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believer and fills his hands as he comes into the holy Presence of God.

Mentioned with the altar ministry is *all* the work of the place most holy and this service was necessary for the successful accomplishment of the other. Because of the sacred obligation to serve at the altar, there can be no neglect of attention to the instruments of that service. This minor service is for God, and so is to be engaged in with the same diligence and holy zeal as is the major service. Let there be no laxity in small things, lest the major service be spoiled.

This service was rendered not only for themselves but to make an atonement for Israel and it was ever to conform to the commandment of God as mediated through His Servant Moses.

All our service must conform to the Word, that Word which has been so miraculously preserved to us and which speaks to us today as the voice of the living God. There can be no departure from it: given through His servants by His Spirit, it remains the one true and faithful Guide for life and service.

AN EXPOSITORY STUDY OF ST JOHN'S GOSPEL

Prof. F. F. BRUCE, D.D.

II. Jesus Reveals Himself to the World (John 1:19-12:50)

(c) MINISTRY OF JESUS IN GALILEE, JERUSALEM AND BY THE LAKE
(John 4:45—6:71)

(v) *The Bread of Life* (John 6:22-71)

Ch. 6, v. 22—*On the morrow the multitude which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save one, and that Jesus entered not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples went away alone*—Next day the crowd of people that had been fed with the loaves and fishes found Jesus on the west shore of the Lake. They wondered how He had got across, because they saw that He had not gone with the disciples in their boat, and there was no other boat that He could have used.

v. 23—(*howbeit there came boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks*):—This parenthesis explains how, if there was only one boat at the spot (the one which the disciples took), the multitude themselves got across to the west side of the Lake. Some other boats came across from Tiberias during the night or in the early morning, driven perhaps by the 'contrary' wind of Mark 6:48. The people in those boats, having come from Tiberias, would not know that Jesus had landed with His disciples from their boat, which put in at Capernaum.

v. 24—*when the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they themselves got into the boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.*—They made sure that Jesus was nowhere in the neighbourhood, and that there was no sign of His disciples returning to fetch Him; so they crossed to the west side to look for Him. Two words are used for 'boat' in this passage, *plouion* and its diminutive *plouiarion*, but they are used indiscriminately both for the disciples' boat and for the other boats that came across the Lake.

v. 25—*And when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?*—Landing at Capernaum they found Jesus there, and naturally wondered how He had got there since they knew He had not embarked in His disciples' boat.

v. 26—*Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled.*—Instead of gratifying their curiosity, Jesus told them that their motive in seeking Him out was unworthy. They were attracted to Him because He had fed them, and they thought they had found in Him the leader for whom they were looking. But they did not see the true significance behind the feeding; this is the meaning of the words 'not because ye saw signs'. In v. 14 the statement that 'the people saw the sign which he did' means that they saw the outward form of the sign; here it is made plain that they did not appreciate the inward reality. According to the Synoptic narrative, even the Twelve

'understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened' (Mark 6:52; cf. Mark 8:14-21); still less likely was it that the multitude should grasp the lesson which the Lord wished to convey. But while the Synoptists simply leave us with the feeling that beneath the surface of this miracle there was much more than met the eye, John proceeds to bring that hidden meaning to light, by recording Jesus' discourse about the bread of life, delivered in the synagogue at Capernaum (v. 59).

The discourse falls into three parts, with an appendix.

- (i) The True Manna (vv. 27-34)
 - (ii) Jesus as the Food of Eternal Life (vv. 35-51)
 - (iii) Partaking of the Son of Man (vv. 52-59)
- Appendix (vv. 60-71)

v. 27—*Work not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life*—There is the same contrast here between material and spiritual food as there is between material and spiritual water in our Lord's conversation with the woman of Sychar (John 4:10 ff.). The water in Jacob's well could not refresh the soul as the living water did; so the food which 'perished with the using' (cf. Col. 2:22) might maintain physical life but could not impart eternal life.

which the Son of man shall give unto you:—As Jesus in Ch. 4 is the giver of that living water which springs up unto eternal life in those who receive it, so here He is the giver of the bread which abides, so that those who eat of it never hunger again. He avoids the title 'Messiah', which would have been all too relevant to their hopes of a military leader; the title 'Son of man' suited His purpose well enough.

for him the Father, even God, hath sealed.—That is to say, He is the one whom God has appointed as His certified agent for the bestowal of this life-giving bread. The particular occasion of this sealing was probably our Lord's baptism, when the descent of the Spirit and the voice of the Father publicly attested Him to be the Son of God (cf. John 1:32-34).

v. 28—*They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that*

we may work the works of God?—As they had to do their common daily work to earn ordinary bread, so (they supposed) to receive the bread which imparted eternal life they would have to perform tasks specially prescribed by God. What were these tasks?

v. 29—*Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*—God's basic requirement for those who would eat of the true bread and thus receive eternal life was faith—faith in the 'Messenger of the Covenant' whom God had sent in accordance with His ancient promise (cf. Mal. 3:1). Again, Jesus means the Messiah, but instead of using that term, He employs a circumlocution which amounts to the same thing. The people realize His meaning well enough, and realize, too, that His words imply that He Himself is the Messenger referred to. So they ask Him to supply further confirmation of His implicit claim.

v. 30—*They said therefore unto him, What then dost thou for a sign, that we may see, and believe thee? what workest thou?*—You claim to be the one whom God has sent, they say; what sign do you offer to prove that your claim is true? Let us see one (aorist tense, indicating a definite event) so that we may believe on you (present tense, as in the previous verse, indicating the abiding attitude of faith and obedience which follows the initial response of belief). For many, the sign which He had just performed in the feeding of the multitude was proof enough that He was the second Moses (John 6:14); but now a further sign is sought. The sequel makes it clear what they wanted Him to do. If Moses had given their forefathers manna in the wilderness, surely the Prophet like unto Moses should vindicate his authority in the same way. Probably the narrative of the giving of the manna (ex. 16:11-36) formed part of the scripture lesson in the synagogue that day. Jesus' words about 'the meat which abideth' might in any case have reminded them of the bread from heaven which their ancestors ate, although even the manna fell into the category of 'meat which perisheth' (cf. Ex. 16:20). In later times the rabbis taught that the new age would be marked by the restoration of the gift of manna, and there is some reason to

believe that this idea was current in the first century A.D. So the people may have meant: 'In the messianic age the gift of manna will be renewed; give us manna, and we shall know that you really are the Messiah'.

v. 31—*Our Fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.*—In indicating the kind of sign which they expect Jesus to show, they quote Ps. 78:24 (cf. Ps. 105:40; Neh. 9:15). The loaves and fishes were a timely provision indeed, but they were earthly food and not bread from heaven. One who could give them bread from heaven would be the Messiah beyond any doubt.

v. 32—*Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven.*—He reminds them that it was not Moses, but God, who gave their forefathers the manna in the wilderness. And God, who fed His people with material food in those earlier days, was now offering them spiritual food, heavenly manna, life-giving bread. Like the loaves and fishes with which the multitude had recently been fed, the manna which Israel ate in the days of Moses was also material food, 'bread out of heaven' though it was. But there is another kind of 'bread out of heaven'—true, real bread, sustaining the inmost and truest life of men—and it is of no perishing or material nature.

v. 33—*For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*—The expression 'the bread of God' is used occasionally in the Old Testament of the 'shew-bread' (cf. Lev. 21:6, 8, 17, 21, 22; 22:25); we may also compare the expression 'bread of the mighty' (Heb. *lechem 'abbirim*) in Ps. 78:25, where LXX, followed by A.V., renders 'angels' food'. But here 'the bread of God' is the bread which God supplies; like the manna, it comes down from heaven, but unlike the manna, it gives life (i.e. eternal life) to all mankind. There is also a hint in these words that this bread is not merely 'that which cometh down out of heaven' but actually 'he that descended

out of heaven' (John 3:13); this becomes explicit in the section which follows.

v. 34—*They said therefore unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.*—Like the woman of Sychar, who said 'Sir, give me this water' (John 4:15) when she heard Jesus speak of the living water which He could give, the multitude respond to His words about the true bread with an eager request that this bread may always be given to them henceforth. But they still understand His words in a material sense; He therefore makes His meaning plainer in what He now proceeds to say.

v. 35—*Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*—In the first section of the discourse Jesus represents Himself as the giver of the bread of life; in the second section, which is both introduced and summarized in this verse, He identifies Himself with the bread of life. He has come to give Himself that men may live by Him. To partake of this bread men must come to Him, they must believe on Him. This total self-commitment to Christ is the secret of eternal life and of perpetual soul-refreshment.

v. 36—*But I said unto you, that ye have seen me, and yet believe not.*—They, however, had not come to Him aright, for they had seen Him and His actions with their outward eyes alone, and had not penetrated by faith into the real truth of His person. Unlike the Evangelist, they had not 'beheld His glory' (cf. John 1:14); thus they had not as yet been able to partake of the bread of life.

v. 37—*All that which the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*—Yet He had the assurance that many would indeed come to Him in faith and receive the satisfying bread of life, for it was the will of God that many should do so. Men's blindness cannot frustrate the saving work of God. God is at work by His grace in the world, and those who come to Christ come to Him by the 'sweet constraint' of that grace. And when they come to Christ, they find that He undertakes all responsibility for their full and ul-

timate salvation. He does not reject them when they come, nor does He subsequently disown them.

v. 38—*For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*—The Father and the Son are completely at one in this work of salvation, the Father giving the believing community to the Son, the Son receiving and keeping those who come to Him, because the Son is utterly devoted to the Father's will. The doing of the Father's will is the purpose of His coming to earth, and it is the very sustenance of His life on earth (cf. John 4:34).

v. 39—*And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.*—In this perfect unity of will and purpose the Father and the Son stand engaged for the salvation of all believers. Here the will of God is said to be that the whole community given by the Father to the Son should be safely kept by the Son until it is blessed with the consummation of resurrection life at the last day. Those who speak as if John's eschatology is exclusively 'realized' should pay attention to those passages where he represents Jesus as raising up His people 'at the last day' (cf. vv. 40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48). This 'last day' is the time indicated in John 5:28 f., when 'all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.' Those who come to Christ receive the resurrection life in measure here and now, but they will receive it in its fulness only when they are clothed in bodies of glory. The pronouns used with reference to the community of believers in this verse are in the neuter gender and singular number, indicating the sum-total of Christ's flock.

v. 40—*For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*—In this verse the pronouns used with reference to believers are in the masculine gender and singular number, indicating each individual member of Christ's flock separately. No believer need fear that he will be overlooked among the multitude of his companions in the faith. The beholding of the Son spoken of here is much more than the super-

ficial seeing of Him mentioned in v. 36; it is that divinely-imparted vision which discerns the glory of God in the Word made flesh. The verb *theoreo* is used here, as in v. 62 below, 'for the discerning vision which recognizes the eternal reality behind or within the phenomenal facts of the life and death of Jesus Christ' (C. H. Dodd *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 342). The possession of eternal life now, and the hope of bodily resurrection 'at the last day', are two things which God has joined together for those who have come to Christ.

v. 41—*The Jews therefore murmured concerning him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*—'The Jews' on this occasion are not the official teachers of the people who were so angered by the way in which He spoke of God as His Father (John 5:18), but the synagogue congregation in Capernaum. How could a man with whose family relationships they were well acquainted make such claims as these? How could He be the bond between heaven and earth, 'the holy bread by which the soul of man is fed'?

v. 42—*And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how doth he now say, I am come down out of heaven?*—He was known familiarly as 'Jesus the son of Joseph' (cf. John 1:45). Their language need not imply that Joseph was still alive. They meant: 'We know who this man's parents were; how could He come down from heaven?' They could not know the real facts of His conception and birth (which naturally remained a family secret until the following generation); but they had no inkling of the greater mystery of His incarnation—of the fact that, while He entered human life by a real birth, He was at the same time the Eternal Word.

v. 43—*Jesus answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*—Let them stop this exchange of scandalized criticism; they would not arrive at the truth that way.

v. 44—*No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him:*—This is a repetition in different language of the first clause of v. 37. Those who come to Christ are spoken of here as being drawn to Him by the Father; in John 12:32 it is

Christ who, by His being 'lifted up from the earth', draws all men to Himself. One way or another, the divine initiative in the salvation of believers is emphasized. Men's responsibility in the matter of coming to Christ is not overlooked (cf. John 5:40); but none at all would come unless divinely persuaded and enabled to do so. And everyone who has come to Christ will gladly confess:

He loved me ere I knew Him;
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.

and I will raise him up in the last day.—For the third time in so brief a compass the resurrection of the believer is emphasized as the final and crowning stage of the saving work which Christ undertakes to accomplish in every one who comes to Him.

(To be continued)

MARY MAGDALENE

(Luke 8 : 1-3; Mark 15 : 40-47; John 20 : 1-18)

R. NORTH

Demon possession

There is no justification for identifying Mary Magdalene with 'the woman that was a sinner' (Luke 7:37), nor is there any evidence that demoniacal possession was connected with unchastity. We must also refuse a common notion that demoniacs were merely persons of disordered minds, or that seven demons are merely indicative of seven besetting sins. The testimony of the scriptures to the existence of demons is unquestionable. There is only one devil, but there are many demons. Whatever the symptoms of demoniacal possession, the actual dwelling of demons in a person is real.

During the course of His earthly ministry, our Lord cast out many demons. He also gave His disciples authority to cast out