own free will, they will come to Me.”* By “come to Me,” I believe He means that he or she will devote their entire life to Jesus' teaching, surrender to Him, and love Him more than anyone else in their life.

5.3. Jesus continues by saying He did not come to do His own will but the will of His Father. I believe He is saying that He came to fulfill the plan God intended to carry out in the story He has written as Author. Who knows God's plan better and more clearly than the One for whom that plan was ultimately created? Here we see enormous humility from our Teacher — even though He has technically been given authority to decide who will inherit eternal life, He knows that the chosen are already chosen. Because of that truth, He sets Himself aside and gives precedence to His Father, who has already decided who will live forever. In other words,

Jesus knows that those who will persevere in loving Him, those who — like Peter — will say: *“Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!”* and who, despite Pharisaic pressure, will still choose to follow Him — are those whom His Father has already chosen before the creation of the world.

5.4. By repeating the same statement, Jesus emphasizes how important it is for His listeners to heed Him and do what He has been telling them since He began His ministry. And that is: the will of His Father — or, to put it another way — the end of the story, of which He is the Author, has a happy ending. ALL whom the Father has given to Jesus will, in the end, be raised up on the last day.

5.5. In other words, at the end of this age, those who are alive at that moment and those who are dead will, at the call (voice) of Jesus Christ, rise to heaven. When they arrive, Jesus will, with a look or a gesture, transform them into new beings who will be perfectly good — just like their King who has freely given them this gift⁹.

And why will He give them this gift? To glorify God the Father — not Himself, but God the Father who is a GOOD God. Jesus knows that only a good God can write such a magnificent and beautiful ending into His plan.

SHORT CONCLUSIONS

6. The Israelites have always focused more on what God could do for them than on God's promises, which He revealed throughout history through the prophets.

And I believe, looking at today's world, that Western civilization — which still claims to be Christian — would react in much the same way if Jesus were to return and call people to choose between His bread (teaching) and the bread of their religious leaders.

Many would say: *“I am Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Jehovah's Witness — the Kingdom of God belongs to me!”*

Of course, I cannot prove this, because Jesus is not physically among us now. But the day will come when He will be — and then we will see whose bread people actually want to eat.

6.1. Studying the Bible, we come to the conclusion that the God of the Bible is truly a consistent God. If we are Christians, if we call ourselves Christians, I have one message for all of us: let's stop conforming to worldly ideas that predict who created this world, why it was created, what and whom we should fear, and what we should not fear. The world wants to convince us that we, as human beings, have the power to decide how the world will look in the future, that we are the makers of our own destiny... All of that is an illusion. We have no such power, nor was this world created because of us. In reality, the only thing we truly possess and have authority over is — the decision we make, in our free will, to commit ourselves to the One for whom all things were created. And because of that, in the end, we receive eternal life. In other words, we decide whether we want to live forever.

⁹ (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18)

6.2. If only a person would become aware of the privilege they have, of the gift their Creator has given them — the gift to choose — then, even during the journey (the life they are currently living), they would be a joyful human being, even though the journey is sometimes extremely difficult.

6.3. In the end, to believe that God is a consistent God means to believe in a happy ending — an ending where He, as Author, has written down who, of their own free will, will decide to give their life to His Son, Jesus Christ. Please, be one of them. Choose to live forever.