

THE BREAD OF LIFE

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro, to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” Amos, Bible, Amos 8:11-12

“What "oppression" is more grievous than that a soul seeking the truth, and wishing to attain unto the knowledge of God, should know not where to go for it and from whom to seek it? For opinions have sorely differed, and the ways unto the attainment of God have multiplied. This "oppression" is the essential feature of every Revelation. Unless it cometh to pass, the Sun of Truth will not be made manifest. For the break of the morn of divine guidance must needs follow the darkness of the night of error. For this reason, in all chronicles and traditions reference hath been made unto these things, namely that iniquity shall cover the surface of the earth and darkness shall envelop mankind. . . . by "oppression" is meant the want of capacity to acquire spiritual knowledge and apprehend the Word of God. By it is meant that when the Day-star of Truth hath set, and the mirrors that reflect His light have departed, mankind will become afflicted with "oppression" and hardship, knowing not whither to turn for guidance.” Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 31

“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Jesus Christ, Bible, Matthew 4:4

“For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. . . . I am the bread of life; he that cometh unto me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Jesus Christ, Bible, John 6:33, 35

“I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Jesus Christ, Bible, John 6:48-51

“This bread signifies the heavenly food and divine perfections. So, "If any man eateth of this bread" means if any man acquires heavenly bounty, receives the divine light, or partakes of Christ's perfections, he thereby gains everlasting life. The blood also signifies the spirit of life and the divine perfections, the lordly splendor and eternal bounty. For all the members of the body gain vital substance from the circulation of the blood. . . . It is evident that the bread of which the disciples ate and were filled was the heavenly bounty; for in verse 33 of the same chapter it is said: "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." It is clear that the body of Christ did not descend from heaven, but it came from the womb of Mary; and that which descended from the heaven of God was the spirit of Christ.

. . . Reflect how clear it is that what Christ meant by the heavenly bread was His spirit, His bounties, His perfections and His teachings; for it is said in the 63rd verse: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." ‘Abdu'l-Baha, Some Answered Questions, p. 97

“That which is preeminent above all other gifts, is incorruptible in nature, and pertaineth to God Himself, is the gift of Divine Revelation. Every bounty conferred by the Creator upon man, be it material or spiritual, is subservient unto this. It is, in its essence, and will ever so remain, the Bread which cometh down from Heaven. It is God's supreme testimony, the clearest evidence of His truth, the sign of His consummate bounty, the token of His all-encompassing mercy, the proof of His most loving providence, the symbol of His most perfect grace. He hath, indeed, partaken of this highest gift of God who hath recognized His Manifestation in this Day.” Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 195

“This is the food that conferreth everlasting life upon the pure in heart and the illumined in spirit. This is the bread of which it is said: "Lord, send down upon us Thy bread from heaven." This bread shall never be withheld from them that deserve it, nor can it ever be exhausted. It groweth everlastingly from the tree of grace; it descendeth at all seasons from the heavens of justice and mercy.” Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 22