

THAT YOU MAY KNOW

Much Ado About Flesh and Blood
John 6:41-59
June 5, 2022

MAIN POINT: Be not offended by the words of Jesus or that we must feast on him, for it is only those who feast on him who will live both in this age and into the age to come.

I. THE JEWS GRUMBLE (vv. 41-46)

- Just like Israel grumbled against Moses and Yahweh in the wilderness over bitter water (Exod. 15:22ff) and hunger (Exod. 16:2ff), so too the Jews grumble over the greater Moses who is Yahweh incarnate (v. 41).
 - The LORD demonstrated mercy in raining manna down from heaven after leading Israel through the Red Sea; grace is seen in the true manna from heaven who comes down (v. 41) and tramples the waves.
- The Jews thought they knew who Jesus was (v. 42), but their grumbling evidenced they neither knew him nor the Father (vv. 43-46).
 - The Servant's work (Isa. 52:13-53:12) ensures the covenant of peace (54:10) and the knowledge of the Lord (54:11-13). See also Jeremiah 31:31-34, where the "covenant of peace" is called a "new covenant."

II. JESUS' AMEN AND AMEN (vv. 47-51)

- Israel perished in the wilderness (v. 49) while eating perishable bread (cf. Exod. 15:19-21), but Jesus is the living bread who gives his life for the world (v. 51).
 - Jesus is the Lamb of God, the greater Passover Lamb, whose infinitely valuable sacrifice saves all those who come to him in faith.

III. THE JEWS QUARREL (v. 52)

- The Jews understood cannibalism to be a wicked thing, tantamount to suffering covenant curses (cf. Lev. 26:27-29; Deut. 28:52-57; Jer. 19:9; Lam. 2:20; 4:10; Ezek. 5:10).
 - Drinking blood was also an abominable practice (cf. Lev. 17:10-16).

IV. JESUS' AMEN AND AMEN (vv. 53-59)

- Jesus only strengthens his statement by asserting that one MUST eat (and more than eat; chew!) the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man (cf. Dan. 7:13-14) if they are to have eternal life (vv. 53-54).
 - Israel had to eat the flesh of the Passover lamb and paint their doorframes with its blood and thus benefit from the substitutionary sacrifice (Exod. 12:1-28). David would not drink the blood of his three mighty men and thus benefit from their sacrifice (2 Sam. 23:13-17; 1 Chron. 11:15-19). One must eat and chew and drink of Jesus, figures of benefiting and being sustained by the work of the Son of Man (vv. 55-57).
 - Feasting on Jesus is our only hope in life and death (v. 58).

Suggested Reading:

The Person of Christ by Stephen Wellum

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read John 6:41-59

1. In what ways have you been tempted to grumble against the Lord after experiencing so clearly his mercy and grace?
2. How well do you think you know Jesus? Does your familiarity with him keep you from hearing his voice and listening to his words, especially those deemed more offensive?
3. What is the solution to the grumbling of the Jews in vv. 43-46? How does the hope of the New Covenant fit into Jesus' argument?
4. Jesus' flesh is given for the life of the world. In what ways does John describe receiving Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice throughout John 6:41-59? How do these different descriptions inform one another?
5. Jesus doubles down in his response to the Jews and provokes quarrels in their midst. In what ways are you surprised by Jesus' response? Were you expecting something nicer, something more winsome?
6. What does Jesus mean when he calls us to chew his flesh and drink his blood? What Old Testament imagery lies behind such commands?