

Weekly Gospel Readings The 3rd Sunday of Meshir

What is The Bread of Life?

On this Sunday (02/25/2024), the Third Sunday of Meshir, the Church reads from [John 6:27-46](#).

Through the month of Meshir, we continue our journey into Christ's message on being the Bread of Life.

In [John 6:27](#), Jesus says “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him, God the Father has set his seal.” This verse was also included during the Gospel reading two weeks ago (1st Sunday of Meshir). Hence, the fathers are emphasizing that our lives' goals are not for worldly desires or pleasures but rather to gain eternal life. Therefore, in the forefront of our minds, we need to think about the Kingdom of Heaven: As St. Paul wrote in ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#)) “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”.

Upon hearing these words, those who were with Him inquired about what needed to be done to properly perform the works of God, and His response was simply to believe in Him ([v. 28-29](#)). Jesus later emphasizes that “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst” ([v. 35](#)) and in later verses He explains; “It is written in the Prophets, ‘and they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me—not that anyone has seen the Father except He Who is from God; He has seen the Father” ([v. 45-46](#)).

St. John Chrysostom expounded on the meaning of the Bread of Life when he said, “By bread, He means here either His saving doctrines and the faith which is in Him, or His own Body; for both nerve the soul.” ([Homily 46 on the Gospel of St. John \(St. John Chrysostom\)](#)). Furthermore, St. Cyril of Alexandria, emphasizes that “Faith therefore is the door and way unto life, and return from corruption unto incorruption” ([St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on John, Book 4](#)).

Often when we hear or read the mention of the Bread of Life (this term is only used in the Gospel of St. John), it always reminds us of Communion. In our Coptic Church, to take Communion and partake in this Bread of Life, one must be baptized. Being baptized is a sign of acceptance of God and His message of eternal life; after all, in being baptized, you have not only learned but have accepted the Word of God. Both need to happen in order to gain eternal life. St. Cyril explains: “[It is] not corporeal bread, for it does not just satisfy the feeling of hunger and free the body from destruction caused by hunger, but it forms the whole living being once more toward everlasting life. The human being thus created lives forever conquering death. These words refer to the life and blessing we obtain through His holy body. Through His holy body the special characteristic of the only Son, that is life, is transferred to us.” ([St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on John, Book 3](#))

May we remember what it means to partake of the Bread of Life; it means not only to share in the Eucharist but also to accept His word and to come to Him. Amen.

Further Reading:

- [CHURCH FATHERS: Homily 46 on the Gospel of John \(Chrysostom\) \(newadvent.org\)](#)
- [St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on John, Book 3](#)
- [St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on John, Book 4](#)