

Not Just Provider, But Provision

By R.T. Nusbaum

Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he has no life in him". (John 6:53)

The circumstances surrounding Jesus' above statements are the ones of the feeding of the five thousand. He just finished giving free bread to the multitude. Needless to say, this was a great blessing and a greater ministry than anything the scribes and Pharisees had ever done. Just experiencing a miracle was a great blessing but the thought that they would never have to work for food again must have been over-whelming. He not only gave them all enough to eat but had basketfuls left over. Their response to miracles as a resource was. "Give us to eat of this bread evermore".

Jesus – Not Just The Provider But The Provision

Jesus' response to their desire to live based on a miraculous supply of bread was "Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he has no life in him". Jesus' purpose in saying these things was to let them know that He had come for greater things than just improving the conditions of an earth existence. Miraculous bread would sustain their earth life but the Bread of Heaven would replace it and place their existence on a whole new plane. However, they could not comprehend what it was that He was trying to say.

The people's response to Jesus' words was: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" They had no clue that Jesus' words were Spirit and Life and that the flesh profits nothing. On the contrary, their view was that the providing of free bread for a life-time was great profit.

We must realize that the things Christ gives you and does for you can never fully bring satisfaction. Why? The reason is, God never intended to bring mankind into a satisfied earth life. His plan has always been that we live "above, where Christ sitteth" (Col. 3:1-3). To live above is not simply to live in some far off place called heaven but to live in union with the Person and nature of Christ that is not earth bound and gravity prone.

Earth Provision Is Temporary

God built in to creation the testimony that things of earth were not meant to satisfy. Even though they ate of the loaves and were filled, they were still empty. That is why Jesus was introducing them to another form of bread – the Bread of Life. With earth bread you are not truly satisfied for the proof is in the fact that you end up hungering again. This is an endless cycle akin to the Samaritan woman continually returning to the well to draw water instead of partaking of the Water of Life. For every miracle and experience we get from God, it is like Him giving us another meal but we must realize that there is more. There is a table set that we partake of that removes the need for earth fulfillment.

The physical Christ can multiply the loaves and fill our stomachs; but the spiritual Christ can satisfy us with Himself. To eat this Living Bread is to assimilate it. To assimilate it is for it to become one with us. It is the source of strength and motivation. Without it, whatever comes out of us may appear acceptable to us but Jesus states we have "no life."

The problem with the crowd who heard Jesus' words was that they were applying His words to His physical body that stood before them. Many left Him after this, possibly because they thought He was preaching cannibalism. One main problem is that we tend to be more aware of the Christ who is with us than the Christ with whom we are one and in whom we dwell. Therefore, we continually misread His words, even as these people did. Is it any wonder then, that Jesus said, "It is expedient for you that I go away... but I will come again."

The Need For A Relationship Change

Our Provider must go away! If He does not, we will never know Him as the Provision. The Gift-Giver must go away so that the great Treasure is revealed within. The One who provides for our flesh and our earth life must go away – Why? Because as long as THIS JESUS remains we will never make the great transition from dwelling in earth to dwelling in Christ.

This is not to be understood that Christ no longer meets our needs. But one thing is sure, if we make this transition, our needs become more based on Him and not life on this planet. Our main focus is turned from earth to Christ.

The improvement of our lives on this planet is far below the plan for Christ to be All and In All. When we make this transition then Jesus is not the sustainer of our lives but is our life whereby we are sustained. **