

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 7 – August 28

Chapter 5

- 112 When the disciples said: Jesus, son of Mary, is your Lord able to send down food to us from heaven? He said: Keep your duty to Allah if you are believers.
- 113 They said: We desire to eat of it, and that our hearts should be satisfied, and that we may know that you have indeed spoken truth to us, and that we may be witnesses of it.
- 114 Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Allah, our Lord, send down to us food from heaven which should be to us an ever-recurring happiness to the first of us and the last of us, and a sign from You, and give us sustenance and You are the Best of the sustainers.
- 115 Allah said: Surely I will send it down to you, but whoever disbelieves afterwards from among you, I will punish him with a punishment with which I will not punish anyone among the nations.

Notes:

According to the Gospel of John, people made a demand on Jesus for bread from heaven as a sign: “Therefore they said to him, What sign will you perform then, that we may see it and believe you? What work will you do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them **bread from heaven** to eat’.” (John 6:30–31).

Jesus replied to them: “... the **bread of God** is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (6:33). He also said: “Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for **the food** which endures to everlasting life” (6:27). Elsewhere he said: “Man shall not live by **bread alone** but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew, 4:4).

With this concept of the kind of bread man should really seek, the prayer of Jesus for food from heaven for his followers, as in verse 114 above or in the well-known Lord’s prayer for “the daily bread”, *cannot* be for mere physical food, but must *primarily* be for **spiritual food**, i.e. for revealed guidance from God. And he prayed for this for his immediate as well as later followers (“the first of us and the last of us”).

The acceptance by Allah of that prayer (verse 115) indicates that something *quite unprecedented and extraordinary* in terms of **food** will be given to the followers of Jesus, because if they still

don't accept it as a sign they would be punished "with a punishment with which I will not punish anyone among the nations" (v. 115).

The material provisions, prosperity and plenty attained by Christian nations in Western civilization have been on an unimaginable scale. The "punishment" for showing ingratitude for this unprecedented favour takes place by man's own hands. He develops the most terribly destructive weapons, using the same science and technology which gave him the material provisions and comforts, because of his overriding fear of losing these possessions. He stands on the brink of destroying not only his enemies, but himself as well.

The only way to be grateful for this abundance of **physical food** and material prosperity is to look and search for the **spiritual food** sent by God to accompany it. That spiritual food should be equally as great and magnificent as the material wealth. That **spiritual food** is the Quran. As Jesus said, man cannot live by food alone, no matter in what tremendous abundance, variety and quality it may be available to him. He stands in need of "every word which proceeds from the mouth of God".