

III. An Easy Condition, 34-37.

V. 34. *Lord, evermore give us this bread.* The words remind us remarkably of the Samaritan woman's entreaty, when Jesus had described to her the living water which he could bestow, ch. 4 : 15. Apparently the minds of the petitioners were fixed on bodily food. The outward and perishable blinds them to the spiritual and eternal. This has been true of all ages.

V. 35. *I am the bread of life.* The request brings Jesus to the great truth for which he has been seeking to prepare his hearers. He himself, and no other provision, is the real, all-satisfying food of the soul. He emphasizes here, not what he gives, but what he is. In him, as a living person, men can find all that they need. In him only do they reach fulness of life. This is one of the great sayings of John's gospel, to be classed with, "I am the light of the world" (ch. 8 : 12), "I am the good shepherd" (ch. 10 : 14), "I am the true vine" (ch. 15 : 1). *He that cometh to me . . . he that believeth on me.* The two actions are really the same. To come to him is to surrender ourselves to him in living faith. Believing on him is entering into real contact with him. "Unless we come and believe, we do not know that he is the Bread of God. We must take and eat."

Vs. 36, 37. *I said unto you.* Possibly this refers back to v. 26. In any case, the meaning is plain. They had seen him and seen his wonderful deeds of lovingkindness, and yet they had not yielded themselves up to him. Could there be any influence more effective than their sight of him? But, although they might hold back, his work

could not be in vain. *All that the Father giveth . . . come to me.* God's gracious purpose for men shall be fulfilled. Those whom the Father draws (v. 44) shall come. (Compare Eph. 2 : 8.) *I will in no wise cast out*; one of the most magnificent assurances in the New Testament. Christ will never put any obstacle in the way of any soul that seeks him.

Light from the East

THE BREAD "BROKEN"—In Palestine bread is made in loaves that look like big, heavy pancakes; one of them is usually enough for a meal. They are half an inch thick and nine inches in diameter. They are never cut; it is absolutely wicked to use a knife on bread. It is always broken in pieces with the fingers. The Bible never speaks of bread being cut; it is always "broken." Lamentations (ch. 4 : 4) gives a picture of desolation and penury :

"Infants ask for bread,
And no one is breaking it to them."

When our Lord fed 5,000 people with five of these bannocks, we read that after a blessing he "broke and gave the loaves to his disciples;" and he did the same when he fed 4,000 with the seven loaves. So in the Upper Room Jesus "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples." When he was with the two disciples at Emmaus, "he took the bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them." The Book of Acts tells us about believers "breaking bread from house to house," and the Apostle Paul speaks of "the bread which we break."

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON IX.]

The Land of Gennesaret was on the west side of the Sea of Galilee and towards its northern end (see also HOME STUDY QUARTERLY). "This plain, which is one of the most charming spots in Palestine, is about one mile broad and two and a half miles long, having Khan Minyeh (Capernaum) on the north and Mejdal, the ancient Magdala, on the south. The Rabbis were enthusiastic in their praise of this 'garden of princes.' It was to them a veritable 'paradise.' Its

fruits were prized for their wonderful sweetness, but they were not found at Jerusalem at the feasts, and the reason given was that no one should be tempted to come to the feasts merely for the sake of enjoying those fruits."

"The Lake of Galilee is subject to violent storms. From an eminence the writer has several times seen the clouds gather above the lake, a dense black mass, not covering a great area, and sink lower and lower towards