



WEEK 4 || *JOHN 6*
THE OFFENCE

It's easy for us to think that we might need *something*, only to miss the *one thing* we so desperately need. And it was the same with the Israelites.

John 6 has a number of references back to Moses and the Exodus from the Old Testament. Jesus has already made the bold claim that he is the great 'prophet' who would come after Moses (5:46, cf. Deut 18:15) and now he re-enacts a miracle from the days in the wilderness.

Read Exodus 16:1-20 and John 6:1-69 in your own time before your group meets.

Exodus 16:4-18

THE CROWD JUDGES JESUS

1. Why are the crowds following Jesus? What do they want from him? (v26, 34...)

2. Jesus performs a remarkable miracle in feeding the large crowd. The miracle echoes the way God fed the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16). Who do the crowd think Jesus is at first (v14)?

3. How does their opinion/judgement of Jesus change when he doesn't give them what they think they need? (compare verse 14 with verses 41-52.)

The crowds following Jesus were impressed by his signs and his ability to provide for their dietary needs, but they missed who he was and what he had come to do. When Jesus doesn't give them what they think they need, their judgment of him quickly changes. But as we'll see, Jesus is greater than Moses and he offers something much more than bread...

...WHICH JUDGES THEM

Read **John 6:25-59** together.

4. What 'bread' is Jesus really offering to the crowd (v35, 51)?

5. In the history of Israel, the escape from Egypt was the most significant moment of rescue they had ever known. How does Jesus compare his work with the events of the Exodus?

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. 5 On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days..."

11 The Lord said to Moses, 12 "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'"

13 That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14 When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 15 When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. 16 This is what the Lord has commanded: 'Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'"

17 The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. 18 And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

6. Why do you think Jesus makes such extreme statements about eating his flesh and drinking his blood? What cost is Jesus alluding to as he uses this imagery?

7. How do the crowds respond to these statements?

Jesus' closest disciples were offended too, but didn't leave him like the crowd, because they knew eternal life could be found nowhere else. It is offensive to hear that you're so sinful that to be forgiven you need the broken body and shed blood of God become human! But there is no other way to eternal life.

WHAT'S YOUR VERDICT?

8. What mistake did the crowd make when they just wanted Jesus to fill their stomachs?

Do people make the same mistakes about Jesus today?

In what ways?

9. Jesus promises that those who believe in him will never be hungry or thirsty again. Has this been your experience in life following Jesus? Have you been hungry and thirsty for the right things?

CONCLUSION

Jesus is not only 'the one who provides what we need for life', he is the very provision for true life – life for eternity. The Manna provided in the days of the Exodus was amazing, but it pointed to something far greater. Now that he's here, feed off him and you will live forever!

Read right through John 7 & 8 before your group meets next week.