

## GOSPEL OF JOHN 6:41-50

**<sup>41</sup>The Jews** (Galileans, are referred to as Jews perhaps because of thinking, Bp. Gerasimos) **then were murmuring about Him, because He said, “I am the bread, the *One* having come down out of the heavens.”** **<sup>42</sup>And they were saying, “This is Jesus, the son of Joseph, of Whom we know the father and the Mother, is it not? How *is it* then *that* this *One* said, ‘I have come down out of the heavens’?”**

“When the heavenly enters history, when it manifests itself in the space of the finite world, then faith is challenged, it is tested. The mind cannot conceive the manner, the *how* of it...as long as man seeks to be supported by rational proofs and miracles, he will never reach the faith that is required for salvation. Faith presupposes the **paradoxical**, the supernatural. Disbelief can only be overcome in us, in our heart, in a sincere dialogue of the heart with the living personal God, whom we meet within our own world to acquire a real relationship with Him. Only then can man say, *I believe, help my unbelief!* (Bp. Gerasimos)

Chrysostom: “They must not have known of his miraculous birth, Jesus does not correct them, he is not the Son of Joseph, but they are not ready to hear such great things”

The question raised is responded to by Jesus with a reference to the Prophet Isaiah and this is now the teaching He is giving that understanding is a revelation from God the Father. Jesus is the bread which has come down from heaven to be eaten. (Fr. Behr).”

**<sup>43</sup>Jesus therefore answered and said to them, “Cease murmuring with one another. <sup>44</sup>“No one is able to come to Me unless the Father, the *One* Who sent Me, should draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Augustine: “This is the doctrine of Grace: none comes unless they are drawn. ...if you are not drawn, pray that you may be.”

“For those who do not believe it is presumed that they have not yet been drawn by God the Father. But this drawing, this attracting from God, is not a forced movement. Only the initiative belongs to God, while the response belongs to us. Only those who with joy hear, obey, believe and come to Christ, only they will have eternal life. God wants all men to be saved. Therefore, allow yourself to be attracted and drawn by the Father and to come to Christ. (Bp. Gerasimos).”

Augustine: “There is a certain craving of the heart to which that Bread of heaven is sweet... a person is drawn to Christ when he delights in the truth, when he delights in blessedness, delights in righteousness, delights in everlasting life.

“Thus...in the theology of the Gospel the ‘last day’ signifies the day of resurrection for believers – and hence the day of their glorification. (Fr. Behr)”

**<sup>45</sup>“It has been written in the prophets, ‘And they shall be all taught of God.’ (Isaiah 54:13) Everyone then who has heard and has learned from the Father, comes to Me.**

Theophylact: “To this Christ adds, *and has learned*, indicating that hearing alone does not suffice. The Lord speaks precisely, making it plain that one must also willingly draw near to Him and

learn...Now that the only-begotten has taken flesh, knowledge comes directly from the Father through the Holy Spirit. Thus the words of the prophet are fulfilled: *In Your (the Father's) Light* – which means the Holy Spirit – *we shall see Light* (Psalm 35:10) which is the Son.”

Gregory of Nazianzus: On priests who are seeking a livelihood instead of virtue and a ministry for which they must give an account...All are teachers instead of being taught by God.

**46“Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the *One* Who is from God, that *One* has seen the Father.**

Cyril of Jerusalem: “For with the Son, the Holy Spirit alone can rightly behold him...For he (the Son) fully beholds and reveals God through the Spirit to each person as he is able to receive, since the only-begotten Son together with the Holy Spirit is a partaker of the Father’s Godhead.”

**47“Verily, verily, I say to you, the *one* who believes in Me has everlasting life.**

Augustine: “Eternal life took death on itself; eternal life willed to die...Life underwent death, that Life might kill death...The same eternal life gave eternal life also to the flesh that it assumed.”

**48“I am the bread of life. 49“Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and died.**

St. Athanasius: “...sin, too, has its own special bread – of death, calling to those who are lovers of pleasure and lack understanding...For even when the sinner thinks he is going to find pleasure, the end result of that food is anything but pleasant...the end result is, he eats and rejoices for a little while but afterwards he spurns it the further his soul has moved away from God. For the fool does not know that those who depart far from God shall perish...May we also hear our Savior saying, *‘blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.’* It is much more satisfying then for the saints and those who love the life that is in Christ when they elevate themselves to a longing after this food.”

Chrysostom: “And so, it is necessary to understand the marvel of the mysteries, what they are, why they were given and how they are profitable. We become one body and *‘members of His flesh and bones’* (Eph 5:30)...Let us be blended into that flesh. This is effected by the food that He has freely given to us, desiring to show us the love He has for us. This is why He has mixed Himself up with us. He has kneaded up His body with ours, so that we might be one distinct entity, like a body joined to a Head...He has allowed those who desire Him not only to see Him but even to touch, and eat Him, and fix their teeth in His Flesh and to embrace Him and satisfy all their love. Let us then, return from that Table like lions breathing fire, having become terrible to the devil, ruminating on our Head (who is Christ) and the love that He has shown for us. ”

**50“This *One* is the bread, the *One* coming down out of the heavens, in order that anyone might eat of it and not die.**

Theophylact: “In a manner beyond explanation through the mystical blessing and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the bread is changes into the flesh of the Lord. Let no one doubt that ordinary bread becomes Christ’s flesh...But why, one might ask, does it not appear to us as flesh, but as bread? So that we would not feel revulsion when we partake of it. The Lord condescends to our human weakness and causes the mystical food to appear in a form acceptable to us.

Ephraim The Syrian: “Do not regard as bread what I have given you now...eat it and do not disdain its crumbs. For this bread that I have sanctified is my body. Its least crumb sanctifies thousands of thousands, and is capable of giving life to all who eat it. Take, eat in faith, doubting not at all that this is my Body. And he who eats it in faith eats in it fire and the Holy Spirit. If anyone doubts and eats it, it is plain bread to him. He who believes and eats the bread sanctified in my name, if he is pure it will keep him pure; if he is a sinner he will be forgiven...This is the heavenly bread that has come down from in high onto the earth.”