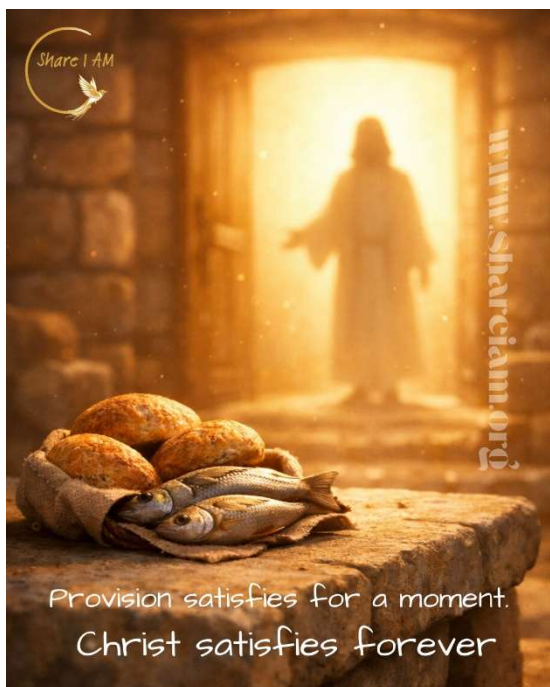




BEYOND LOAVES AND FISHES

📖 “Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.” — John 6:2, NKJV.

There is something deeply human about following Jesus for bread. Hunger has a persuasive voice, and need can make even miracles feel irresistible. The crowd followed Him because they saw what He could do for them, and indeed, He did not refuse their need. With five loaves and two fish, He fed thousands, leaving twelve baskets over. Scarcity, once placed in His hands, became abundance.

Yet the miracle was never meant to end with full stomachs. It was a signpost, not a destination. When the people returned, hungry once more,

Jesus refused to repeat the sign. Instead, He offered a harder gift: Himself. *“Do not labor for the food which perishes,” He said, “but for the food which endures to everlasting life”* (John 6:27). The bread they wanted would satisfy for an hour; the Bread He offered would satisfy forever.

Here the crowd faltered. They had gladly received what cost them nothing. But when Jesus spoke of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, of sharing His very life, they recoiled. The gift had become too costly, the truth too demanding. Provision was welcome; participation was not. This is the great divide in the Christian life. Many rejoice in what Christ gives; few desire what Christ is. The loaves and fishes draw crowds. The Bread of Life draws only those willing to die to lesser hungers.

Jesus could not yet explain fully what He meant. Gethsemane lay ahead. Calvary had not yet been climbed. Resurrection life had not yet been released. But He looked forward to a day when He would say, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock... I will come in and dine with him, and he with Me”* (Revelation 3:20). First, He receives what we bring—our worship, our surrender, our exhausted resources. Then He offers Himself as our sustenance.

This is why many are called, but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14). The call is generous; the choosing requires response. To know the power of His resurrection means first to share the fellowship of His sufferings (Philippians 3:10). Resurrection life is preceded by death—death to self-reliance, to shallow satisfaction, to a faith that feeds only on miracles.

In this last hour, many are still hungry. Yet too often they are offered only loaves and fishes, blessings without transformation, provision without participation. Christ is seeking more. He is offering Himself. May we not turn back when the saying is hard. May we open the door. And may we learn to hunger not merely for what He gives, but for who He is.

🌿 Reflection:

Am I following Jesus primarily for what He provides, or for who He is?