

John 6

John 6:4 the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh

"The association of the symbols of the Exodus manna, the miraculous feeding, and the Last Supper is intensified by John's report that 'the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh' (John 6:4). The Passover plays a major role in the writings of John. His central theme in this regard presents Jesus Christ as the Paschal Lamb (John 1:29; John 19:36) and as the way for us to pass over from this world of death to the Father and eternal life (see John 5:24; John 13:1).

"One Passover symbol is of particular interest in the context of John 6. The unleavened bread, or 'the bread of affliction' that was to be eaten during Passover week to remind the Israelites of their Exodus in haste from Egypt (see Ex. 12:39; Deut. 16:3), provides an important type of the Savior. Leaven, which produces fermentation, was often used in the scriptures as a symbol of sin, false doctrine, and hypocrisy (see Matt. 16:11-12; Mark 8:14-16; Luke 12:1). Jesus was the 'unleavened bread' who was without sin or corruption and who led Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. The Apostle Paul linked the partaking of the unleavened bread under the old covenant with the symbols of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He said:

'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth' (1 Cor. 5:7-8).

"The similitudes of unleavened bread, the manna, the loaves, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper sustain each other in testifying of 'the true bread from heaven' (John 6:32)." (Thomas R. Valletta, "The True Bread of Life," *Ensign*, Mar. 1999, 9-10)

John 6:9 there is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes

James E. Faust

"Some months ago, as Elder Spencer J. Condie and I were in the Salt Lake airport, we unexpectedly met a devoted and faithful couple who have been friends for long years. This couple has spent a lifetime of service, meekly, faithfully, and effectively trying to build up the Church in many places in the

world. Elder Condie noted, 'Isn't it remarkable what people with five loaves and two fishes do to build up the kingdom of God.' This kind of quiet, devoted service to me is surely a fulfillment of the word of God 'that the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers' (D&C 1:23). Today I would like to speak of those of us who have only talents equal to five loaves and two fishes to offer the Savior to help feed the multitudes.

"...It has been said that this church does not necessarily attract great people but more often makes ordinary people great. Many nameless people with gifts equal only to five loaves and two small fishes magnify their callings and serve without attention or recognition, feeding literally thousands. In large measure, they make possible the fulfillment of Nebuchadnezzar's dream that the latter-day gospel of Christ would be like a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, rolling forth until it fills the whole earth (see Dan. 2:34-35; D&C 65:2). These are the hundreds of thousands of leaders and teachers in all of the auxiliaries and priesthood quorums, the home teachers, the Relief Society visiting teachers. These are the many humble bishops in the Church, some without formal training but greatly magnified, always learning, with a humble desire to serve the Lord and the people of their wards.

"Any man or woman who enjoys the Master's touch is like potter's clay in his hands. More important than acquiring fame or fortune is being what God wants us to be. Before we came to this earth, we may have been fashioned to do some small good in this life that no one else can do...If God has a work for those with many talents, I believe he also has an important work for those of us who have few." (James E. Faust, "Five Loaves and Two Fishes," *Ensign*, May 1994, 5-6)

John 6:13 they...filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves

The Lord could have multiplied the bread such that none was left over. However, there is great symbolism in this excess. The Lord's spiritual blessings come to us in such great abundance that we cannot receive all he has to give. Indeed, our 'cup runneth over' (Ps. 23:5); we receive such blessings 'that there [is] room enough to receive it' (Mal. 3:10). When the Lord measures out a blessing, he does it in 'good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over' (Lu. 6:38). Symbolically, the twelve filled baskets represent that spiritual food given us of the Bread of Life-spiritual nourishment which is so great that we are filled to overflowing.

John 6:15 Jesus...perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king

When Pilate asked Jesus, 'Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world' (Jn 18:37). Yet ironically, the King of kings chooses not to be made king by this clamorous following. The Master knew that the people were only looking for a free lunch. Their motivation was their own temporal welfare, and Jesus knew it, 'For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not' (v. 64).

Dean L. Larsen

"[The Savior] had great power that he could have used to compel people to follow him and to be obedient to his word. Occasionally he demonstrated this power in miraculous ways, but never with the intent to command a following...It was almost as though he feared that men would follow him because of his power rather than as a result of having learned his truths and having valued them because they were true.

"In no incident in the mortal ministry of the Lord is this concern made more manifest than in the case of the feeding of the multitude with the loaves and fishes...Their reaction to this demonstration of power was to attempt to force him to become their king. The benefits of yielding subservience to one who could care for their needs so easily were obvious. Their intentions alarmed the Savior. He left the crowd immediately, and during the night crossed over to the other side of the sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

"...Obviously the truths that Jesus had taught these people had not penetrated their hearts and their understanding. They were untouched by the influence he had wished to effect...It would not have been difficult for Jesus to continue to command the following of these people. Their welfare and their salvation meant more to him than his own life. A few more public miracles could have held them and augmented their numbers. It would have been an easy thing to do. But the essential parts of the equation were not coming together. He did not wish a following on that basis. It must have been a terribly disappointing, frustrating experience for the Master. If they would not follow him because they believed and valued the truths he taught them, he would not have them follow him at all." ("Let Your Light So Shine," *Ensign*, Sept. 1981, 23-24)

John 6:19 they see Jesus walking on the sea

See commentary for Matthew 14:25-33.

John 6:26 **Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled**

Jesus had an interesting way of dealing with these newly obtained disciples. He knew they were only fair-weather fans-followers seeking free lunch, not consecrated discipleship. They would be faithful to him only if he kept up the miracles, especially the feeding of the multitude. For these, Christ would teach the deeper doctrines-principles that were true, but not as easy to swallow as the miraculous loaves and fish. The Bread of Life sermon is specifically designed to drive away these unbelievers. In many ways, the sermon is designed to separate the wheat from the tares, the men from the boys, and the fair-weather followers from the true disciples. The Lord hates hypocrisy and he won't tolerate it among his saints. Hence, he teaches them the hard doctrines: 1) that he is the bread of life, 2) that he came down from heaven, 3) that he has power to exalt the elect, 4) that everlasting life would be given to those that believe in Him, and 5) that all must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood. None of his disciples were ready for these doctrines, and he knew it.

John 6:28-29 **What shall we do that we might work the works of God?**

Jewish religious culture overemphasized the importance of individual works. The question posed by these would-be believers belies this preconception. Their overemphasis on works was the great barrier to faith which Paul spent years trying to break down. He was the great champion of faith and the importance of God's grace. But Paul's doctrine was not his own but the Master's, who also had to teach the Jews the importance of faith. When they asked about what works they should do, he responded that they must believe, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'

John 6:30-31 **What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe?**

The Master taught that it is an evil and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign (Matt 12:39). These brazen tempters have the audacity to ask for a sign the day after he has fed them with the loaves and fishes! Their real motivation is revealed in their next statement, 'Our fathers did eat manna in the desert.' These Jews were saying, "we don't believe you yet. How about some more signs? If you're wondering what sign we had in mind, we'll tell you. Since our fathers were given manna to eat, maybe you could do the same thing. We are all tired of working for a living. If you were to provide us with an

endless supply of food, we could retire and live high on the hog. Of course, we would believe you then and be your greatest supporters."

John 6:33 the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven

"I passed through masses of icons, silver lanterns, and trinkets before descending the stairs into a sea of people crowded into the small cave. Heat and noise mingled in the heavy, stale air. People jostled for position, nudging, pressing, seeking to see the silver star that marked the place where some say the Savior of the world was born.

"People kissed the walls. Others walked through, merely curious...For years I had imagined, pondered, and prepared, and I wanted the place to elicit all the feelings I'd encountered while studying. But it didn't. In an attempt to push away the disappointment, I let my mind wander over what I'd learned of the event in Bethlehem that I'd come to love.

"Bethlehem-the name means 'house of bread.' Whether or not the cave below me was the actual stable of Christ's birth, this was the town. Words came to mind, words I had heard almost every Sunday since I was a child: 'Bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son' (D&C 20:77). Christ, the Bread of Life, was born in the house of bread and placed in a manger.

"As a child I had thought manger was a synonym for crib. I remembered my surprise at learning that a manger is a box made to hold food for animals, a feeding trough! Now, as I sat in Bethlehem, I imagined a manger filled with oats that beasts of burden hungrily devoured. They, like me, would eat and in a few hours want more. No matter how nutritious earthly fare is, it is never enough. The next day, even the next hour, the stomach growls for more.

"In my mind's eye I saw hands brushing away the last few oats. The same hands filled the manger with fresh straw and placed the Babe in the feeding trough. Words leaped to mind: 'He that cometh to me shall never hunger' and 'He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever' (John 6:35, 58). The heavenly fare offered in the manger was not only eternal but capable of lifting us to God. How fitting that Mary should cradle her son, the Bread of Life, in a manger." (Sherrie Johnson, "Tasting the Bread of Life," *Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 47)

John 6:35 I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst

Man's most fundamental needs are food, water, and shelter. Some have lived in such conditions that the majority of their time was spent in pursuit of these simple necessities. The Lord has used this imagery to appeal to our most basic and fundamental needs. He speaks not just of our physical needs, but is able to provide for us spiritually as well. He is the bread of life; He gives us living water (Jn. 4:10); He protects us 'even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings' (Matt 23:37). However, there is one thing we must do to be the beneficiary of his great protection: we must come to him and believe on him. Mark E. Peterson asked, "Do you know what it is to be really hungry? Do you know what it is to really be thirsty? Do you desire righteousness as you would desire food under extreme conditions or drink under extreme conditions? [The Savior] expects us to literally hunger and thirst after righteousness and seek it with all our hearts!" (Russell M. Nelson, *The Power Within Us*, p. 21) Our sincerity and diligence in this regard will not go unrewarded. If we seek him with all of our hearts, we will never be hungry or thirsty again.

Robert E. Wells

"When we hunger and thirst to come unto the Savior, and hunger and thirst to achieve his righteousness, we are led to seek the companionship of the Saints, to gather on the Sabbath, and to enjoy worship, the sacrament, hymns of praise, and the brotherhood of our fellow members. This hunger and thirst of the spirit stimulates fervent and sincere prayers, fasting, good works, and sacrifice, and our desire to go to the temple increases. These lasting joys are more to be sought after than the fleeting pleasures of the world." (*The Mount and the Master* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 44.)

Bruce R. McConkie

"Let all men forsake the tables of carnality and of false doctrine, where the scoffers of the world, 'walking after their own lusts,' are eating and drinking with gluttonous abandon as men did in the days of Noah...But be it known- whatever the ungodly may suppose, whatever views the spiritually untutored may espouse, whatever foods may be eaten at the evil tables of the world-that here at the Lord's table is found living bread; here is the fountain from which streams of living water flow." (*The Millennial Messiah*:

The Second Coming of the Son of Man [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 1.)

J. Reuben Clark, Jr.

"The bread and water that Christ, our Lord gives, are the spiritual food that can bring salvation and exaltation to every human soul...How blessed are we to have this never dimming, always glowing hope, and the eternal knowledge that belongs to us, to comfort us and to urge us on through life, that we may add to God's declared work and glory by gaining for ourselves, and for all believers and doers, the priceless destiny of immortality and eternal life." (*Behold the Lamb of God* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 128.)

John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me

The Savior is teaching that there are a number of souls which the Father has given him (see also 3 Ne. 15:24, DC 27:14, DC 50:41, Jn. 17:2,5,11-12). These souls are the elect of God. They have been foreordained to receive the greatest of all the gifts of God-eternal life. What is most remarkable is that the Savior has the power to save all of these elect individuals, 'thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him' (Jn. 17:2). With the exception of Judas Iscariot, none of the elect will be lost, 'those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled' (Jn. 17:12, see also DC 50:41-42). These elect souls were so righteous in their pre-mortal life, that the Father knew they would be faithful to the end. However, this knowledge in no way detracts from the agency of the individuals involved. Because of the veil of forgetfulness, the elect of God don't know who they are. Their behavior can't be influenced by their foreordination because they don't remember that it occurred. Only after their calling and election is made sure do they realize that they were foreordained to receive this great blessing.

LDS theology doesn't speak much of this doctrine because it has been so perverted by sectarian Christianity. Just as "salvation by grace" is a true doctrine that has been distorted, so the "doctrine of election" is a true doctrine that has been distorted and misunderstood. **Elder LeGrand Richards** wrote, "...the erroneous doctrine of predestination...teaches that without any act on our part, some are predestined to eternal life and some to eternal damnation, and that no matter in which class we find ourselves, there is nothing we can do about it. A complete analysis of this doctrine forces one to the conclusion that if it is true that all our acts, whether good or evil, were predetermined

before our birth, God would be responsible for all sin and iniquity in the world." (*A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, 25).

John Calvin is the most famous proponent of the doctrine of election, but his explanations are faulty because he did not understand that there was a pre-mortal life in which the righteous could demonstrate their obedience and loyalty. Therefore, he taught that election was an arbitrary decision of God. Rodney Turner notes, "This view of predestination is based on a highly selective (sectarian) interpretation of Paul's theology. It robs God of his indispensable attribute of justice, rendering him a respecter of persons who, contrary to his own disavowals (Acts 10:34; D&C 1:35), overwhelms and negates the agency of mankind by his sovereign will. But what father worthy of the name would capriciously consign one child to wealth and another to poverty? (D&C 38:26.)" (Robert L. Millet, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 109.)

The true doctrine of election means that certain souls, by virtue of their righteousness in the pre-mortal sphere, were foreordained to receive eternal life. It does not mean that God has predestined every act of the every elect individual. In fact, it does not mean that God has predestined *any* act of *any* individual. Therefore, it does not in any way violate the agency of man. It does not mean that *only* those who are elect may receive eternal life, for the Lord has said, 'every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life' (Jn 6:40). It does not mean that any have been foreordained or predestined to receive damnation, for the damned earn this reward of their own free will and choice.

John 6:39 this is the Father's will...that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing

This story is designed to help the reader understand the doctrine of election. In particular, it is hoped that this illustration will help the reader understand how God's foreknowledge and his plan to exalt his elect saints does not violate the principles of the agency of man. It neither predestines one to success nor does it predestine another to failure. The interpretation is as follows: the father is Jesus Christ, the mother is the Church, the angel represents God, and the sons are the members of the Church.

A certain man prayed one evening that he might have children. That night, while he slept, an angel appeared unto him and said:

"I have come in answer to your fervent prayers. I have come to inform you that you will be the father of five sons. You are to raise them in light and truth. As their father, you are given a special charge: the first three of your sons have been foreordained to serve missions and you are to see that they live worthy to serve in this capacity. It is your assignment to influence them for good such that they choose to serve a mission. In performing this task, you and your wife may use all the powers of persuasion in your possession. You may teach them, encourage them, and be an example for them, but you must not force them. They must make the decision to serve a mission of their own free will and choice, for their agency must not be violated. Still, if you are faithful in this stewardship, you will find that they will make correct choices including the decision to serve a mission.

"Your fourth and fifth sons are also precious individuals. You will love them very much. You and your wife are to raise them just the same way you raise your other sons. Hopefully, they will both serve a mission, but neither has been foreordained to do so. I must warn you that your last son can be rebellious at times."

Without another word, the angel left him. In time, the man fathered five sons. He and his wife did everything in their power to raise them in righteousness. But the father never told his sons about his vision. Therefore, they never knew which ones were foreordained and which ones were not. At times, the man and wife found themselves giving special attention to their more rebellious son. They encouraged him with all the feeling of tender parents, but still he would not listen and eventually drifted away. In time, the first four sons served faithful missions. The fifth did not.

As the sons returned home from their missions, the father found a quiet time when the two of them could be alone together. In a very spiritual interaction, the father individually told his faithful sons that they had been foreordained to serve a faithful mission. He told them how pleased he was with their faithfulness and promised that God would give them blessings beyond their wildest imagination. As the father interviewed his third son, he was pleased that he had fulfilled the specific assignment given to him by the angel, and told him, "you are of them that my Father hath given me; And none of them that my Father hath given me have been lost." He was also pleased with the faithfulness of his fourth son who was worthy of the same great blessings as his older brothers. Then the father prayed again thanking God for the faithful sons he had been given. Referring to his first three, he prayed, "I kept them in thy name: the assignment thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost." (see Jn. 17:2, 9-12)

John 6:42 Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph?

Bruce R. McConkie

"Jesus never met these murmurs about His supposed parentage and place of birth by revealing to the common crowds the high mystery of His earthly origin.' It sufficed for them to hear the witness borne that he was the Son of the Highest; let the details of his coming be reserved for those whose spiritual stature would enable them to receive the mysteries of godliness." (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 2: 376.)

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father...draw him

Elder George Teasdale

"We understand that He had drawn us into His fold; for 'no man can come to me,' saith the Lord Jesus Christ, 'except the Father which hath sent Me draw him.'

"My brethren and sisters, do you understand that our Father has drawn you into His fold? Do you young people, who are sons and daughters of the pioneers of this work, realize that God has appointed the bounds of your habitation, and that He hath given you the honor of being the sons and daughters of High Priests, Seventies, Elders, Patriarchs, and Apostles of God? Do you understand that your names are enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, and that it was foreordained from before the foundation of the world for you to be born in the latter days of goodly parents, to have the privileges of the house of the Lord, and to assist in the redemption of the living and the dead? If you do realize this, surely you will manifest it in your works. You will be gentle men, gentle women. You will keep yourselves clean from the iniquities of this unbelieving generation, with all their pride and highmindedness, and you will humble yourselves before our Heavenly Father, and plead before Him, in the name of Jesus Christ, that He will vouchsafe unto you His Spirit and reveal to you your individual missions that you may stand approved of Him both here and hereafter." (Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], vol. 3, March 19, 1893)

John 6:46 he which is of God, he hath seen the Father

B. H. Roberts

"Take this expression of the scripture, 'No man hath seen God at any time' (I John 4:12). Standing alone, it seems emphatic and conclusive. And in the same connection this also, from the testimony of John: 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him' (St. John 1:18). But consider these texts in connection with what the Master himself said on the same subject: 'It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, *save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father*' (St. John 6:46). Now we have the key to the matter. 'No man hath seen God at any time, *save [except] he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*' If any one shall contend that this '*he which is of God*' has reference to Jesus only, the complete answer to that will be found in the account of the Martyr Stephen's glorious view of the Father and the Son together and at one time: 'But he [Stephen] being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, *and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God*' (Acts 7:55-6). Undoubtedly, for reasons that are wise, God the Father has been 'invisible' to men except under very special conditions; for the most part the 'Only Begotten hath declared him,' and stood as his representative; and in the absence of those special conditions, no man hath seen God the Father; no man in the absence of these conditions can see his face and live. He must be '*of God,*' as Stephen was, then he may see God, even the Father, as that martyr evidently did." (*The Mormon Doctrine of Deity* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1903], 80 - 81.)

John 6:49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead

"Israel would have perished in the wilderness were it not for the bread or manna sent down from heaven. That heaven-sent bread symbolized that all men would have perished had it not been for Christ, who came down from heaven as the food or spiritual nourishment of which all must partake or die as to the things of the Spirit." (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999], 4.)

Neal A. Maxwell

"Jesus Himself observed that those who ate the miraculous manna were long since dead. They would have remained so, too, except for the miracle of Christ's atonement and the resurrection." (*Men and Women of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 89.)

John 6:53 How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

"Eat his flesh? Drink his Blood? What is this Nazarene suggesting? How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Yesterday, he was feeding us loaves and fishes as if he could make them forever, now he seems to have gone mad. What could he possibly mean?" Such may have been the thoughts of the Jews hearing these words. Some may have perceived that he was speaking figuratively; "we must be aware of the Jewish tradition...In their view: 'The real bread from heaven was the Law.' (Edersheim 2:30.) And so again those in conversation with Jesus could not have done other than suppose he was offering them something in addition to what they already had, something in addition to the law of Moses with all its rituals and performances." (Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 2: 374.)

But whatever the Jews thought, one must understand that the Savior was intentionally teaching doctrine that was beyond their understanding. Importantly, this sermon takes place before the Last Supper. It takes place prior to the Atonement and Resurrection. Christ is teaching them about the Sacrament prior to its institution. He knows that later generations will understand, but how could even Peter and John be expected to understand? When the Jews asked for some clarification saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' he provides no simple explanation. These are the hard doctrines, and he has no intention of making them easy to understand. To the contrary, he teaches this doctrine as a test. He asks his disciples, 'Doth this offend you?' and 'Will ye also go away?' (v. 61, 67) He knows that all those who believe in him will follow him, even if they do not at first understand his teachings. Of these, Neal A. Maxwell said, "those who 'believe and are sure' (John 6:69) about Jesus' divinity do not panic, for instance, at the arrival of a new volley of fiery darts; they merely hold aloft the quenching shield of faith. (*Ensign*, November 1988, p. 32.)" The sign-seekers, on the other hand, will go elsewhere in search of another free lunch.

Bruce R. McConkie

"We come now to the crowning teaching of the sermon on the bread of life, which is, that men are saved by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God. With this proclamation, Jesus pushes back the walls of the synagogue so that his words go forth to all men on all the earth in all ages. His teachings are not alone for a handful of Galileans, not alone for the few million Jews who knew the meaning of the imagery used, but for all men of all nations no matter when or where they live. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Him who came down from heaven to shed his blood and mar

his flesh is a mystery that can only be understood by the saints as they are enlightened by the power of the Spirit." (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 2: 377.)

John 6:54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life

"Jesus invited not only those who heard him, but all others as well, to partake of his atonement. Through the fatal piercing of his flesh and shedding of his blood, he overcame death and made possible eternal life. The invitation to partake of his flesh and blood is an invitation to take part in the atonement that he worked out in our behalf. His redeeming grace, the true power by which we can be saved, is made available to all who desire to take part in it and demonstrate this by their devotion to his gospel plan. The ordinance of the sacrament, in which we consume the symbolic emblems of his redemptive act, signifies profoundly our consuming of his atoning grace and of his plan that makes it effective in our lives." (Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 5: The Gospels* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1986], 294.)

David O. McKay

"The partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is one of the most sacred ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ. Associated with it are principles fundamental in character building and essential to man's advancement and exaltation in the kingdom of God. Too few communicants attach to this simple though sublime rite the importance and significance that it merits. Unfortunately, the *form* of worship is frequently an outward compliance without the true soul acknowledgment of its deep spiritual significance." (*Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], 71.)

John Taylor

"We have met to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and we should endeavor to draw away our feelings and affections from things of time and sense. For in partaking of the sacrament we not only commemorate the death and sufferings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but we also shadow forth the time when he will come again and when we shall meet and eat bread with him in the kingdom of God. When we are thus assembled together, we may expect to receive guidance and blessings from God." (*The Gospel Kingdom: Selections from the Writings*

and Discourses of John Taylor, selected, arranged, and edited, with an introduction by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1941], 227.)

George Q. Cannon

"Those who eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lord should always remember Him and should be filled with perfect love for Him and for their brethren, and upon no other principle can they expect to have His Spirit to be with them. We feel that there is a feeling of apathy and carelessness upon this subject which should not exist among the Saints.

"To partake of the sacrament often and in a proper spirit is a very great safeguard against apostasy, because the Saints who will do thus will always remember the Lord and, as a consequence, according to His promise, shall have His Spirit to be with them. But to partake of it unworthily involves terrible consequences. No Elder can do his duty and permit persons who he knows are not feeling and doing right to partake of this ordinance." (*Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President George Q. Cannon*, selected, arranged, and edited by Jerreld L. Newquist [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 400.)

Spencer W. Kimball

"Remembering covenants prevents apostasy. That is the real purpose of the sacrament, to keep us from forgetting, to help us to remember. I suppose there would never be an apostate, there would never be a crime, if people remembered, really remembered, the things they had covenanted at the water's edge or at the sacrament table and in the temple. I suppose that is the reason the Lord asked Adam to offer sacrifices, for no other reason than that he and his posterity would remember-remember the basic things that they had been taught. I guess we as humans are prone to forget. It is easy to forget. Our sorrows, our joys, our concerns, our great problems seem to wane to some extent as time goes on, and there are many lessons that we learn which have a tendency to slip from us. The Nephites forgot. They forgot the days when they felt good." (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 112.)

John 6:60 This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

Neal A. Maxwell

"...Jesus' followers faced a moment of truth in responding to the Master's teachings...The topics discussed by Jesus included the reality of his Godhood and of the resurrection, which shook then-prevailing beliefs...The full implications of 'hard doctrines' heralded by Jesus will require us to put forth different solutions to the proximate problems of mankind...The basic choice to be made will frame itself in many individual ways with many ironies, but at the testing point it will often take the form of this question: Do I have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in his modern prophets?" ("The Value of Home Life," *Ensign*, Feb. 1972, 4-5)

Neal A. Maxwell

"[The man or woman of Christ] believes deeply in the Beatitudes, but also in those doctrines which tell him 'who' Jesus is. He does not divorce the Sermon on the Mount from the sermon at Capernaum with its hard teachings which caused many to walk 'no more with' Jesus. (John 6:66.) These latter doctrines are likewise a part of the bracing breeze of the scriptures which must be played upon the fevered brow of mankind. ("The Man of Christ," *Ensign*, May 1975, 101)

John 6:66 many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him

Jeffrey R. Holland

"As the world slouches toward the 21st century, many long for something, sometimes cry out for something, but too often scarcely know for what...In an absolutely terrifying way, we see legions who say they are bored with their spouses, their children, and any sense of marital or parental responsibility toward them. Still others, roaring full speed down the dead-end road of hedonism, shout that they will indeed live by bread alone, and the more of it the better. We have it on good word, indeed we have it from the Word Himself, that bread alone-even a lot of it-is not enough.

"During the Savior's Galilean ministry, He chided those who had heard of Him feeding the 5,000 with only five barley loaves and two fishes, and now flocked to Him expecting a free lunch. That food, important as it was, was incidental to the real nourishment He was trying to give them...But this was not the meal they had come for, and the record says, 'From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.'

"In that little story is something of the danger in our day. It is that in our contemporary success and sophistication we too may walk away from the

vitaly crucial bread of eternal life; we may actually choose to be spiritually malnourished, willfully indulging in a kind of spiritual anorexia. Like those childish Galileans of old, we may turn up our noses when divine sustenance is placed before us. Of course the tragedy then as now is that one day, as the Lord Himself has said, 'In an hour when ye think not the summer shall be past, and the harvest ended,' and we will find that our 'souls [are] not saved.' (DC 45:2)" ("He Hath Filled the Hungry with Good Things," *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65)

John 6:68 Lord, to whom shall we go?

Vaughn J. Featherstone

"Would you think about that? To whom shall we go if not to him? Where in all the world? In whom could we put our trust? Where could we find the peace that surpasseth understanding? Where, when we've gone to the very limit, to the mountain too high and too wide to get across, where can we go when we need to be on the other side, except to him?"

"Now, I suppose we should think how this affects you and me. If we hope to walk with him we need to live a Christlike life...Elder James E. Talmage said that the cost is always the same for every single one of us as we accept Christ and him crucified. The cost everlastingly and always will be the same. It is, simply, all we have. If we are going to be truly his disciples the price could never be less than all we have. Some of us may say, 'I'll go so far, and that's all the farther I can go.' With such an attitude I don't believe we will qualify as true disciples." ("Where Following Him Can Lead Us," *Ensign*, Feb. 1981, 9)

John 6:68 thou hast the words of eternal life

Joseph Smith

"The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints has the words of eternal life." (Kent P. Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible*, 132)

Dean L. Larsen

"The words of eternal life, while full of transcendent hope and promise, are not easy. The pathway of progress marked by the Lord is filled with challenges and risks. But it is the only way to celestial life. As we move along the path, we have the reassurance of knowing that we follow in the

footsteps of one who knows the way, who understands and trusts us to press on, always with his encouragement and supporting strength, but by our own effort and will. He has removed from this path every obstacle that we could not remove ourselves. He now beckons, 'Come to me.'

"On our onward journey, may we draw proper strength and help from each other, and may we be so wise as to avoid any act or desire that would unnecessarily hedge up the way for another." ("Let Your Light So Shine," *Ensign*, Sept. 1981, 25)

John 6:69 we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God

Gordon B. Hinckley

"There was no uncertainty in Peter's mind when the Lord asked him, 'Whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' (Matthew 16:15-16.)

"Nor was there any doubt on the part of Peter when the Lord taught the multitude in Capernaum, declaring himself to be the bread of life. Many of his disciples, who would not accept his teaching, 'went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.' (John 6:66-69.)

"...As it was anciently, so has it been in modern times. Without certitude on the part of believers, a religious cause becomes soft, without muscle, without the driving force that would broaden its influence and capture the hearts and affections of men and women. Theology may be argued over, but personal testimony, coupled with performance, cannot be refuted. " (*Faith: The Essence of True Religion* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989], 2.)

Russell M. Nelson

"Peter's answer defines the real core of commitment. When we know without a doubt that Jesus is the Christ, we will want to stay with Him. When we are surely converted, the power to endure is ours." (*Perfection Pending, and Other Favorite Discourses* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998], 129.)

John 6:70 Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Harold B. Lee

"Well might we expect, as in the past dispensations, that our worst enemies will be those within our ranks who will betray us. (65-07, p. 1152)

"We pray for our Saints everywhere, pray that they will hold steadfast. But, some of the greatest of our enemies are those within our own ranks. It was the lament of the Master, as He witnessed one of those chosen men, whom under inspiration He chose as one of the Twelve, betray Him with a kiss and for a few paltry pieces of silver turn Him over to His enemies. Judas then stood by and, realizing the enormity of what he had done, took the only escape out to sacrifice himself. And Jesus could only explain that one of the Twelve, meaning Judas, had a devil (see John 6:70-71).

"When we see some of our own today doing similar things, some who have been recognized and honored in the past as teachers and leaders who later fall by the wayside, our hearts are made sore and tender. But sometimes we have to say just like the Master said, 'The devil must have entered into them.' (73-36, p. 379)

"Today the greatest enemies we have are those who, for flattery of the world, would betray the Savior by denying His prophets and making light of Church pronouncements on vital issues that strike at the very foundation of the Lord's work. Such we have among us today-make no mistake." (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 392.)